The London School of Economics and Political Science

Policing minority ethnic communities: A case study in London's 'Little India'

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A thesis submitted to the Department of Sociology of the London School of Economics for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London, December 2012.

Declaration

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Abstract

The Macpherson Inquiry (1999) was instrumental in forcing into the public domain the issue of police racism, which for decades had been an endemic part of police culture. My thesis, undertaken post Macpherson (1999), examined ongoing tensions in the policing of minority ethnic communities through a case study of policing in London's 'Little India'. My thesis highlights the continuing influence of racism in policing, describing a world of policing ethnically diverse communities that is far more complex, variable and contradictory than has yet been documented in the empirical policing literature.

I describe how policing in Greenfield was a patchwork of continuity and change, illustrating how, despite the advances the police in Greenfield had made in eradicating overt racism from the organisation, passive prejudice remained rife among officers. Most notably, despite acknowledging Greenfield's long resident Asian communities as the 'indigenous population', officers still had little knowledge about these communities, tending to classify them as 'Asians' in a way that obscured, rather than illuminated their diversity. Furthermore, while officers regarded 'Asians' as the established communities of Greenfield, new 'problem populations' - most notably Somalis, Muslims and travellers - emerged, with officers tending to engage with these communities in antagonistic ways, echoing themes from early studies of race and policing.

Yet beneath this somewhat depressing overarching picture of policing, a more complex, contradictory network of attitudes and practice emerged,

encompassing both officers who were overtly hostile to ethnic diversity and also examples of inspirational officers committed to reforming the policing of minority ethnic communities. Having described policing in Greenfield, I conclude by discussing the wider ramifications for police legitimacy and democracy in Britain, arguing that until greater emphasis is placed on ensuring that the police support the equitable principles of democracy, the police in Greenfield and other areas will continue to fail the marginalised people who most need their services.

Acknowledgements

During my research I have accrued debts of gratitude to a number of generous hearted individuals, without whose help this thesis could never have been written. First and foremost I am indebted to my supervisor, Doctor Janet Foster, for her continuing support, guidance and robust good sense and to Professor Paul Rock who provided invaluable advice at key stages in the research. Secondly I am grateful to my employers at the Home Office, Department for Communities and Local Government and Ministry of Justice for funding my PhD and allowing me to work flexibly to complete my research. My boss at the Ministry of Justice, Nick Goodwin, deserves special thanks for his seemingly endless kindness, patience and encouragement during the final stages of the thesis. Thirdly I would like to thank all of the police officers who participated in my research and were so generous in granting me access, sharing their views and giving up their time. Although they cannot be named to preserve their anonymity, I am deeply indebted to them all. Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Mohan and Anil Trikha, for encouraging me to pursue knowledge to the highest levels.

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Acronyms

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
BPA	Black Police Association
CRIMIT	Crime Incident and Intelligence Forms
CSU	Community Safety Unit
EIA	Equality Impact Assessment
FLO	Family Liaison Officer
IAG	Independent Advisory Group
IWA	Indian Workers' Association
LSE	London School of Economics
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
PC	Police Constable
PCC	Police Consultative Committee
PCG	Police Consultative Group
PCLO	Police Community Liaison Officer
POPCRU	Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union
PSNI	Police Service Northern Ireland
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
REC	Race Equality Council
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
TPHQ	Territorial Police Headquarters

Introduction

Race and policing: the ongoing issue

> *'The murder of Stephen Lawrence had had a belated but explosive impact on the workings of the criminal justice system…No other episode…was to have the popular and political force of the death of Stephen Lawrence'* (Rock, 2004: 481-482).

The Macpherson Inquiry (1999) into the police handling of the racist murder of black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, marked a watershed in British policing as it constituted the first high profile, official acknowledgement that racism was endemic in the British police (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rowe, 2004; Rock, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). Since the 1960s, research suggested that overtly racist attitudes were pervasive in policing, leading some academics to conclude that racism was a core element of police occupational culture (Hunte, 1966; Gordon, 1983; Benyon, 1986; Smith and Gray, 1985; Keith, 1993; Holdaway, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Whitfield, 2004). However these issues remained largely unrecognised in official policy reports, which at most conceived of the problem of racism in the police service as being one of a minority of officers, or 'bad apples' (Scarman, 1981).

However the Macpherson Inquiry (1999) and indeed Stephen's death itself, brought an almost unprecedented political and public pressure for change in the policing of minority ethnic communities (Rock, 2004; Foster, 2008). While the Macpherson Inquiry (1999) identified a range of issues

surrounding the police investigation of Stephen's murder (including

inadequacies in murder investigation), as Rowe (2004) noted, the single

most significant, most publicised finding of the Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999)

was that the police service was 'institutionally racist'. In the aftermath of

the Inquiry the police were subject to widespread condemnation, and

intense public scrutiny and pressure for change (Rock, 2004; McLaughlin,

2007; Foster, 2008). As Rock (2004: 413) noted, much of the public

outrage stemmed from the fact that Stephen was: 'An ideal approximation

to the blameless victim'. However it also reflected the fact that the police

are one of the most fundamental institutions of democratic states and the

most visible agents of government authority, therefore they must be seen

to exercise their powers equitably (Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn,

1998; Lum, 2009; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). Consequently, the

presence of 'institutional racism' within the police (Macpherson, 1999)

risked undermining not only legitimacy of the police organisation, whose

mandate is based upon policing by consent, but also potentially the

legitimacy of the British state (Jones *et al*, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Fleming

and McLaughlin, 2010).

Accounts by Deputy Assistant Commissioner Bill Griffiths (2009) serving in

the Metropolitan Police Service at the time and Foster (2008) who

conducted research with murder investigation teams following the Inquiry

(1999), provide an insight into the extreme pressure officers within the

organisation were under to change their approach to policing minority

ethnic communities. The available research evidence indicates that this

intense pressure appeared to result in the eradication of the overt racism,

which as recently as the 1990s remained prevalent in policing (Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012).

Yet despite this major shift, research also suggested that the problem of racism was far from solved, and that while superficially policing might appear to have changed, underlying problematic attitudes towards minority ethnic communities persisted, leading some academics to conclude that racism had merely shifted from overt to more covert forms (Morris, 2004; Foster *et al,* 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012).

The findings of qualitative studies of policing were supported by quantitative data which showed that historic disproportionality in the numbers of minority ethnic people targeted as offenders by the police (either through arrest or stop and search) continued, and even worsened in relation to some ethnic groups (Ministry of Justice, 2011). Furthermore, despite overall improvements in minority ethnic people's confidence in the police (Patterson and Jansson, 2008) there was also evidence that certain sections of minority ethnic communities, most notably young Black and Asian people from deprived communities, continued to have an almost exclusively antagonistic relationship with the police (Wake *et al,* 2007).

Following the terrorist attacks in the US in September 2001, research also highlighted that Muslim communities and in some cases all Asians, were increasingly targeted as suspect populations by CJS agencies, including

the police (Wake *et al*, 2007; Mythen *et al,* 2009; Brittain, 2009; Pantazis and Pemberton, 2009; Murray, 2010; Parmar, 2011).

Aims of the research

Despite the acknowledgement of persisting tensions in race and policing, these complexities are largely unexplored in the policing research. My thesis aimed to address this knowledge gap by using the more nuanced conceptual frameworks from the race and ethnicity literature to explore in greater detail whether, and how, racism continued to shape the policing of minority ethnic communities. Building on the race literature's acknowledgement that racism is not monolithic, I examined whether, and how, plural 'racisms' rather than a single, monolithic 'racism' shaped the policing of minority ethnic communities (Solomos and Back, 1996; Blum, 2002; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Furthermore, developing the race literature's themes that individuals' attitudes to race are rarely consistent but often contradictory, bearing little relation to their personal relationships and interactions with minority ethnic people, I explored how these dynamics played out in policing (Cashmore, 1987; Hall, 2012).

An ethnography of 'Little India'

The research presented in this thesis is based on an ethnography of policing in Greenfield, also known as 'Little India, an ethnically diverse town in Greater London which in many ways encapsulates the challenges involved in policing ethnically diverse communities in Britain. The steadily

increasing diversity of the area's population, which comprised both long-standing Asian communities and newly arrived immigrants from Somalia and Eastern Europe, and its' history, as the site of some of the seminal moments in British policing including the urban riots of 1981 and the death of Blair Peach during the policing of a protest against the Far Right in 1979, made Greenfield a fascinating context in which to study the policing of ethnically diverse communities.

I conducted my research between September 2004 and September 2005 – in many ways a unique moment in the history of policing as the period encompassed both the far-reaching changes introduced by the Macpherson Reforms (1999) and the Islamic terrorist attacks of July 2005, when bombings on London transport resulted in death and injury to a large number of people. To gain as full a picture as possible of policing during this period I spent time with officers of differing ranks, roles, specialisms and backgrounds and also examined how two key strands of the Macpherson Reforms (1999) - the recruitment of minority ethnic officers and community policing - influenced understandings of, and practice in relation to, policing minority ethnic communities.

Contributions to debates on race and policing

Although my research was small-scale and focused on an area that was in many ways unique, it provides an insight into the complex ways race continues to shape policing in contemporary Britain. Perhaps the most significant contribution of this thesis is that it describes a world of policing ethnically diverse communities that is far more complex, variable and

contradictory than has yet been documented in the empirical policing literature. The overall picture it presents of policing encompasses both continuity and significant change; in line with the findings of wider research, I found that the police organisation in Greenfield had been largely successful in eradicating the overt racism historically prevalent in policing (Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). Furthermore, while criminologists have described how disadvantaged, multi-ethnic areas have become increasingly stigmatised as lawless, no-go areas (Wacquant, 2010; Downes and Rock, 2011), the vast majority of officers did not view Greenfield in this way, either regarding it with indifference or saying that they enjoyed working there. Furthermore many officers also recognised that 'Asians', who had constituted the majority of Greenfield's population since the 1960s, were the 'indigenous population' and established communities of the area.

Yet despite these advances there remained underlying tensions, for although the majority of officers were not hostile to Greenfield, they regarded it as a foreign, confusing place. Almost in direct contrast to the studies of Bittner (1967), Muir (1977), Van Maanen (2006) and Loftus (2012), which describe officers having an intricate knowledge of the neighbourhoods they policed, the majority of rank and file officers in Greenfield had great difficulty negotiating its geography. Furthermore despite recognising them as the 'indigenous population' most officers had little if any understandings of the area's different Asian communities, tending to classify them as 'Asians' in a way that obscured rather than illuminated their diversity.

While Asian communities were regarded as established, officers viewed certain groups - most notably Somalis and travellers - as problem populations, who disrupted the order and stability of Greenfield with their disordered, criminal behaviours. In addition, wider political and media discourses on Islamic radicalism appeared to influence officers' perspectives on Muslims, leading them to define Muslim communities primarily in terms of their potential terrorist threat.

However beneath this overarching picture a far more complex, network of perspectives and practice emerged, encompassing both examples of officers who were overtly hostile to Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities, and inspirational individuals who were committed to improving the policing of minority ethnic groups. Three broad categories or Weberian 'ideal types' (Giddens, 1971: 141; Weber, 1964) emerged in relation to officers' perspectives: at one extreme, two officers in my study could be classified as *racist.* At the other end of the spectrum were a larger minority of officers who could be classified as *reformers*, that is to say officers who were committed to policing Greenfield in a way that was sensitive and met the needs of different ethnic communities in the area. However the majority of officers could be described as *passively prejudiced*, that is to say while they did not profess antipathy towards any particular ethnic groups, they unconsciously, almost unquestioningly accepted 'facts' that certain ethnic groups (Somalis, travellers, Muslims), were problematic or criminal.

However as I describe in this thesis, officers did not fit neatly into broad categories of *racist, reformer* or *passively prejudiced*; rather individuals' perspectives were often more complex, shifting and contradictory. Furthermore, officers' perspectives were not stratified by factors such as ethnicity, age, rank or length of service - indeed the racist and reforming groups both included white and Asian officers.

In the chapters that follow I describe the complexities and contradictions that comprised the picture of policing in Greenfield.

In **chapter one** I summarise the main bodies of literature informing my research, charting: the history of minority ethnic communities in Britain; the ways in which racism has shaped their experiences; police responses to Britain's increasing ethnic diversity; and how these have changed over time. I describe how, despite the extensive body of research on race and policing, there remain gaps in the evidence on officers' perspectives on minority ethnic communities, and how I have applied the more nuanced paradigms from the race and ethnicity research to broaden our understanding of the policing of minority ethnic communities.

In **chapter two** I describe my methodology for conducting my research, discussing the extent to which I was able to 'infiltrate the field', the ethical dilemmas I encountered and the inevitable subjectivities shaping my research. While the chapter's primary purpose is to provide a frank appraisal of the strengths and limitations of the research, the sections on my relationships with officers in themselves make for interesting reading,

contributing to the knowledge base on the ways in which ethnicity and gender can influence relationships between researchers and officers.

In **chapter three** I provide contextual information on Greenfield, illustrating why it was such an apposite area in which to study issues of race and policing.

In **chapter four** I outline the main themes in officers' perspectives on Greenfield and its ethnically diverse communities. The picture I describe encompasses both continuity and change, illustrating how while only a minority of officers held overtly hostile, racist views of the area, many found it a foreign, confusing place. Building on this I describe how certain communities (such as Somalis, Muslims, travellers), tended to be classified as what Van Maanen (2006) described as the 'assholes' or suspect populations of Greenfield and how class, gender and age intersected to shape officers' perspectives on local people. The chapter concludes with a description of an incident that indicates how a lack of knowledge, combined with a strong disciplinary line on eradicating racist conduct, resulted in some young, inexperienced officers feeling under-confident in certain situations and policing ineffectively.

In **chapter five** I focus on Asian officers' 'insider perspectives' on policing in Greenfield and the extent to which the increased numbers of Asian officers influenced the organisation's approach to policing minority ethnic communities. I describe how, in line with findings from other research (Foster *et al,* 2005; Loftus, 2012), Asian officers agreed that the

Macpherson Report (1999) had marked a watershed in policing, contrasting their historic experiences of racism with their experiences in contemporary Greenfield. The chapter also provides an insight into the influence of minority ethnic officers in shaping police culture, suggesting that minority ethnic officers' responses to policing ethnic diversity are more complex than has been acknowledged in the policing literature.

In **chapter six** I examine the extent to which one of the key external reforms to British policing - community policing - was implemented in Greenfield, describing the implementation of what was at the time a major new neighbourhood policing initiative - Safer Neighbourhoods. While Ebury, the borough in which Greenfield is located, superficially appeared to embrace community policing, I describe how two very different approaches emerged with varying results on police understandings and practice. I also examine how this was linked to wider issues such as leadership and the relative importance of community policing compared to mainstream crime fighting, illustrating how my research chimed with themes from the wider policing literature.

In **chapter seven,** using domestic violence as a case study, I attempt to illustrate how a lack of sufficient knowledge about Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities prevented officers from policing effectively. I describe three domestic violence calls I attended to illustrate how even competent, conscientious officers were hampered during such incidents by a lack of knowledge.

In **chapter eight** I summarise the key features of policing in Greenfield, including its changes and continuities, and examine why, despite successive waves of reform, underlying tensions remained in the policing of the area's ethnically diverse communities. Building on Phillips' (2011) work in which she draws on Giddens' (1984) concepts, I examine how dynamics at the macro, meso and micro social levels interacted to produce the complex, sometimes contradictory picture of policing in Greenfield and discuss the wider ramifications for police legitimacy and democracy in Britain.

In **chapter nine** I summarise the main findings of my thesis and its contributions to the existing literature on policing ethnically diverse communities and suggest directions for future research.

Chapter One: Policing ethnically diverse communities

Introduction

In this opening chapter I summarise the main strands of literature informing my thesis and the ways in which my research aims to build on the existing literature. I begin by providing an overview of the history of minority ethnic communities in Britain, describing how their experiences have been shaped by racism and the ways in which this has changed and evolved over time. In the second part of the chapter I describe police responses to Britain's increasing ethnic diversity, charting how the policing of minority ethnic communities has changed considerably from the 1960s, when racism appeared to be a defining feature in officers' perspectives on minority ethnic communities to the more mixed, complex picture in evidence today.

Ethnic diversity - a very British history

Britain has long been an ethnically diverse society, with a history of absorbing immigrants from across the world (Holmes, 1988; Visram, 1986; Chandan, 1986; Lahiri, 1999). As Holmes (1988) notes it is difficult to identify an epoch in British history when immigration to Britain did not take place; indeed the so-called indigenous population, the English, are a mix of different 'races' who have settled in these islands (Holmes, 1988; Paxman, 1999). In addition to successive waves of European immigration to the UK, Britain's imperialist history and its colonisation of parts of the

globe such as Africa, Asia and the West Indies brought a range of peoples to Britain, shaping its culture (Holmes, 1988; Bowling 1998; Kushner, 2004; Hall, 2009). Hall (2009) succinctly illustrates how Britain's history and identity is irrevocably intertwined with its former colonies using the simple example of a cup of tea:

> '*People like me who came to Britain in the 1950s have been here for centuries. I am the sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea. I am the sweet tooth that rotted generations of English children's teeth. There are thousands of others beside me that are, you know, the cup of tea itself. Because they don't grow it in Lancashire you know. Not a single tea plantation exists within the United Kingdom. This is the symbolization of English identity – I mean, what does anybody in the world know about an English person except that they can't get through the day without a cup of tea? Where does it come from? Ceylon - Sri Lanka, India. That is the outside history that is inside the history of the English. There is no English history without that other history'.* (Hall, 2009: 202).

Despite the presence of Black and Asian people in Britain since Elizabethan times (Bowling, 1998), the large scale migration of peoples from beyond Europe to the UK began after the second world war when people from Britain's former colonies came to fill labour shortages in industry and public services (Holmes, 1988; Chandan, 1986; Hiro, 1991; James and Harris, 1993; Bowling and Phillips, 2002).

Immigrants arriving in Britain following the Second World War were diverse, varying hugely in terms of their countries of origin, languages, histories and patterns of migration to the UK (Glass, 1960; Banton, 1973; Chandan, 1986; Holmes, 1988; James and Harris, 1993). Even their relationships with Britain and experiences of colonialism differed substantially, reflecting the different approaches the British adopted to ruling different parts of the world (Banton, 1973; Hiro, 1991).

Despite this diversity, post war immigrants from the Indian subcontinent and the West Indies were to a certain extent bound together by their experiences in the UK (Alexander, 1996; Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988). As Bowling and Phillips (2002: 5) noted, though immigrants coming to Britain from the West Indies, Africa and the Indian subcontinent regarded Britain as the, 'Mother country…The inhabitants of the metropolis [London] and its surrounding provinces held quite a different perspective…which is discernable in both political discourse and public opinion surveys'.

The defining role of racism

Given Britain's long-standing links to countries across the globe and its history of absorbing successive waves of immigrants (Holmes, 1988), one might have expected the wave of commonwealth immigrants in Britain to be absorbed relatively easily. Yet historical evidence suggests that these newcomers were regarded with considerable hostility and were perceived to come from alien 'races', threatening to the indigenous culture of Britain (Holmes, 1988; James and Harris, 1993; Alexander, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002).

The idea of race and the notion that non-European 'races' were inferior have their roots in Enlightenment thinking and are inextricably linked to Britain's colonial history, having been used to justify European domination and colonisation of Africa, Asian and the West Indies, (Goldberg, 1990; Hall 1992; Gilroy, 1993; Solomos and Back, 1996; Eze, 1997; Bowling, 1998; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rex, 2009). As Bowling and Phillips

(2002: 3) summarised: 'The supposed superiority of the European justified the acquisition and rule of colonial territories and their inhabitants'.

Although notions of 'race' have no biological basis, and the idea that the European 'race' is superior has been long been discredited, these ideas continue to be the focus of much academic study in the social sciences (Back and Solomos, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Blum, 2002; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Banton, 2004; Rex, 2009). As Banton (2004) notes, this is largely because ideas of 'race' are still used to designate differences between social groups (Solomos and Back, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rex, 2009).

Furthermore racism, that is to say beliefs about the inherent differences between races, continues to reinforce inequalities between different social groups and consequently merits further study (Back and Solomos, 1996; Alexander, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Banton, 2004). As Miles and Torres (1996) aptly summarise, though academics need to reject the concept of race, they need to continue to analyse racism. However racism is not a neatly defined concept for as Blum (2002: 7) notes: '"Racism" and "racist" have definitely broadened their reach beyond doctrines of biologically based hierarchy. At the same time, current use is not sufficiently unified or stable to allow us to point to one definition as the "true meaning" of "racism"'.

However, Blum's (2002: 8) suggested definition perhaps best encapsulates the nature and features of racism. He writes:

*'All forms of racism can be related to one of two general themes or "paradigms":
inferiorization, and antipathy. Inferiorization is linked to historical racist doctrine and
racist social systems. Slavery, segregation, imperialism, apartheid and Nazism all
treated certain groups as inferior to other groups…by reason of their biological nature.
Though race-based antipathy is less related to the original concept of "racism", today
the term unequivocally encompasses racial bigotry, hostility and hatred,' (Blum, 2002:
8)*

As Blum (2002) notes, inferiorizing racism does not necessarily involve
hatred or hostility, as perpetrators can feel paternalistic to the subjects of
their prejudice. Similarly, not every race hater regards the subjects of their
antipathy as inferior – in some cases their hatred stems from notions of
groups having superior intelligence or a stranglehold on resources (for
example Jews or Asians in the US). Linked to racism is the concept of
racialisation, an equally broadly defined, widely used and contested
concept (Murji and Solomos, 2004; Banton, 2004). While some authors
feel that the concept of racialisation is, like racism, ill-defined and over-
used including Banton (1977) who is widely credited with introducing the
term into sociology (Essed and Goldberg, 2002; Murji and Solomos 2004),
at its essence, racialisation can be defined as: 'The process by which
ideas about race are constructed, come to be regarded as meaningful,
and are acted upon', (Murji and Solomos, 2004: 1).

However processes of racialisation are rarely linear and people's
perspectives on race are often a mixture of contradictions, complexities
and inconsistencies (Cashmore, 1987; Blum, 2002; Hall, 2012). For
example, racist individuals can be prejudiced against some minority ethnic
communities and not others (Cashmore, 1987; Blum, 2002) and
furthermore, people's views on race can bear little relation to their
personal relationships and interactions with people from minority ethnic

groups (Hall, 2012). This is perhaps best illustrated by Hall's (2012) recent ethnography of an ethnically diverse area of London, which described how an elderly man named Mike of Southern Italian origin expressed virulently racist views about Black people saying that Britain should, 'Put all the Blacks in a boat out to sea and burn it', despite being close friends a young Black man in his thirties (Hall, 2012: 67). Hall (2012) explained the contradictions between Mike's attitudes and behaviour as being due to the fact that people who have stereotypes about certain ethnic groups do not necessarily reflect upon their views in the light of their day-to-day interactions with people from those communities. Furthermore, as Blum (2002) notes, individuals can act in racist ways without necessarily having racist beliefs or motivations; yet as he argues, irrespective of individual or organisational intentions, racist actions remain racist, inevitably producing the same damaging effects (Blum, 2002: 17).

The social study of racism and its complexities originated in the US during the 1920s and 1930s, influenced by the work of Park, founder of the Chicago School of Sociology which established the key concepts and ideas that have underpinned the ongoing study of race today (Solomos and Back, 1996). As Park (2009: 166) aptly observed when writing in the 1920s, 'One speaks of race relations when there is a race problem'. Using the example of Brazil, Park (2009: 166) describes how, 'There are, to be sure, races in Brazil – there are, for example, Europeans and Africans – but not race relations because there is in that country no race consciousness…there is no race problem in Brazil'. Park's (2009) point is that the study of race, racism and relations between races stems from the

social problems being studied. While in Brazil one never speaks of race relations, as Solomos and Back (1996) note, in Britain since the late 1960s, the study of race and racism has blossomed into an established field of study in a number of social science disciplines.

While ideas about the biological inferiority of certain 'races' have been discredited (Back and Solomos, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Blum, 2002; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Banton, 2004), as Alexander (1996) aptly summarises, a recurrent theme in racist discourses in Britain has been the equation of Black and Asian communities with a culture that is alien and threatening to the British way of life. Alexander (1996) notes this supposed British way of life is imagined, for as Andersen (1983) described in his seminal work, 'Imagined Communities', modern nations and national identities are social constructions based on ideas about aspects of belonging and identity rather than genuine commonalities.

However Black and Asian peoples are not the only groups to have been subject to racism. An emerging body of research has explored how white European immigrants, including peoples as diverse as Slavs, Jews, the Irish and Italians have been constructed as alien races threatening indigenous British culture (Curtis, 1984; Barker, 1984; Panayi, 1991; Solomos, 1993; Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Kushner, 2004; Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Kushner (2004) for example has explored the parallels between the processes of racialisation used to cast European and Black immigrants as alien races, noting that there has always been a tendency in Britain to romanticise previous generations of

'genuine immigrants' who have adopted the habits of British society, unlike contemporary 'alien' immigrants. Focusing on Jews, Kushner (2004: 216) describes how Eastern European Jews arriving in Britain in the nineteenth century were constructed as alien and threatening to British society, due to their religion and supposed 'Oriental' or 'Asiatic' origins. He describes how the supposedly alien nature of Eastern European Jews was unfavourably contrasted with previous generations of Hugenot immigrants who were portrayed as akin to British people due to their common religion and racial heritage (Kushner, 2004: 216).

Yet despite the continuities in racist discourses on Black and Asian communities, as Bloch and Solomos (2010: 3) note: 'The study of ethnic and racial relations has seen many transformations in the period since the 1960s…these changes in research agendas are in many ways not surprising…It is because of the changing geopolitical and social environment'. In the following sections I describe how changes in minority ethnic communities' experiences of racism in Britain have changed since the 1960s and the ways in which this has been reflected in academic research.

The 'Black' experience in Britain

Bloch and Solomos (2010: 3) suggest that research on race and ethnicity, 'Has inevitably been politicised, at least in the sense that it has been heavily influenced by wider political pressures and realities'. Confronted with substantial research evidence on the pervasive hostility to immigrants in Britain, and widespread discrimination suffered by ethnic minorities

(Glass, 1960; Rex and Moore, 1967; Rex and Tomlinson, 1979; James and Harris, 1993; Solomos and Back, 1996) early, seminal studies sought to expose how racism defined and reinforced the subordinate position of all minority ethnic or 'Black' people in British society (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Cashmore, 1987; Solomos, 1988; Solomos, 1993; Solomos and Back, 1996). As Hall (2000: 149) wrote: 'Black is not a question of pigmentation. The Black I am talking about is a historical category, a political category, a cultural category'.

These early studies focussing on the position of 'Black' people illustrated how political and social discourses framed Black communities as a problem or threat in Britain, playing an invaluable role in challenging the dominant notions of the time that British society and its institutions were impartial and unprejudiced (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988). Most notably the studies of Hall *et al* (1978), Gilroy (1987) and Solomos (1988) challenged popular conceptions that the British police were impartial by exposing how racist discourses problematising Black communities as 'lawless' resulted in them being disproportionately targeted by the police. Based upon his analysis of official crime statistics and media reports, Hall *et al* (1978) argued there was a moral panic in the British media about 'muggings' committed by Black people in the 1970s which reflected and reinforced racist discourses that Black people threatened the stability, values and ideology of Britain. Based upon their statistical analysis, Hall *et al* (1978) argued that the moral panic about 'mugging' resulted in rises in the arrest and conviction rates of young Black men for mugging and robbery related offences.

Building on Hall *et al's* (1978) work, Gilroy (1987) in his seminal book, 'There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack', illustrated how debates regarding the policing of minority groups or 'Blacks' reflected and reinforced wider racist discourses on immigration. Gilroy argued that Black people had always been portrayed as threatening British values and institutions but whereas in the 1940s and 1950s the threat was posed by their living conditions and sexual habits, from the 1970s onwards the threat changed to one of criminality. Gilroy (1987) describes how the riots in Brixton, Toxeth and elsewhere in the early 1980s were portrayed as evidence of lawlessness in Black communities and a direct attack by 'Blacks' on the police and, by extension, national stability. Gilroy (1987) argued such discourses surrounding 'lawlessness' were used to reinforce arguments that Black people constituted a problem, the solution to which was the control or curtailment of immigration.

Solomos (1988) in his study, 'Black Youth, Racism and the State', also analysed representations of young Black people in social and political discourses illustrating how from the outset Black and Asian people arriving in post-war Britain were cast as a 'problem' for British society. Solomos (1988) describes how early narratives in the 1960s and 1970s focussing on the problem of how to 'assimilate' new immigrant communities, developed into narratives about the threat of Black lawlessness and concerns that the second generations of these communities, born in Britain, were an 'enemy within'.

Yet as Solomos (1993) argued in his subsequent work, ideologies linking immigrants with crime have a long history in the UK and in some ways Black people were simply the latest ethnic community to be portrayed as threatening British society with their lawless behaviour. In the nineteenth century there were concerns about Irish and Jewish criminality and from the 1970s onwards Black people were increasingly portrayed as criminal, with the issue of 'Black crime' being linked with images of urban unrest and civil disorder (Solomos, 1993).

Beyond the 'Black' experience

Even in the early seminal studies of Black peoples' experiences in Britain it became increasingly apparent that there were critical differences between the ethnically diverse peoples subsumed in the category 'Black'. As Hall (2000: 127) noted: 'A decade ago…African-Caribbeans and Asians were treated by the dominant society as so much alike that they could be subsumed and mobilised under a single category. But today that is no longer the case. Today we have to recognise the complex internal cultural segmentation'.

Indications of divergences in perceptions of ethnic minorities were reflected Cashmore's (1987) study, 'The Logic of Racism', in which he examined attitudes to ethnic minorities in the West Midlands, describing how racist stereotypes associated with Black and Asian communities differed. While West Indian communities were portrayed as disordered, lawless and either unemployed or concentrated in low-level, unskilled work, Asians were regarded as insular, unwilling to integrate into British

culture, and ruthlessly capitalist, acquiring businesses, houses and being primarily in Britain for economic reasons (Cashmore, 1987).

These themes were echoed in Solomos' (1988) study on the narratives surrounding Black youth, which found that although all young Black people were problematised, the stereotypes associated with West Indian and Asian young people differed. For example, Asian children were regarded as problematic because of their inability to speak English, while West Indian children were portrayed as having difficult home backgrounds and aggressive behaviours. Solomos (1988) described how in the 1980s, as riots erupted in Brixton, distinctions began to emerge in discourses between economically successful Asians and lawless, unemployed West Indians. Building on these themes, Benson (1996: 47) aptly suggested these stereotypical differences could be summed up as, 'Asians have culture, West Indians have problems': 'Social anthropological discourses about race, ethnicity and culture in Britain…have served to construct Asian ethnic communities in Britain as proper objects for anthropological study, and Afro-Caribbean ethnic minorities as, by contrast, problematic objects of investigation' (Benson, 1996: 47).

Discourses on Black and Asian communities are not static, but have evolved and changed over time (Solomos and Back, 1996; Alexander, 2002). However as Alexander (2002: 557) writes, while: 'The notion of weak Black [African Caribbean] cultures and pathologized identities continues to underpin popular debates in crime, underachievement and 'nihilism' in Black communities…African-Caribbean cultures have become

the epitome of dangerous and desirable marginality'. To put it more simply, despite continuing to be portrayed as the sources of problems in Black communities, Black identities, music and cultures have become increasingly idealised in popular culture. At the same time Asian identities have become increasingly problematised; somewhat ironically the very qualities for which Asian communities were once praised, most notably strong cultural, familial and religious ties, have become designated as the sources of their problems in popular discourse (Modood, 1992; Gilroy, 1993; Alexander, 2002). This is perhaps best illustrated by the example of Muslim communities, whose adherence to their faith has been problematised in popular discourses linking Islam with terrorism (Webster, 2004; Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Zemini, 2011).

Protests by Muslims against the publication of the anti-Islamic work of fiction, 'The Satanic Verses', by Salman Rushdie in the 1990s, the riots in Asian populated areas in the former mill towns in the North of England, Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in 2001, and more recently the increasing concern with Islamic terrorism and fundamentalism have been framed in media and political discourses as evidence of the alien, problematic nature of Asian communities (Modood, 1992; Gilroy, 1993; Alexander, 2000; Alexander, 2002; Webster, 2004; Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Zemini, 2011). Racist narratives have focussed on the insularity of Asian communities, their segregation from other ethnic groups and their reluctance to 'integrate', (Alexander, 2002). Yet Modood (1992) has argued, there has also been a splintering of the racial stereotypes associated with different Asian communities, with an increased gulf

opening up between deprived Muslim communities and economically successful Indian communities, or as Modood (1992) puts it, between 'Indian achievers' and 'Muslim believers'.

Building upon this, some academics have argued that Muslim communities have been constructed into a 'race' in a way which obscures their considerable diversity and characterises Muslims as deists whose attitudes, culture, and intolerant behaviours, particularly towards women and those of other faiths, are at odds with European enlightenment values of freedom, liberty and equality (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008 Zemni 2011; Schierup, and Alund 2011). Some writers have suggested that Muslim young men in particular have been increasingly cast as the new 'problem' group in British society, and that there has been a 'moral panic' about crime, offending and terrorism amongst Muslim young men (Modood, 1992; Alexander, 2000; Webster, 2004; Parmar, 2011).

To analyse these shifting and diversifying narratives surrounding minority ethnic communities, studies of race and ethnicity have evolved from analysing the monolithic racism shaping the experiences of all 'Black' peoples in British society to analysis of plural racisms shaping the positioning of different minority ethnic groups (Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Despite the wide acknowledgement in the literature that new plural forms of racism have emerged, in many ways these continue to reflect elements of previous narratives. As Solomos and Back (1996: 213) aptly summarise:

> *'New racism is not a uniform entity as such. There is strong evidence that racial discourses are increasingly using a new cultural and social language to justify their arguments…A key problem is that in a very real sense what some writers today call 'new racism' has in some sense always been with us'* (Solomos and Back,1996: 213).

The recognition of the plural forms of racism has been accompanied by an increasing recognition that race is not the singular defining feature of minority ethnic peoples' experiences in Britain and that class and gender play critical roles in shaping peoples experiences (Mama, 1989; Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004). As Park (2009: 172) foretold:

> *'The forces which brought about the diversity of races will inevitably bring about, in the long run, a diversity of peoples in the modern world…It is likely, however, that these diversities will be based in the future less on inheritance and race and rather more on culture and occupation. That means that race conflicts in the modern world…will be more and more confused with, and eventually superseded by, the conflicts of classes'* (Park, 2009: 172).

Decades later Sivanandan (2001: 1) reinforced these themes, arguing that 'Poverty is the new Black'. Sivanandan (2001) argued that in the contemporary globalised world a new form of xenophobia and racism has emerged, demonising the international poor. Sivanandan (2001: 2) describes it as:

> '*A xeno-phobia that bears all the marks of the old racism, except that it is not colour-coded. It is a racism that is not just directed at those with darker skins, from the former colonial countries, but at the newer categories of the displaced and dispossessed whites, who are beating at Western Europe's doors…a racism that is meted out to impoverished strangers even if they are white, '* (Sivanandan, 2001: 2).

The growing analysis of new plural forms of racism has also been mirrored by an accompanying recognition of the diversity of Black and Asian peoples' identities and experiences (Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004). Indeed Modood (1992) argued that previous attempts to politically represent Black and Asian people's positions, needs and experiences under a singular 'Black' identity obscured social, cultural and

economic differences between different peoples and ignored emergent forms of 'cultural racism' such as Islamaphobia.

Modood *et al's* (1994) study of ethnic identities in modern Britain provided some empirical evidence for his assertions of the differences in the experiences, perspectives and identities of Black and Asian people. Most strikingly, Modood *et al* (1994) found that Caribbean communities, despite being as diverse as British Asian communities, were more likely than Asian people to define themselves in terms of a pan-Caribbean or 'Black' identity that encompassed all minority ethnic groups. Modood *et al* (1994) attributed this tendency amongst Caribbean people to identify with other minorities in part to the history of the West Indies and the levels of diversity and cultural mixing in its islands.

By contrast, while Modood *et al* (1994) found some evidence of a pan-Asian identity, it was much less established and the majority of 'Asian' people did not actually define themselves as Asian. Instead wider factors such as country of origin (Indian, Pakistani), region (Punjabi, Gujerati), religion (Sikh, Hindu, Muslim) or caste shaped peoples' identities. Furthermore, many 'Asian' people perceived themselves to be distinct both from Caribbean people and other communities within the overarching 'Asian' group. Modood and Ahmad's (2007) more recent research on British Muslim identities reinforced these themes, describing how some Muslims overtly rejected the label 'Asian' dismissing it as having little currency and being used by some high profile 'Indians' to increase their media profile.

Yet as Gilroy (1997) and Hall (1990) note, identities are social, not natural phenomena, produced through complex social interactions and processes. In an increasingly globalised world, with the dispersal of peoples across countries, academics have argued that what were once seen as fixed identities have been replaced by more fluid, contested forms of identity (Hall, 1992; Woodward, 1997; Gilroy, 1997; Hall, 2009). While Hall (1990: 222) has observed that: 'Our cultural identities reflect the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes, which provide us, as 'one people', with stable, unchanging and continuous frames of reference and meaning', individuals often have multiple, shifting identities, defining themselves differently according to the situations and social contexts in which they find themselves (Baumann, 1996; Gilroy, 1997; Hall, 2009).

While the increasing recognition of the plurality of identities, and by extension experiences and perspectives, among minority ethnic peoples in Britain is in many ways positive, power relations remain implicit in what is widely termed 'identity politics' and there remains a hegemony in identities with 'Whiteness' continuing to be presented as the norm (Murji and Solomos, 2004; Hall, 2009). Building upon this Alexander (2002: 568) argues that, 'We need to take difference seriously', but that we also need: 'to refuse to accept either the naturalization of cultural identity or the celebratory marginality of the 'politics of difference', which…serve equally to obscure the complex relations of power that construct difference and keep Britain's Black communities trapped within it'.

Policing Britain's ethnic minorities: a sorry history

The available research evidence suggests that the police have not responded effectively to the increasing ethnic diversity of the British population. As I mentioned earlier, crime and policing were central themes in early racist narratives problematising ethnic minorities in Britain (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988). The available empirical evidence suggests that these discourses were reflected, and even magnified, in policing which historically, has at best failed to meet the needs of minority ethnic communities, and at worst discriminated against Black and Asian people, reinforcing their disadvantaged, marginalised status (Hunte, 1966; Gordon, 1983; Benyon, 1986; Smith and Gray, 1985; Keith, 1993; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Whitfield, 2004).

While the police are not the only organisation to have failed to respond effectively to Britain's increasing ethnic diversity, their failures have perhaps attracted more political and public attention than many other organisations (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rowe, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007). This partly reflects the fact that, as I argue in chapter eight, the police are one of the most fundamental institutions of democratic states and the most visible agents of government authority and therefore need to be seen to exercise their powers equitably (Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Lum, 2009; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). Consequently where there have been failures or evidence of discrimination this has not only undermined the legitimacy of the police organisation, whose mandate is based upon policing by consent, but also

potentially the legitimacy of the British state (Jones *et al*, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010).

The intense academic scrutiny of the policing of minority ethnic communities is also perhaps reflective of the fact that historically racism has been a pervasive problem in the police service. Indeed the evidence documenting racist attitudes and behaviour among officers was so extensive that policing academics concluded that racism was a core, seemingly intransient component of police organisational culture (Gordon, 1983; Smith and Gray, 1985; Benyon, 1986; Graef, 1989; Keith, 1993; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Loader and Mulcahy, 2003; Whitfield, 2004). Reviewing the available evidence Reiner (2000a) concluded that minority ethnic people were more likely to be classified as 'police property', that is to say low status, powerless groups perceived to be problematic or deviant to be dealt with as the police saw fit.

Research describing racist attitudes within the British police dates back to the 1960s and 1970s, when studies by Hunte (1966) and Cain (1973) challenged widespread perceptions of the British police as impartial (Home Office, 1973). Hunte (1966) documented instances of racist language and the disproportionate use of violence against Black people (including the use of dogs), arguing that there was evidence of sergeants and PCs patrolling with the express purpose of 'nigger hunting'. Similarly Cain's (1973) early observational research uncovered racist language and attitudes amongst officers, documenting how minority ethnic people were

disproportionately likely to be subject to police violence. Cain (1973: 119)

quoted an officer in her study who described how:

> '*There was this enormous negro and we kept batting him over the head with our sticks and he didn't even seem to feel it…I hit him hard where it hurts most and in the stomach and as I went past – just happened to knock him with my foot, and he went down like a light…We had to take him [to court] for assault on police or we could never have accounted for all those knocks*' (Cain, 1973: 119).

Holdaway's (1983) undercover study of policing, undertaken while he was

a serving police sergeant, also described how racist language and

attitudes were pervasive amongst rank and file officers. Smith and Gray's

(1985) extensive observational research with the Metropolitan Police

suggested that the evidence from these smaller scale studies reflected a

more extensive problem of racism within the police service, describing how

racist language (including terms such as 'Paki' and 'Nigger') and racist

attitudes were pervasive among officers. In his review of the available

evidence on policing ethnic minorities, Holdaway (1996) concluded that

race was a key determinant of the way police officers viewed and treated

members of the public, and that people from minority ethnic groups were

treated discriminatingly, as both as victims and offenders.

Yet despite the extensive, somewhat condemnatory evidence on racism

within the police service, the link between officers' attitudes and behaviour

was not necessarily linear. For example Waddington (1999a) argued that

while there was compelling evidence that the police, particularly the lower

ranks, had hostile attitudes towards minority ethnic communities, there

was a disjuncture between officers' attitudes and behaviour, and that

despite holding racist views officers did not necessarily behave

discriminatingly towards ethnic minorities. Smith and Gray's (1985) study

provided some evidence to support this, as they found that whilst racist talk and attitudes were pervasive, police officers were rarely overtly hostile towards minority ethnic groups during face-to-face interactions.

Similarly, some policing theorists contended that police attitudes were not simply the product of racist discourses or personal prejudices, but shaped by their day-to-day experiences of policing minority ethnic communities. For example, Lea and Young (1982) argued that while racism undoubtedly shaped police interactions with Black people in the 1970s and early 1980s, high levels of socio-economic deprivation within British Black communities had actually resulted in disproportionate levels of crime within these communities, consequently fuelling police perceptions that Black people were disproportionately criminal. Building on this, Waddington (1999b) argued that both young Black people and police officers engaged in processes of mutually hostile stereotyping during their interactions, reinforcing each other's existing prejudices.

Over policing and under protection

Irrespective of the complexities and ambiguities surrounding police attitudes towards ethnic minorities, there is substantial evidence that policing has historically failed to address the needs of minority ethnic people in Britain (Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002). These failures have broadly centred on two core issues: a failure to adequately protect minority ethnic communities, most notably from racist victimisation; and repressive, 'over-policing' of crime and criminal behaviour people from

minority ethnic communities (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Webster, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007).

In his seminal study of the policing of racist victimisation Bowling (1998), documented how throughout British history there have been incidents of violent, racist victimisation of minority ethnic people in Britain. Studies such as Pearson's (1976) research into 'Paki-bashing' in a Lancashire Cotton town, Foster's (1999) study of victimisation of Bengali families in London's Docklands, and Webster's (1995; 2004) research on racist victimisation in Keighley, West Yorkshire, all describe racist violence against minority ethnic communities, over issues such as competition for jobs, housing and perceived incursions into 'white owned' areas.

More recently, there is an emerging body of evidence suggesting that following the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the US and July 2005 terrorist attacks in London racist attacks on Muslim communities have increased substantially, (Allen and Nielsen, 2002; Mythen *et al*, 2009). Mythen *et al's* (2009) qualitative study of young Muslims in the UK found many had been subject to racist victimisation including physical attack, being spat on, verbal abuse, damage to property and having clothing forcibly torn or removed (Mythen *et al*, 2009). Evidence from larger scale studies (Allen and Nielsen, 2002; Hopkins, 2007; Richardson, 2004), suggests that these findings were by no means unique and reflected wider increases in racist victimisation directed at Muslims post September 2001.

Against this picture of often distressing violence the police response has historically been poor, with officers dismissing racist crimes as minor, unimportant incidents and failing to offer adequate protection to minority communities (Graef, 1989; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling, 1998; Bowling, Parmar and Phillips, 2008). In his study of the policing of racist violence in East London, Bowling (1998) described how a combination of racist attitudes on the part of police officers (including a tendency to assume minority ethnic victims were exaggerating complaints or lying), a tendency amongst officers to dismiss the racist motivations implicit in most racist crimes, and also the low-level, cumulative nature of racist victimisation resulted in officers often failing to provide appropriate action and support for victims of racist victimisation. Bowling (1998) argued that to overcome these issues, all racist incidents, needed to be regarded as part of a continuum of wider behaviour marginalizing minority ethnic people and policed accordingly.

There is some evidence that in the absence of sufficient police protection, minority ethnic, specifically Asian, communities have organised to defend themselves against racial attack. For example, in her study in the Docklands Foster (1999) described how Bengali families re-housed in the area quickly became the scapegoats for the frustrations of the white resident population and began organising to defend themselves in response. Local council policies created considerable competition and demand for public housing in the area and a council decision to house Bengali families in Docklands resulted in them being mistakenly blamed for housing shortages in the local area by white communities who subjected them to racist attacks. In response Bengali youths began to form gangs on an ad hoc basis to defend

themselves. Similarly in his study of racist victimisation in Keighley Webster (1995) found instances of Asian young men attacking white people in predominantly Asian neighbourhoods, which perpetrators explained or justified as an attempt to prevent incursions and attacks in their areas by white racists.

Some of these attempts at self-defence have resulted in confrontations between the police and Asian communities. As I outline in chapter three, in Greenfield, street violence erupted in 1979 and 1981 when local Asian residents mobilised to protest against Far Right harassment and activities in the town. In 1979 there were clashes between police and Asians following police attempts to disperse a peaceful protest against a National Front rally in the town hall. During the ensuing violence Blair Peach, a young teacher from New Zealand was killed. In 1981 large-scale disorder again flared when National Front supporters, arriving in Greenfield for a rally at a National Front pub on the outskirts of the town, began harassing Asian residents and shopkeepers. When the police attempted to intervene in the ensuing fighting between local people and National Front supporters, officers too came under attack.

While in both instances the primary instigators of these tensions were Far Right groups, police interventions in these incidents inevitably created tensions between the police and 'Asian' communities. As Waddington and Leopold (1985) noted, unlike other forms of disorder or violence (such as football hooliganism), protests such as those in Greenfield are motivated by a sense of injustice and are often referred to as 'the politics of the street', that is

to say a means for relatively powerless groups of people to force issues into the public domain. As those responsible for managing protests, the police can be seen as 'defenders of the indefensible' that is to say the defenders of the injustice that is the subject of protests (in the case of Greenfield Far Right activists). Waddington and Leopold (1985) argued that consequently, public protests are problematic for the police not in terms of violence they involve, but because of the sense of injustice that motivates protestors and the fact that the police can be perceived to be on the wrong side.

In addition to failing to sufficiently protect minority ethnic people, tensions have also arisen as a result of over-policing of these communities, with tensions centring on the disproportionate use of stop and search; excessive police force; and deaths in custody (Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; McLaughlin, 2007; Bowling, Parmar and Phillips, 2008). The reasons for disproportionality, particularly in relation to the use of stop and search powers, have been extensively debated, with a range of explanations beyond racism being suggested to explain variation, including differences in the available street population in areas where searches are conducted (Fitzgerald and Sibbit, 1997; Miller, 2000; Waddington *et al*, 2002). Irrespective of whether over policing has been racist in motivation, it has caused tensions between minority ethnic communities and the police (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Bowling, Parmar and Phillips, 2008). Most notably in 1981 riots erupted in areas with large minority ethnic populations, with some of the most prolonged and worst rioting in Brixton, an area with a majority West Indian population. The official inquiry into the causes of the riots (Scarman, 1981) identified

repressive policing - specifically Operation Swamp, which involved the extensive use of stop and search in the area and the arrest of people for not only criminal but 'suspicious' behaviour - as one of the main causes of the riots (Scarman, 1981).

Explanations and attempts at reform

Since the 1970s the issue of policing minority ethnic communities has attracted attention from policymakers and academics, seeking to explain and address problems. While the recommendations in the three main policy reports on the policing of ethnic minorities that emerged during this period were broadly similar, centring on increasing police understandings of minority ethnic communities, the use of community consultation approaches, and the recruitment of minority ethnic officers, their conceptualisations of the problem underpinning the policing of ethnic minorities differed greatly. While the earliest report from the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (Home Office, 1973) did not acknowledge the presence of racism within the police service, the most recent report of an independent inquiry into the police handling of the racist murder of the Black teenager Stephen Lawrence (Macpherson, 1999) concluded that the Metropolitan Police Service was 'institutionally racist', and structured in such a way that it could not meet the needs of ethnic minorities, irrespective of the attitudes of individual officers.

The first major policy report on the policing of minority ethnic groups, the report of the Select Committee on Race Relations and Immigration (Home

Office, 1973: 3), *Police/Immigrant Relations in England and Wales,*
opened by stating:

> *'The arrival over the last couple of decades of significant numbers of immigrants settling in this country has confronted the police, as it has other bodies with a novel situation. The police are the first to admit that difficulties have arisen and that areas of tension continue to exist…however, in many respects the challenge is being successfully met,* (Home Office, 1973: 3).

The Select Committee described the challenges in the policing of minority ethnic communities as centring on: 'The unfamiliarity to newcomers of the ways of this country and its institutions. Misunderstandings arise through misconceptions about the position of the police here…and equally on the police side, misunderstandings arise through difficulties of communication with new immigrants' (Home Office, 1973: 3).

The Select Committee (Home Office, 1973: 3) also emphasised that, 'Immigrants in themselves are not a problem to the police. There is absolutely no evidence to support suggestions that the great majority of immigrants are anything other than hard-working, law-abiding citizens'. While the Committee (1973) acknowledged that tensions had arisen between the police and ethnic minorities, most notably second-generation people, it failed to recognise the presence of racism within the police service, despite the evidence available at the time documenting racist attitudes and behaviour among officers (Hunte, 1966; Cain, 1973). However the Select Committee (Home Office, 1973: 3-4) recognised the critical importance of the police developing understandings of the needs of minority ethnic communities, stating the police could not:

> *'afford to ignore the special circumstances of different groups…they need an adequate understanding of the aspirations and frustrations of the different sections of the community in which they move if they are to establish mutual trust on which successful policing depends'* (Home Office, 1973: 3-4).

To achieve this, the report included a range of recommendations to: increase police understandings of minority ethnic communities; address deprivation within these communities; and build relations of trust between ethnic minorities and the police. Given that the Select Committee (Home Office, 1973) largely attributed any tensions or challenges in the policing of minority ethnic communities as being primarily due to the arrival of large numbers of immigrants to Britain within a short space of time, it also included recommendations regarding the extension of immigration controls. Yet the Select Committee (Home Office, 1973) placed equal emphasis on educating police officers about the diverse cultures of immigrants, providing officers race relations training, establishing effective police-community liaison and recruiting more minority ethnic officers.

Despite the Select Committee's (Home Office, 1973) recommendations for reform, tensions erupted between the police and minority ethnic communities, with riots occurring in areas with large minority ethnic populations (Brixton, Toxeth and Greenfield), in the summer of 1981. Whereas the 1973 Select Committee failed to acknowledge any wrongdoing or malpractice on the part of the police, the Scarman Report, (1981), written following the riots identified insensitive policing as a major contributory factor to the disturbances particularly those in Brixton. Scarman (1981) argued that over-policing, as described above, combined with high levels of socio-economic deprivation in Brixton had created tensions between the police and Black communities. However while Scarman (1981) acknowledged the existence of racism within the police service, he conceptualised the problem as being one of a minority of

officers, or 'bad apples', who needed to be identified and removed from the organisation. Whereas the Select Committee's Report (Home Office, 1973) proposed community consultation as one of a series of measures, Scarman (1981) emphasised that it had a central role in policing, recommending the establishment of police-community liaison groups (Police Consultative Committees) in each borough of London (see chapter six). The Scarman Report (1981) also included a range of recommendations on providing race relations training to officers, identifying racial prejudice amongst police recruits, making racially prejudiced behaviour a dismissal offence and recruiting increased numbers of minority ethnic police officers.

As I argue in chapter eight, the Scarman (1981) recommendations laid the foundations for contemporary changes in policing. However, as was apparent from research evidence at the time, the Scarman (1981) reforms appeared to have a limited influence on racism within the police service, which appeared to be pervasive and intransient (Smith and Gray, 1985; Benyon, 1986; Graef, 1989; Holdaway, 1996; Reiner, 2000a).

Three broad theoretical explanations emerged seeking to explain the persistence of racism in policing, focussing on individual, cultural and structural perspectives (Bowling and Phillips, 2002). *Individual perspectives* such as Scarman's (1981) 'bad apple thesis', explained the ongoing presence of racism as being caused by a minority of racist police officers. This standpoint argued that, as officers are drawn from a cross-section of the public, it is inevitable that some recruits will have racist

attitudes, for such prejudices are present in the wider society from which officers are drawn. To address racism within policing, individual perspectives recommended identifying and removing 'bad apples' in recruitment and disciplinary procedures (Bowling and Phillips, 2002). However individual approaches failed to explain why racist attitudes and language were so pervasive among officers (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002).

Cultural perspectives attempted to explain the prevalence of racist attitudes amongst officers by examining the role of police organisational culture in shaping officers' perspectives and behaviours. Like all organisations the police service has distinctive internal cultures, with specific languages, rituals, values, norms and perspectives on the social world (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster, 2003). Police occupational cultures play a critical role in helping officers make sense of their role and the often confusing, conflicting, difficult world they are policing (Waddington, 1999a; Foster, 2003). Despite the variations and diversity of police cultures, researchers have identified common characteristics threading through police cultures, including racism, machismo, conservatism and a focus on crime-fighting (Fielding, 1994; Waddington, 1999a; Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Foster 2003).

Bowling and Phillips (2002) argued that while cultural perspectives are valuable in explaining police racism, examinations of police culture need to form part of *structural accounts* analysing the wider social structures and contexts of policing. Structural perspectives argue that the policing

mandate is shaped by the society it serves and the structural context within which the police operate (Manning, 2010); consequently in a world where minority ethnic communities are subject to discrimination and disadvantage, policing of these communities reflects and reinforces their subordinate position (Bowling and Phillips, 2002).

Macpherson: a watershed in policing

Despite the persistence, and seeming intransience of racism in the police throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the publication of the third major report on the policing of minority ethnic communities, (Macpherson 1999), marked a watershed in British policing (Rowe, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). The Macpherson Report (1999) focussed on the police mishandling of the investigation into the racist murder of Black teenager Stephen Lawrence, making a number of recommendations to improve murder investigation, police handling of hate crimes and links between the police and minority ethnic communities. However as Rowe (2004) noted, the single most significant, most publicised finding of the report was that the Metropolitan Police Service was 'institutionally racist'. While Scarman (1981) conceived of the problem of racism within the police service as being confined to a minority of officers bringing the service into disrepute, Macpherson (1999) stated that the whole organisation was structured in such a way that it could not meet the needs of minority ethnic communities regardless of the attitudes of individual officers. Describing institutional racism within the force, Macpherson (1999: paragraph 6.4) defined it as:

'*The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to all people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can been seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people',* (Macpherson, 1999: paragraph 6.4)*.*

While Macpherson's (1999) emphasis on institutional racism aimed to draw attention to organisational practices and policies resulting in a failure to provide an appropriate service to minority ethnic communities, the ambiguities in the report's definition of institutional racism resulted in it being widely misinterpreted as referring to a pervasive problem of individual racism amongst officers (Foster *et al*, 2005; Reiner, 2010). The Report's conflation of organizational and individual racism, (through references to 'racist stereotyping' and 'unwitting prejudice', which are often more associated with individual behaviours), was criticized even by those sympathetic to its conclusions (Foster *et al,* 2005; Reiner, 2010). Given the ambiguities in Macpherson's (1999) definition, when analyzing institutional racism I will adopt Reiner's (2010: 162) narrower definition of 'institutionalized discrimination' which he defines as occurring: 'When the consequences of universalistically framed organizational policies or procedures work out in practice as discriminatory, because of the structural bias of an unequal society, or because of inherent but irrelevant differences between different groups' (Reiner, 2010: 162).

However, despite the ambiguities in Macpherson's (1999) definition of institutional racism (Foster *et al,* 2005; Reiner, 2010) the report marked a seminal moment in the policing of minority ethnic communities (Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007; Foster, 2008; Loftus, 2012). Following the Macpherson reforms (1999), research documented that in stark contrast to

the overt racism documented in early studies, racist language had largely been excised from the service (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). This was due both to changes within the organisation brought about by the reforms but also wider social and political dynamics that enabled the Macpherson Report (1999) to create changes in policing where previous reforms had failed (see chapter eight).

Foster *et al's* (2005) study of the impact of the Macpherson Inquiry (1999) conducted between 2002 and 2004 found that the Inquiry had given officers a heightened awareness, indeed anxiety, about their conduct when dealing with minority ethnic people as they felt under greater, more intense scrutiny. Foster *et al* (2005) also noted that there had been considerable improvements in the recording of hate crime, in contrast to earlier studies documenting poor police responses (Bowling, 1998). These findings were echoed in other research such as Holdaway and O'Neill's (2007) study of Black Police Associations. In their aptly titled article, 'Where has all the racism gone?' they described how there was consensus amongst officers working in Black Police Associations that overtly racist language had been largely eradicated (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007). Similarly Loftus' (2012) study of two English police forces also drew attention to the absence of overtly racist language and attitudes from the two areas she observed.

Persisting tensions

Despite the picture of progress suggested by research undertaken in the post Macpherson era, contemporary evidence suggests that there remain underlying problems in the policing of ethnic minorities and that the superficial eradication of racist language from policing has not been accompanied by changes in officers' underlying attitudes towards ethnic minorities (Morris, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). For example Foster *et al* (2005) described how despite the excision of racist language, there were indications that prejudicial attitudes towards minorities persisted among officers, and that racism had merely shifted from overt to more covert forms. These themes were echoed in Holdaway and O'Neill's (2007) research, which found that many officers from Black Police Associations felt that despite the excision of overtly racist language, racism had not been removed, it had simply become more hidden, insidious and thereby more difficult to address. Loftus' (2012) research provided further evidence to support these views, demonstrating that while officers might not use overtly racist language, many white officers continued to have hostile, prejudicial views of minority ethnic communities.

Perhaps more worryingly, there were indications in Loftus' (2008) research that there was resistance and considerable resentment among white officers towards the police organisation's drive to improve race equality. Foster (2008) found that there was a widespread misunderstanding of and consequently resentment towards the findings of the Macpherson Report (1999) that the Metropolitan Police were institutionally racist. This

resentment stemmed largely from officers' mistakenly assuming that the Macpherson Report (1999) had labelled all police officers personally racist, when in fact the report had emphasised that it was the police service as an organisation that was not able to meet the needs of minority ethnic people, irrespective of the attitudes of individual staff. The findings of these studies confirmed the warnings of the Morris Inquiry (2004) into professional standards within the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) which, while commending the efforts of the MPS to improve and embed practice on diversity, argued that there was little understanding of diversity within the organisation. Furthermore Morris (2004: 13) warned that:

> *'We fear that some of the efforts of the MPS has made to promote the message of diversity across the organisation have been counter-productive and that the organisation may now be seeing the beginnings of a backlash. This would be catastrophic. The policy is right; it is the approach and application which we believe needs to be reviewed'* (Morris, 2004: 13-14)

This qualitative evidence on persisting tensions in the policing of ethnic minorities is supported by the latest available quantitative data, which indicate that minority ethnic communities continue to be targeted disproportionately by the police as suspects (Ministry of Justice, 2011). The two main sets of data that provide an indication of who the police target as suspects– data on stop and search and arrests – both suggest that minority ethnic people are more likely to be targeted by the police than white people.

In terms of arrests, there were more arrests per 1,000 population of each minority ethnic group (except for Chinese or Other) than for people from the white ethnic group in 2009/10 in England and Wales as illustrated by table 1.1 below (Ministry of Justice, 2011). Per 1,000 population, Black

people were 3.3 times more likely to be arrested than white people and people from the Mixed ethnic group 2.3 times more likely. Furthermore, while there was an overall 3% decrease in the number of arrests between 2005/06 and 2009/10 from 1,429,785 to 1,386,030, in 2009/10, the number of arrests of Black persons was 5% higher than in 2005/06 and arrests of Asian persons 13% higher, suggesting that disproportionality may be increasing (Ministry of Justice, 2011).

Table 1.1: Arrests per 1,000 Population by self-identified ethnicity, England and Wales, 2009/10

Ethnic Group	Arrests per 1,000 population
White	26
Black	84
Mixed	59
Asian	29
Chinese or Other	25

Source: Ministry of Justice (2011), 'Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2010', London: Ministry of Justice.

Similarly, in terms of stops and searches in 2009/10 in England and Wales per 1,000 of the population, Black people were stopped and searched seven times more than white people, Asian people were stopped and searched 2.2 times more, and Mixed race people were stopped and searched 2.8 times more (Ministry of Justice, 2011). As illustrated by table 1.2 below, disproportionality in stop and search rates of Black, Asian and Mixed people have persisted and indeed significantly increased since 2006/07.

Table 1.2: Stop and search section 1 PACE and other legislation per 1,000 population by self-defined ethnicity, England and Wales, 2006/07 to 2009/10

Year	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Chinese or Other
2006/07	15.2	91.6	28.3	37.4	13.5
2007/08	16.5	108.4	33.1	42.5	18.0
2008/09	17.9	131.0	38.1	49.3	19.3
2009/10	17.9	125.7	40.2	50.3	17.5

Source: Ministry of Justice (2011), 'Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System 2010', London: Ministry of Justice.

Following on from this, emerging research suggests that these discourses problematising Muslim communities have resulted in Muslims, and in some cases all Asians, being increasingly targeted as suspect populations by CJS agencies (Mythen *et al*, 2009; Brittain, 2009; Murray, 2010; Parmar, 2011). Based on their analysis of counter-terrorist legislation and political discourses, Pantazis and Pemberton (2009) argued that Muslims have replaced the Irish as the main focus of the British government's security agenda. Although Waddington (2006) has questioned the extent to which terrorist legislation and CJS practice actually constitutes a long-term erosion of civil liberties, there is evidence that there have been increases in police targeting of Asian communities (Wake *et al*, 2007; Parmar, 2011).

Parmar (2011), in her analysis of the use of stop and search powers under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000, examined the stop and search rate for different ethnic groups across London between January 2008 and July 2010. During this period the stop and search rate for Asian people was consistently around 1.5 times above what would be expected for their numbers in the population, while the rate of disproportionality for Black people ranged from 0.9 and 1.4. These increased stops of Asian people

yielded almost no results (beyond one arrest for terrorist offences) and

created a perception amongst young Asians that they were being unfairly

targeted (Parmar, 2011).

As Bowling, Parmar and Phillips (2008) note, further indications of

potential disparities in policing are provided by survey data on minority

ethnic people's views of the police. In their review of the survey data

Bowling, Parmar and Phillips (2008: 622) summarised that:

> *'The overall picture shows that black respondents are somewhat less satisfied with police action and they perceive the police to be unfair to certain groups and, therefore, not surprisingly, are less willing to co-operate with the police than white respondents… The findings with respect to Asians are more mixed, with less disapproval of the police than black and white respondents reported in some studies, whereas in others Asians tend to hold views that put them between black and white respondents'* (Bowling, Parmar and Phillips, 2008: 622).

These patterns continued prior to the Macpherson Reforms (1999); for

example the 2000 British Crime Survey in England and Wales confirmed

these trends, finding that 54% of white respondents saw the police as

doing a good or excellent job, compared with 40% of black respondents

and 42% of Asian respondents (Mirrlees-Black 2001; Bowling, Parmar and

Phillips, 2008). Similarly successive sweeps of the Citizenship Survey in

2001, 2003 and 2005 measured the extent to which different ethnic

communities believed they would be treated worse by the police (Attwood

et al, 2003; Green *et al,* 2004; Murphy *et al* 2005). As with previous

surveys it found that Asian people's perceptions of police discrimination

placed them between white and Black people, a pattern that has persisted

over time (see table 1.3).

Table 1.3: Percentage of people who believe they would be treated worse by the police than other races, Citizenship Survey, 2001-2005

	White	Asian	Black	Mixed Race
2001	6%	23%	39%	28%
2003	5%	21%	35%	25%
2005	5%	21%	33%	29%

Sources: Attwood, C *et al* (2003), '2001 Citizenship Survey: people, families and communities', London: Home Office.
Green *et al,* (2004), '2003 Home Office Citizenship Survey: People, Families and Communities', London: Home Office.
Murphy, R *et al* (2005), 'Early findings from the 2005 Home Office Citizenship Survey', London: Home Office.

Yet these more recent data from the Citizenship Survey also suggest that Black and Asian people's confidence may have begun to improve following the Macpherson Reforms, with the proportion of Black and Asian people believing that they would be treated worse by the police than other races reducing slightly (Macpherson, 1999; Attwood *et al*, 2003; Green *et al* 2004; Murphy *et al,* 2005). Similarly data from more recent sweeps of the British Crime Survey indicate that minority ethnic people's confidence in the police has improved post Macpherson (Macpherson, 1999; Patterson and Jansson, 2008). The 2006/07 British Crime Survey found that non-white people had higher levels of confidence in the police than white people – 58% of non-white people said that their local police did a good or excellent job compared with 50% of white people and 56% of non-white people felt the police in general did a good or excellent job compared with 51% of white people (Patterson and Jansson, 2008).

However these data suggesting possible improvements in minority ethnic people's confidence in the police should be treated with caution, as the

British Crime Survey data in particular subsumes a range of diverse peoples within the 'non-white' category, and there may been significant variation in perceptions of the police within this group.

Indeed Wake *et al's* (2007) qualitative research on public perceptions of the police suggests there are variations in minority ethnic people's perceptions of the police. The researchers identified three distinct groups: those who were 'pro-police', viewing the police as a positive force in society; those who were 'passive sceptics' who were broadly in favour of the police as a force for stability; and those who were 'highly disengaged' and had an almost exclusively anatagonistic relationship with the police (Wake *et al,* 2007). People who were older, white and middle class or new immigrants tended to be pro-police, while young minority ethnic people living in inner cities were, by contrast, highly disengaged. In fact far from having confidence in the police, there was a widespread perception among these minority ethnic young people that the police were racist and targeted them unfairly (Wake *et al*, 2007).   Most notably the research found that young Asian and Muslim males felt that they were more heavily targeted by the police (including through stop and search) since the terrorist attacks in the USA in September 2001 and London in July 2005 (Wake *et al*, 2007).

Conclusion

As I have summarised in this chapter, research evidence suggests that the Macpherson Reforms (1999) created a major shift in British policing, eradicating the overt racism that was pervasive in the police until the

1990s (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). However despite this progress there is evidence that there remain persisting tensions and issues in the policing of minority ethnic communities (Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). For example, quantitative data on arrest and stop and search, rates indicate that Black and Asian communities continue to be disproportionately targeted by the police (Ministry of Justice, 2011). Furthermore, while Citizenship Survey and British Crime Survey data indicate that levels of confidence in the police may be improving among minority ethnic communities (Patterson and Jansson, 2008), qualitative data suggest that certain sections of these communities, most notably young men from deprived backgrounds, still have antagonistic relationships with the police. Yet to date these potential complexities and variations have been largely unexplored in the research, as have the differences between and within different minority groups.

In this study I want to use the more nuanced conceptual frameworks provided by the race and ethnicity literature to explore in greater detail whether, and how, racism continues to shape the policing of minority ethnic communities. Building upon the race literature's descriptions of the inconsistencies and contradictions in individual's attitudes to race (Cashmore, 1987; Blum, 2002; Hall, 2012) I want to explore more fully the variations and complexities in officers' perspectives on minority ethnic communities, describing the range of officers' reactions to ethnically diverse communities. Similarly, building upon the race literature's

increasing recognition of the emergence of plural forms of racism, or

racisms, I want to explore if different racisms (rather than a single

monolithic racism), appear to influence officers' perspectives of people

from different minority ethnic communities (Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji

and Solomos, 2004; Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Finally I want to examine

how race appears to intersect with other factors such as class to shape

officers' views and whether, as acknowledged in the policing literature,

class may be increasingly superseding race as a determinant of the

positioning of different ethnic communities (Sivanandan, 2001; Park,

2009).

I open my account by setting out my research questions and the methods I

used for conducting the research in the next chapter.

Chapter Two: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I describe my methodology and the strengths and limitations inherent in my approach. Having described my research questions and how I conducted the fieldwork, I discuss my 'infiltration into the field', the extent to which I was able to gain officers' acceptance, the ethical dilemmas I encountered and the inevitable subjectivities that shaped my interpretations of the social world I was studying.

Research questions

As described in the introduction to my thesis, the central aim of my research was to examine the policing of minority ethnic communities post Macpherson (1999) and whether, and how, racism continued to influence officers' perspectives and practice. Specifically I wanted to explore:

1. Police officers' perspectives and understandings of the different people, communities and situations they encountered in Greenfield.

2. Whether officers' perspectives and understandings differed according to personal factors such as their ethnicity, age, length of service, rank or role within the organisation.

3. Whether, and how, officers' perspectives and understandings influenced policing practice.

4. Whether, and how, one of the key internal reforms intended to improve the policing of ethnically diverse communities – the

recruitment of minority ethnic officers – influenced understandings and practice within the organisation.

5. Whether, and how, a key means of external accountability in policing – community consultation – influenced understandings and practice within the organisation.

Conducting the research

Although quantitative data, (such as police statistics and surveys of officers' views), could help identify general patterns they could not provide sufficient information on the core issues of my research, because these data would not give me an in-depth insight into officers' perspectives and behaviours. Furthermore, as Reiner (2000b: 219) noted, though the police are perhaps the most visible criminal justice agency, police work in some ways has 'Low visibility', as: 'the main modes of police work…take place away from the immediate oversight of managers with officers generally working alone or in pairs'. To gain an insight into this 'hidden police work' I decided to adopt a qualitative approach, using a mixture of observation and in-depth interviews.

Punch (1986: 12) noted that in order to conduct observations effectively, researchers need to establish relationships of trust with officers and invest time in gaining both their acceptance and an insight into their social world. As a sole, part-time researcher my time and resources were inevitably limited and I had to make continual judgements about how to make the best use of my period in the field.

Consequently, I decided to focus my research in two wards in Greenfield, Greater London, an area with a long history of absorbing successive waves of immigrants (see chapter three). My fieldwork was undertaken between September 2004 and September 2005 and I spent between one and two weeks per month with officers, (twelve weeks in total). This approach enabled me to spend sufficient time building relationships with officers and immersing myself in the cultures of the police organisation, while also withdrawing and critically reflecting on emerging themes at regular intervals. To gain as full a picture as possible of policing in Greenfield I observed officers based in different stations, teams, specialisms and ranks, spending time with:

- Twenty-four hour response teams who dealt with emergency calls across Greenfield;

- Two neighbourhood policing teams responsible for delivering what, at that time, was a new community policing initiative, Safer Neighbourhoods, within their wards;

- A community beat team, (which preceded the Safer Neighbourhoods teams), comprising a sergeant and six PCs;

- Two Inspectors responsible for overseeing the implementation of Safer Neighbourhoods in Ebury, the London borough in which Greenfield is located;

- Two Police Community Liaison Inspectors, responsible for community liaison across Ebury;

- Two Superintendents responsible for Crime and Detection and Community and Partnership working in Ebury respectively.

In total thirty-four officers of different ages, sexes, ethnic backgrounds, specialisms, ranks and lengths of service participated in the observation element of my research (see Annex A). I also undertook in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a range of officers to explore particular issues in greater depth.

Given the complexity and potential sensitivity of my research, I decided to employ a semi-structured approach to interviewing. My core set of questions was generic, with no specific references to race or policing minority ethnic communities, to allow officers to raise issues independently without any prompting or steer from me. When officers referred to topics that were pertinent to my research – such as their views on different ethnic communities – I used supplementary probing questions to explore their perspectives in-depth. Inevitably my research focus influenced the nature and type of data collected, concentrating it very much on issues of race and ethnicity. However my approach was reflexive enough to enable officers to raise wider issues (such as gender, class, changes in policing), and thus yield fuller, richer data on the social world I was researching.

Most of the interviews were conducted after I had spent time with officers to gain their trust and help build rapport however, given the subject of my research, it would be naïve to assume that officers felt able to express their views with complete frankness. Indeed, the most revealing data I gained on officers' perspectives were not collected during formal interviews, but during informal conversations, 'Off the record', or 'Between

you and me'. The gulf between the views officers were willing to express in recorded interviews and those they discussed in more relaxed settings is perhaps best illustrated by an interview with a white, male, middle-aged Inspector, (Officer 25), who was responsible for overseeing the implementation of Safer Neighbourhoods. During the recorded interview this officer talked in general terms about community policing and crime issues, never once raising the issue of race during our long discussion. However the moment the interview concluded and I turned off the tape-recorder he said, completely unprompted: 'You know what the real problem is? Political correctness stopping me locking up criminals because they're Black or Asian'.

Although my observation and interviews were a rich source of data, there were inevitably limitations to my data collection. Resource constraints meant that I could only focus on two wards in Greenfield and include only a limited number of officers in the research. Furthermore, I was also denied access to certain areas, most notably a series of confidential meetings for minority ethnic officers held by the Borough Commander following the terrorist attacks on London in July 2005. The meetings were confidential and intended to provide minority ethnic officers with a safe forum in which to report any discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour they had witnessed or experienced in the aftermath of the attacks. To ensure confidentiality and protect officers' privacy I was, understandably, prevented from attending these meetings or accessing any data or records from the events. Yet while I could not attend the actual forums, minority

officers who attended the meetings, disclosed the content of the discussions to me.

However, despite my efforts to make best use of my time in the field, my data collection was primarily shaped not by the way I spent my time, but the extent to which I was able to gain the trust and acceptance of my participants, and 'infiltrate' the field (Punch, 1986: 11).

'Infiltrating the field'

Punch (1986: 12) notes that access and acceptance is pivotal to the whole relationship between the researcher and researched and said of participant observation:

> *'Far more so than with other styles of social research…the investigator engages in a close relationship during a considerable period of time with those he or she observes. This is of vital significance because the development of that relationship is subtly intertwined with both the outcome of the project and the nature of the data',* (Punch, 1986: 12).

As with most policing research, I had to gain access and acceptance on two levels; firstly I needed the permission of senior officers to access the field; and secondly I needed to gain the acceptance of the officers I was researching (Brewer, 1993). At the time of my fieldwork I was working as a Home Office researcher and consequently found it relatively easy to gain senior officers' formal permission to enter the field. Although the Borough Commander and Superintendents were content to allow me access to almost all areas of policing in Greenfield (with the exception noted above), there seemed to be a certain nervousness about my research and the issues I might uncover. For example the Borough Commander who granted me access said, 'If you do see anything you're not comfortable

with or you're unhappy about, just come and tell us. We won't go in there with size ten boots stamping about, we'll just sort it out'.

I never informed senior officers about any of the issues and behaviours I witnessed, as I did not want to jeopardise my relationships with the officers participating in my research. However management concerns were perhaps reflective of the climate of policing during the time of my research. As I discuss more fully in chapter eight, the policing of minority ethnic communities was a highly controversial topic at the time; following the publication of the Macpherson Report (1999) into police handling of the racist murder of the Black teenager Stephen Lawrence, the police perceived themselves to be, as Foster (2008: 92) aptly put it, on 'A very public pillory'. The failings identified in the police response to the murder and the Macpherson Inquiry's (1999) finding that the Metropolitan Police were 'institutionally racist', attracted widespread condemnation and intense political and media scrutiny (Rowe, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007).

This re-intensified in 2003, following the BBC Panorama documentary, 'The Secret Policeman', exposing racist attitudes amongst police recruits despite formal police commitments to eradicate racist views and behaviours from the service (McLaughlin, 2007). Furthermore, during my fieldwork in the aftermath of the July 2005 terrorist attacks in London, police officers shot dead an unarmed Brazilian man, Jean Charles De Menezes, at Stockwell tube station on suspicion of terrorism who subsequently turned out to be innocent. In essence my research was what Lee and Renzetti (1993), describe as sensitive, that is to say it potentially

posed a substantial threat to the groups or individuals – in this case police officers - being researched.

The sensitivity of the research also influenced the extent to which I was able to gain access and acceptance among rank and file officers. The situation was further complicated by the fact that, as a Home Office researcher, I was what Brown (1996, in Reiner, 2000b: 220-221) termed an, 'inside outsider', that is to say a researcher who is a non-police officer but has a role within an official body with responsibility for policing. While this status made it easy for me to gain formal access, as Brown (1996, in Reiner, 2000b: 220-221) observed it could also have created problems in gaining genuine co-operation from police officers precisely because my findings could potentially have had a more immediate impact on officers than those of outsiders.

Given the considerable difficulties posed by both the sensitivity of my research and my professional status, though I was never directly deceitful I never referred to my job or research topic unless specifically questioned by officers. Instead, I simply introduced myself as a student studying Criminology at the LSE who wanted to learn more about crime and policing in London. Yet somewhat ironically, though I was careful never to raise issues of race or ethnicity with officers, these topics tended to dominate our initial interactions. This appeared to stem from a pervasive assumption among rank and file officers that, as a British Indian, I would be primarily interested in racism within the police service. At the beginning of our relationships officers would subject me to informal processes of

testing, trying to establish my views on the police to gauge whether I was

sympathetic or whether I was what Reiner (2000a) termed a 'challenger',

that is to say a member of a group of people challenging police authority

(such as lawyers, policymakers, academics). During such questioning, and

indeed all my conversations with officers, I was careful never to express

views that could be interpreted as being critical or anti-police. Yet what

secured my infiltration to the field was not my failure to critique or

challenge officers' views, but a more complex set of dynamics relating to

personal aspects of myself as a researcher.

Acceptance of the 'acceptable incompetent'

While my status as a Home Office researcher resulted in officers initially

treating me with a degree of wariness, as a young woman I was generally

viewed as what Brewer (1993: 133) termed an 'acceptable incompetent',

that is to say someone naïve, gullible and fundamentally unthreatening.

While officers would sometimes make jokes about my 'checking up' on

them and accompanying them because they had been 'naughty boys',

they generally assumed that as a young woman I had no real influence

over policy and consequently posed no real threat.

Furthermore my assumed naivety and ignorance (which I did everything to

encourage and nothing to dispel) led many older male officers to try and

educate me about the 'realities' of race and policing. As illustrated in

subsequent chapters, they would openly discuss their controversial views

of minority ethnic communities with me, expanding upon the problems the

police had with 'Asians', without it ever seeming to occur to them that as

an 'Asian' myself I might take offence. Younger male officers would also discuss controversial issues fairly freely with me; while older male officers were often paternalistic, viewing me as young and naïve, the dynamic between myself and younger policemen was more akin to that of peers and I was often able to establish a rapport through friendly discussions about common interests such as music or sport.

Furthermore, it appeared that my gender made officers, both male and female, more willing to discuss personal or emotional issues with me. For example, female officers confided in me about their experiences of sexual harassment in the police service, assuming that as a woman I would be more empathetic. Similarly male officers often discussed personal issues with me, including their experiences of bullying, relationship breakdowns and familial issues. Their eagerness to confide was perhaps reflective of the fact that as male officers working in a macho organisation (Reiner, 2000a) they rarely felt able to discuss their emotions or problems for fear of being regarded as weak. As a young woman outside of their daily working environment I perhaps presented a sympathetic, sufficiently removed confidant with whom they could discuss their problems without fear of ramifications.

Overall my findings mirrored those of Brewer's (1993) research in Northern Ireland; he found that a young female Catholic researcher collecting data for his study could penetrate the predominantly Protestant RUC, largely due to her gender. As a young woman she was generally viewed as an unthreatening by police officers who often discussed their personal

feelings, opinions and emotions with her because they assumed that as a woman she would be more sympathetic (Brewer, 1993).

My ethnicity also shaped my acceptance by officers, however its influence on our interactions was far more complex than I envisaged at the outset of my research. Prior to entering the field, I assumed that officers would be reluctant to frankly disclose their opinions on issues of race and policing to a British Indian woman. Furthermore, I anticipated that I would find it difficult, 'to learn to sustain relationships with whom one normally might not easily mix' (Punch, 1986: 16). Yet once in the field I found that by emphasising different aspects of my identity, (English, Indian) I was able to gain some degree of acceptance from both white and minority ethnic officers. The gulf between my expectations and my actual experiences perhaps reflected my own prejudices prior to entering the field, and my somewhat essentialist assumption that as an Indian I would be uniformly viewed with suspicion and hostility by white officers.

While it was certainly true that most white officers were keen to establish my 'background' when they first met me, my ethnicity did not necessarily impede our relationships. The type of questions officers posed varied to some extent according to their roles or ranks within the organisation; while officers working in community roles would ask more detailed, nuanced questions about my religion, caste and region of India, mainstream rank and file officers simply wanted to know whether I was from Greenfield and whether I had been born in Britain or was a first generation immigrant. These variations were perhaps reflective of the more in-depth knowledge

and understandings community officers had of different ethnic communities in Greenfield.

Despite being Indian Punjabi like the majority of Greenfield residents, the fact that I was not from the area, had grown up in the Home Counties in a predominantly 'English' area, had many English friends and an apparently 'English' lifestyle (I went to pubs and lived independently of my parents) resulted in most white officers classifying me as 'Anglicised', 'like us' and different from, 'Asians round here'. The insistence that I was 'Anglicised' reached an almost ludicrous extreme when a middle-aged, white male PC, Officer 1, a supposed 'expert' on Indian communities claimed that my name, Sara Trikha, was in fact Old English. Though I explained that while my name might sound anglicised due to my pronunciation, it was in fact wholly Indian, he persisted in his insistence that it was 'An old English name'.

The fact that I was not Muslim but Hindu also appeared to influence some white officers' relationships with me, increasing their levels of trust and acceptance. As I describe in chapter four, many officers in Greenfield viewed Muslim communities primarily in terms of their potential terrorist threat and regarded Muslims as being unwilling to 'integrate'. Yet some white officers, most notably those with a more detailed knowledge of different Asian communities, while viewing Muslims with suspicion expressed more empathetic views towards other Asian communities. For example a white middle-aged, male Inspector leading on community liaison (Officer 23) said: 'Hindus and Sikhs often have more in common

with white people – the young ones in particular do the things we do…they have similar lifestyles – Muslims are different'.

Conversely my religion never influenced my interactions with Asian officers, who overwhelmingly classified me as being 'like them' as well, despite the fact that we often differed considerably in terms of our religions, countries of origin and cultures. While white officers invariably questioned me about my 'background', Asian officers rarely referred to such issues, assuming an almost automatic affiliation with me and making remarks such as 'You know what it's like for us'. While I never questioned Asian officers directly about their experiences of racism within the police service, some confided that they had encountered a lot of racism and hostility (see chapter five) assuming that I would empathise with their experiences.

The extent to which I was able to gain acceptance amongst officers is perhaps best illustrated by the remark of a middle-aged White male PC, Officer 1, who was one of only two officers in my study who could be described as racist. He said: 'I'm not bothered by you…we can talk…not like senior officers, if they want to come out with me I'm always a bit suspicious you know…I think what's your game?...You're ok'.

The limits of acceptance

Despite the acceptance outlined above, it would be naïve to assume that officers in Greenfield completely accepted and trusted me; as Reiner (2000b: 220) incisively summarised: 'Ultimately there is no way of knowing

for certain whether what the police do in front of observers, or what they say to interviewers, is intended to present an acceptable face to outsiders'.

Indeed there were indications during my fieldwork of the limits of my acceptance. For example, despite Asian officers' apparent affiliation with me, certain incidents underlined that I was regarded as an outsider in the police service. This was perhaps best illustrated by an incident involving a British Pakistani male PC in his mid-thirties, Officer 7. During the first shift I spent with Officer 7 we appeared to establish a good rapport, and he seemed to talk to me quite freely, expressing views on the police service and discussing various personal issues. When we returned to the station at the end of his shift, as we were entering the station Officer 7 encountered a colleague from the emergency response team who asked whether he would be, 'Up for a game of poker in the canteen?' Officer 7 evidently uncomfortable, jovially responded, 'Well off duty of course…we don't want people to think we're shirking our duties', perhaps as an attempt to put his colleague on his guard.

Such incidents mirrored those described by Daza (2008) during her research at a Columbian university. Though an English speaking, US citizen, Daza (2008) assumed that as a Spanish-speaker who had Columbian relatives living near the university, she was largely accepted as Columbian until certain incidents emphasised her outsider status. Daza (2008) quotes the specific example of how, during the filming of a promotional film for the university, colleagues asked her to narrate the film in English, to make it more accessible for an American audience. She

describes how the whole narration process steadily underlined that despite her Columbian connections and heritage, she was primarily viewed as an American by her Columbian research participants (Daza, 2008).

There were also evident limits to white officers' acceptance of me; perhaps most contradictorily I found that my gender, while increasing my acceptance on one level made officers more reticent with me in other respects. Mirroring findings from Cain's (1973) early policing research, I found that older male officers tended to assume that as a young woman I needed to be protected from the gritty, harsh realities of policing, and they would attempt to shield me in various ways, often adapting the coarser aspects of their own behaviour. Most notably the use of crude expressions or swearing in my presence created considerable confusion and embarrassment amongst older male officers (Cain, 1973). For example, when a middle-aged male Superintendent, Officer 29, described a well-known anti-smoking guru as, 'A fucking wanker', within my earshot, on seeing me he became evidently embarrassed and blushingly apologised, 'Sorry, I'm not allowed to swear am I?' Young male officers had no such reserve and would swear openly in my presence or tell coarse, sexual jokes. If older male officers were present they would often reprimand them, making remarks such as, 'That's enough - there's a young lady present'.

Some white male officers also referred to criminal incidents involving violent or sexual elements in euphemistic terms in my presence, perhaps reflecting a mixture of embarrassment and a desire not to distress me. For

example, when discussing a brothel in the area, its associated crime problems and planned police action, two white male officers, (Officers 21 and 26), referred to the brothel as a 'cat-house', and described the brothel customers and their activities in the area in highly euphemistic terms, attempting to obscure the sordid realities of prostitution.

Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that officers' apparent willingness to voice what I considered to be problematic, prejudicial views on ethnically diverse communities might have reflected not their trust in me, but rather the acceptability of their views within the organisation. While officers acknowledged that, 'You can't say that now', when expressing views about supposed crime problems in different ethnic communities, they did not believe that their views were problematic, but rather that they simply could not be expressed because of 'political correctness'.

Ethical dilemmas

While the extent of officers' frankness during our interactions was debateable, such confidences and revelations that they did provide created some ethical dilemmas for me. Foremost, despite assuring all my participants that I would preserve their anonymity, as I began to write up the research it quickly became apparent that the idiosyncrasies of Greenfield meant that the area was almost impossible to anonymise. Though I have referred to the town and its locales by pseudonyms, and never referred to officers by name but only numbers, there remains a risk that individual officers could be identified in this thesis.

Building on this, at points during my fieldwork officers informed me about behaviour by either themselves or their colleagues that was unprofessional, unethical or unauthorised on the understanding, 'This is just between you and me'. This not only presented challenges in terms of preserving officers' anonymity following the research, but also during my fieldwork. For example, during my time with a neighbourhood policing team the young women in the team, Officers 11 and 31, informed me that they were being bullied and sexually harassed by the middle-aged male officers heading the team, Officers 1 and 17. Both Officers 11 and 31 were adamant that they wanted me to keep these issues confidential, yet Officer 31 was keen to tell me her experiences. She said: 'The British Police Force is meant to be the best policing service in the world, the gold standard and the Met is meant to be the best in the country and then you come here and this is what it is like'.

While I found it difficult not to report what I had been told, I could not act against the wishes of my participants and disclose information that was confidential. Beyond the obvious need to treat officers with respect and honour my commitments, there was a widespread view amongst rank and file officers that, 'You don't grass - ever'. Were I to 'grass', there was a strong possibility that the victims would be vilified by their colleagues as 'troublemakers' and I would certainly not have been able to maintain the trust of officers in the area.

Subjective interpretations

While I attempted to remain objective during the course of my research, it would be futile to pretend that my analysis and interpretations of the social world I observed were devoid of subjectivity. As Edwards (1993: 184) notes, the researcher is always a variable in the research process, bringing their own life experiences and perspectives to the research. In the context of my study, my life experiences and perspectives as a minority ethnic person overshadowed my entire thesis, determining the focus of the research, the data I collected and my analysis and interpretations of what I observed. To a certain extent this was perhaps desirable, for as feminist Standpoint Theorists argue, subordinate groups such as women may have greater insight into and be better able to understand the dynamics of patriarchy because of their position in the social hierarchy (Edwards, 1993). In my research it could be argued as a young Indian woman, I had a more in-depth understanding of the implications of officers' perspectives on the ethnically diverse peoples and communities they were confronted with in Greenfield.

Yet as my experiences in the field illustrate, the world I was attempting to analyse had not one but multiple perspectives. Furthermore it became increasingly clearer to me during my analysis that, as Callon (1986) argued, I was guided by my own values, selecting the elements of police 'reality' that seem to be most important to me and, like all research, my study involved a reduction of infinitely complex realities. Power relations were implicit in this reduction, as I selected and privileged certain

perspectives to explain the world I was studying, through what Callon (1986: 196) described as 'the sociology of translation'.

My translations of the social world I was observing inevitably involved some element of presenting officers' accounts selectively and out of context. However I was keen to ensure that I provided as comprehensive, objective and above all fair an account of policing in Greenfield as possible. To help limit potential for privileging certain accounts and misinterpreting officers' perspectives, I attempted to follow Callon's (1986) main methodological recommendations. Firstly, I attempted to remain impartial at all times to officers' perspectives and accounts of themselves and their social environment (Callon, 1986: 221). Secondly in my reporting of social realities I attempted to ensure there was symmetry in my accounts, that is to say I ensured that conflicting accounts were reported in the same objective terms so that no particular account or explanation of policing was privileged (Callon, 1986: 221-222). Finally, rather than imposing a pre-determined framework of analysis I attempted to understand and identify the ways in which officers defined and explained their world (Callon, 1986: 222).

Attempting to understand how officers understood or acted in their world was challenging, for as Becker (1998) observed of social scientists, I was always implicitly or explicitly attributing perspectives to the officers whose actions I was analysing. To try and limit the potential for imposing my own interpretations, I attempted to discuss officers' perspectives and understandings with them throughout the research. I also attempted to

adopt an 'appreciative realism' approach, that is to say a positively critical approach that seeks to identify and build upon positive factors within the organisation, identifying what functions well and how organisations can be improved (Liebling, Elliot, Arnold, 2001).

However despite my best efforts it must be acknowledged that I was often frustrated and even angered by what I witnessed in the field. While in some ways I empathised with officers it would be disingenuous to pretend that I was not offended by some of their views, behaviours and sometimes even their conduct towards me. For example, a white, middle-aged male Inspector leading on community liaison, Officer 23, subjected me to his unwanted sexual attentions throughout the time I spent observing him. On a daily basis I had to endure his inappropriately personal questions, unwanted revelations about his own personal life, and his attempts to persuade me to go on 'a date' with him. This culminated one evening in Officer 23 asking me to meet him at a restaurant in central Greenfield during the policing of the evening celebrations in Greenfield marking Vasaki, a Sikh festival. Though he gave me to understand that 'community representatives' would be there, when I arrived it quickly became apparent that we were the only two people coming and it was in fact 'a date'. Feeling vulnerable, I left the restaurant as soon as I could, feigning illness. Consequently, while I have tried to be measured in my presentation of Officer 23 in this thesis, I cannot pretend that I my feelings towards him were neutral.

Similarly, from the outset I had a strained relationship with a middle-aged male Pakistani sergeant, Officer 17. During our first meeting, as I accompanied Officer 17 on his foot patrol of Greenfield, he made flirtatious, personal remarks, making me feel steadily more uncomfortable. Eventually, to my considerable relief he proposed that we return to the station for lunch, a suggestion which I eagerly accepted, feeling that I would be more secure in the canteen in the company of other officers. However on arriving at the station he led me through the main canteen to a small, cramped private office where he said we could share his lunch (comprising various Indian foodstuffs). Again I feigned illness to extricate myself from the situation, saying that I did not feel hungry and would just have a cup of tea in the canteen. As with Officer 23, while I have tried to be fair in the way Officer 17 is represented in this thesis, I must acknowledge that his conduct from the outset coloured my perspectives on him.

My reactions were hardly surprising for as Fineman (2003) notes, organisations are suffused with emotion and their practices, cultures and day-to-day interactions are shaped by the feelings of people who work within them. The police service, perhaps more so than many other organisations due to the nature of its work, was an emotive environment therefore it is not surprising that emotion shaped my interactions with, and reactions to, officers. Consequently, while I have attempted to be measured, I must acknowledge that my findings and analyses have all been shaped by both my feelings towards, and the reactions I provoked from, officers.

Yet personal bias was not the only potential subjectivity in my analysis, there was also a risk that my analysis and interpretations would be confined by the existing canon of race and policing literature. As Becker (1998) noted, in every academic field there are 'experts' whose existing ideas set the context for further studies. Becker (1998) argues that when studying society we produce and refine images of the social phenomena we are studying and there is a risk that as we do so, we can confine ourselves to presenting phenomena in ways that simply supports existing ideas.

To try and limit this, I used two 'tricks of the trade', Becker (1998) suggested: the 'null-hypothesis trick' and analysing wider social processes. The null hypothesis trick involved assuming that no relationship existed between certain phenomena (for example an individual's ethnicity and officers behaviour towards them) and helped prevent my over-interpreting events or attributing causality where none existed. Building on this, by investigating wider social processes and the small, gradual steps that officers took on the way into worlds of social norms (namely police culture) I was better able to understand their perspectives on the communities they were policing (Becker, 1998).

I also attempted to limit what Bottoms (2000) termed 'theoretical bias' in my study, that is to say limiting analysis and data collection by using a single school of theory to inform the design, methods and analysis of research. Limiting theoretical bias in my study was somewhat challenging

as the existing canon of literature provided extensive evidence of racism in the police service; however as per Bottoms' (2000) recommendations I attempted to draw on a wider range of 'General Social Theories' to inform my theoretical framework to help explain the complex social phenomena I was confronted with.

Glaser and Strauss (Corbin and Strauss,1990) however advocated a more radical, 'grounded theory' approach, which would have involved my immersing myself in the field, including all phenomena in data collection, interpretation and analysis to allow the data, not existing literature to generate my theories. While there were obvious strengths in this approach, most notably the fact that it allowed for the generation of new theories and would have prevented my analyses being confined by existing theoretical paradigms, as a single, part-time researcher it was not practical for me to adopt this approach. Timing and resource constraints meant that it was imperative I limited my data collection to key topics, which I identified both on the basis of my initial research focus and themes and issues emerging from the existing literature. However, as per Glaser and Strauss' recommendations, I attempted to maintain a reflexive relationship between data and existing theory during analysis, using my data to critically reflect upon existing theories as well as using the existing literature to help me understand and interpret what I had witnessed in the field (Corbin and Strauss, 1990).

In terms of my practical methods for undertaking analysis and coding, I meticulously recorded all my experiences in the field, writing my fieldwork

diary after each day and detailing everything I could recall, no matter how minor or seemingly irrelevant. After each block of fieldwork I would analyse my data, coding it according to pre-defined categories that reflected the specific focus of the study: race and ethnicity; different communities; class; age; sex; Asian officers; and community policing. Having coded my data according to my main themes I would then examine the data for other key emerging issues. Where these themes were related to the main focus of my study (language, religion and police leadership are the most notable examples) I would establish a new category and include this theme in my ongoing analysis and data collection. By conducting this preliminary coding and analysis after every block of fieldwork I was able to structure subsequent fieldwork blocks to ensure I collected further, in-depth data on key themes. Throughout the coding and analytical process I triangulated my methods, using data from other sources (such as official police statistics) and discussing my emerging themes with the research participants to develop and test my analyses and interpretations of the data.

It should also be acknowledged that I disregarded certain emerging themes, for despite being interesting and important, they were not directly relevant to my research topic. For example, during my fieldwork bullying in the police service emerged as a key issue, meriting a research study in its own right. However I could not examine this issue in any great depth and was only able to focus on specific aspects, such as racist bullying of Asian officers. Similarly, police leadership and the management of emotions also emerged as key themes in the research, however again, I was only able to

examine these issues in so far as they were related to the central focus of my research - policing ethnically diverse communities.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to provide a frank appraisal of the strengths and weakness of my research. The small-scale nature of the study, the subjectivity of the researcher and idiosyncrasies of the timing of the research mean that, inevitably, it is not possible to generalise on the basis of the findings of this study. However I would argue that the relationships I established with officers and uniqueness of my own perspective has enabled me to gain a fresh insight into the complexities, contradictions and challenges of policing ethnically diverse communities. Furthermore, as I describe in the following chapter, Greenfield, the location in which I conducted my research, was a particularly fascinating context in which to examine these issues.

Chapter Three: Greenfield

Introduction

Greenfield is an interesting area in which to study policing ethnically diverse communities, for in many ways the town encapsulates the changes, challenges and complexities involved in policing Britain's increasingly diverse population. Like Britain as a whole, Greenfield has had a long history of absorbing successive waves of immigrants and following the Second World War became home to increased numbers of Indian immigrants, eventually becoming known as 'Little India' (Holmes, 1988; Oates, 2003). The diversity of the area's population has continued to increase over time with further waves of immigrants arriving from different parts of the Indian subcontinent, East Africa (during the expulsion of Ugandan Asians), Eastern Europe and most recently Somalia, (Baumann, 1996). Perhaps because of its diversity, Greenfield has also been the site of some of the seminal moments in British policing including the death of Blair Peach in 1979 and the urban riots of 1981 (Scarman, 1981).

In this chapter I provide background information on Greenfield to illustrate why the area makes such a fascinating case study and contextualise the findings of subsequent chapters. I describe the area's history, the hostility encountered by its' emerging Indian communities, their collective action in response to their difficulties and how this brought local people and the police into conflict with far-reaching ramifications. The chapter concludes with a description of the diversity and complexity of Greenfield's contemporary communities.

Greenfield: a diverse history

Greenfield, a small town in the Greater London borough of Ebury, has like many areas of the UK, undergone radical changes to its population and environment since the 1800s, absorbing successive waves of immigrants from across the UK, Europe and the world (Holmes, 1988; Oates, 2003). Originally a small rural hamlet, from the 1800s onwards Greenfield expanded rapidly during the industrial revolution and by the Edwardian area (1901-1918) had established itself as a major manufacturing town with a range of industries including gas works, emulsion works, telephone works, a paper mill, jam factory, motor works and a rubber factory.

Greenfield's industrial expansion stemmed primarily from its proximity to London and its transport links (via the railway and canal) between the town and centre of the city. As in the case of many manufacturing towns, the changes to the physical environment brought by industrialisation, such as the increase in the density of housing and factories and erosion of green spaces, were criticised by writers of the Victorian and Edwardian eras who disapproved of the ugly, overcrowded and dirty character of Greenfield (Oates, 2003).

Industrialisation was inevitably accompanied by rapid changes in the population as migrants arrived from across the UK, Ireland and Europe to staff the new industries. Census figures for the county where Greenfield is located demonstrate that following the First World War the population of the area continued to grow, as the number of people living in the county

rose from 43,958 in 1931 to 99,724 in 1951. The 1951 census indicates that this increase was primarily due to immigration as only 34% of the population in the 1951 census sample were born in the county.

There is little evidence about the experiences of these successive waves of migrants to Greenfield, however two accounts in a local history of the area suggest that they may have encountered hostility from the resident population (Oates, 2003). According to these accounts there were violent confrontations between 'local men' and Irish labourers working on the construction of Greenfield's railways in 1836 and 1838 (Oates, 2003). Records of the 1838 incident provide an indication of the extent of the violence, as they describe how mounted police attempting to intervene in the fighting were attacked with shovels and pickaxes (whether by locals or the Irish it is unclear).

While Greenfield had absorbed successive waves of immigrants since the 1800s, until the Second World War the majority of incomers were from other parts of the UK or Ireland, (Oates, 2003). However mirroring wider patterns in the UK, post war this changed as the new waves of immigrants arriving to staff Greenfield's renewed industries came from Britain's former colony, India (Holmes, 1988; Oates, 2003). Britain's long-standing colonial links with India meant that there had long been an Indian presence in Britain with peoples as diverse as professionals, ayahs, lascars and princes being resident in Britain for hundreds of years; Indians had even served as MPs in the House of Commons from the 1890s (Desai, 1963; Visram, 1986; Chandan, 1986; Holmes, 1988; Lahiri, 1999).

However, while an Indian presence in Britain was hardly novel, the difference in post war Indian migration to the country was its scale, bringing far larger numbers of Indians to the UK than in previous years.

This latest wave of immigrants to Greenfield came, like the peoples before them, to staff Britain's industries, regenerating after the economic hardships of war (Aurora, 1967; Holmes, 1988). As Aurora's (1967) ethnography of these early Indian settlers vividly documents, the new (mostly male) immigrants were not necessarily from the poorest sections of society. Like the West Indians arriving in London in the 1950s described in Glass' (1960) study, Indian immigrants to Greenfield were from higher socio-economic groups, coming to Britain to augment and secure their economic position (Aurora, 1967). Developments in India post Independence in 1947 resulted in certain sections of Indian society, most notably the landowners and farmers of the Punjab, experiencing significant financial and resource pressures.

Consequently men from this region migrated to earn sufficient funds to support their families and farms at home, and secure their families' economic and social status (Aurora, 1967). Like the West Indians in Glass' (1960) research, England was the most logical destination for Punjabis arriving in Greenfield, as India's colonial connections with England meant that most had a basic command of English, were familiar with English institutions and some had already travelled under the British Empire, fighting in the Second World War, serving in colonial police forces in

countries such as Singapore or working in other colonies of the UK such as African countries (Aurora, 1967).

The precise connections that brought the first Punjabi settlers, or 'New Frontiersmen' as Aurora (1967) termed them, to Greenfield are unclear. However local histories and accounts by Indian community organisations suggest that one of the owners of Woolf's rubber factory, one of the major factories in the area, who had served with Punjabi soldiers in the Second World War, had been impressed by their capacity for hard work, resilience and abilities and brought the first Punjabi workers to Greenfield (Oates, 2003). Census figures provide an indication of the rapidity and extent to which the Indian population grew in Greenfield from the 1950s. Although the categories used to define ethnicity vary and consequently do not provide consistent trend data, sweeps of the census from 1951 to 1991 provide an overall picture of how the population changed in the post war period (see table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Population increases in Greenfield, 1951-1991 Census

Census Year	Total population	Population born in Commonwealth or protectorates	Population born in Indian subcontinent	Population born in West Indies or Africa
1951	55,896	330	-	-
1961	52,983	2,261	1780	481
1971	-	20,215	14,630	5,585
1981	66,488	25,690	-	-
1991	61,160	-	35,214	-

Source: Oates, J (2003), 'History Guide: Southall and Hanwell', Gloucestershire: Tempus Publishing.

Whereas there is practically no information on the experiences of immigrants arriving in Greenfield in the 1800s and early 1900s, the

experiences of Indian migrants are far better documented, with information provided by ethnographies (Aurora, 1967; Bachu, 1985), local histories (Oates, 2003), the accounts of community organisations (Southall Rights, 1980 and 1981) and local newspaper articles.

Hostility against the incomers

Mirroring the UK-wide patterns described in chapter one, evidence suggests Indian immigrants in Greenfield faced racism and hostility, including violent victimisation and attacks, from the white population already resident in the area (Aurora, 1967; Southall Rights, 1980 and 1981; Oates, 2003). Aurora's (1967) early ethnography describes how Indian workers faced almost uniform antipathy and exclusion from the white population, who refused to work alongside Indians, rent property to them or interact with them in any way. This hostility took more politically organised forms, with local organisations such as the Greenfield Residents' Association forming to lobby the Government to restrict immigration and for Indians to be educated and housed in areas other than Greenfield (Oates, 2003).

In addition to this general hostility and exclusion, there is evidence that Indian people were subject to racist violence and attacks (Oates, 2003). Oates (2003) describes how in 1958 a crowd of white people arrived in Greenfield and began attacking property, throwing stones and bottles at houses owned by Indians. The armed mob gathered outside Woolf's rubber factory, one of the first factories in which Indians were employed and which had a large number of Indian workers. Violence escalated, with

fights breaking out between Indians and white people, and the police had to intervene to disperse the crowds. There were similar incidents of mob violence in Greenfield in 1979 and 1981, when the National Front held rallies in Ebury town hall and a local public house (the Hambrough Tavern) respectively, leading to clashes between Indian residents in the area and National Front supporters (Scarman, 1981; Oates, 2003).

In addition to these instances of mob violence, there is evidence that Indian people in Greenfield were subject to other types of ongoing victimisation and hostility. Local newspapers contain various reports of racially aggravated incidents and anti-immigration protests in the 1970s and 1980s. For example in 1972 the *Acton Gazette* (14th September 1972) reported that a crowd gathered to demonstrate on the steps of Ebury Town Hall against Ugandan Asian immigration to the UK. The paper reported how, 'Councillors arriving to discuss the Ugandan Asian situation had to run the gauntlet of a screaming mob who seemed to range from children to adults and Old Age Pensioners' (Acton Gazette, 14 September 1972: 4). Similarly in 1980 the *Ealing Gazette* (12th September 1980) reported that Black shirted youths shouting racist slogans disrupted the Community Relations Council's free legal advice service. In 1982 the *Southall Gazette* (2nd July 1982) reported that an Indian female teacher had established a support group for Indian women living on a housing estate in Greenfield in response to widespread racial attacks. Greenfield was also the site of the high profile racist murder of an eighteen-year-old Sikh schoolboy, Gurdip Singh Chaggar, who, according to those who

witnessed the attack, was stabbed to death by a white mob; his killers were never convicted (Oates, 2003).

Mirroring patterns from UK-wide research, the limited evidence available suggests that police responses to racist victimisation in Greenfield were poor (Pulle, 1973; Southall Rights, 1981; Bowling, 1998). For example, a study examining fifty complaints against the police from minority ethnic people living in Ebury found evidence of police failing to provide any substantive support to victims of racist victimisation and incidents of police brutality against minority ethnic people. A middle-class, middle-aged Indian headmaster included in the study described how he and his family suffered repeated racist victimisation (including having their windows smashed and stones thrown at their house), and, despite calling the police numerous times, never received any help or support. During one incident, when the headmaster chased a group of youths throwing stones at his house away from his property he was chastised by the police officers he called to the scene for behaving in a violent manner (Pulle, 1973). Similarly an Indian bus conductor with an unblemished record, who refused to dispense a ticket to a racially abusive woman, was summoned to court following a complaint filed against him by police officers who attended the scene; the officers in question did not even bother to inform him that they were filing an action against him (Pulle, 1973).

In addition to failing to protect minority ethnic victims from racist victimisation, there is some evidence of police officers racially harassing Indian and West Indian people themselves. For example, a middle-aged

Indian civil servant reported how he was stopped outside his home in the early hours of the morning by police officers who racially abused him, demanded to see his papers, and then arrested him for 'insulting behaviour', ripping his shirt and assaulting him at the police station (Pulle, 1973). It should be noted that Pulle's (1973) study was small-scale and based upon cases involving complaints about police behaviour, consequently it cannot be said to be representative of policing in Greenfield at the time. However evidence from local newspapers in the 1970s and 1980s suggest that the issues identified by Pulle (1973) may have reflected more pervasive problems in policing.

For example, in 1979 the *Midweek Gazette* (3rd April 1979) described how Greenfield police station was picketed by demonstrators protesting against police harassment. The protests were sparked by a police search of the premises of People's Unite, a community organisation based in Greenfield. In 1980 the *Ealing Gazette* (12th September 1980) reported that instances of racial discrimination by the police were being investigated by the Deputy Head of CID following allegations by the Greenfield Campaign against Racial Attacks.

Collective action

In the absence of adequate police protection Indian people in Greenfield began to organise to defend themselves against attack. Following the murder of Gurdip Singh Chaggar the Greenfield Youth Movement, comprising young people from the area, formed with the express purpose of protecting Asian people in the area from racist violence, organising

patrols of Greenfield's streets to protect local people and deter perpetrators of violence (Southall Rights, 1981; Oates, 2003).

The Greenfield Youth Movement was not the only group to emerge in Greenfield during this time, indeed some of Britain's key contemporary campaigning groups were established in the area during the 1980s and 1990s. For example, The Monitoring Group, championed by veteran civil rights activist and anti-racism campaigner Suresh Grover, was set up in Greenfield in 1981 with the stated intention of challenging racism and most notably racist victimisation. The Group developed into one of Britain's foremost campaigning organisations for race equality and now has branches in different parts of the UK. Similarly, the Southall Black Sisters, established in 1979 to champion the rights of minority ethnic women and challenge their experiences of domestic and gender-based violence, is today one of Britain's most foremost voluntary organisations advising on issues of domestic violence within minority ethnic communities.

Greenfield's Indian communities also engaged in collective action in response to a wider range of issues beyond crime and policing including housing shortages, securing employment rights and accessing education services. Many of the difficulties encountered by Greenfield's Indian communities arose not simply from racist hostility, but also the fact that the town's services were ill-equipped to meet the needs of the new immigrants. For example, due to post-war housing shortages, the accommodation available in Greenfield in the 1950s and early 1960s was limited, low-quality and often inaccessible to Indian arrivals as the resident

white population were reluctant to rent the limited accommodation that was available to 'coloured immigrants' and Indians were often unable get mortgages (Aurora, 1967; Southall Rights, 1981).

 Aurora's (1967) ethnography, undertaken between 1957 and 1959, describes how the early Punjabi settlers in the area overcame these difficulties by pooling resources to buy houses and renting rooms to one another. Aurora's (1967) findings mirrored themes from Glass' (1960) research with early West Indian settlers in the UK which found that West Indians, in response to their exclusion from the general housing market, organised their own accommodation, buying and letting rooms and properties to each other. Contrary to racist narratives circulating in the 1960s and 1970s that 'Asians' arriving in Greenfield depressed property prices, local historian Oates (2003) has argued that evidence suggests prices actually increased due to demand from Asian buyers.

Indians also collectively organised to defend their employment rights and counter the widespread difficulties they encountered in the workplace (Southall Rights, 1981; Oates, 2003). While they had no difficulty securing jobs in the 1950s and 1960s, Indians encountered considerable workplace exploitation where a mixture of discrimination and unfamiliarity with the UK employment market led to them being concentrated in the worst jobs, paid the lowest wages and segregated from white employees who did not want to work with Indians (Aurora, 1967; Oates, 2003). To counter this, Indian workers established their own trade union, the Indian Workers' Association (IWA), which lobbied for better working conditions, organising strikes in the

1960s (Southall Rights, 1981). The IWA did not restrict its activities to campaigning on employment issues, but also provided a range of welfare, support and leisure services to the Indian population, including funding a cinema that played Indian films (Southall Rights, 1981).

The IWA also represented Indian peoples' interests on a range of different social and civic issues, most notably education (Southall Rights, 1981; Oates, 2003). For example, the Greenfield Residents' Association lobbied Sir Edward Boyle, the then Labour Education Secretary, in 1963 about their concerns about the number of children of 'immigrants' attending primary schools in Greenfield outnumbering white children. Partly to address their concerns and perhaps also to prevent the segregation of Indian children and integrate them into mainstream society (a major issue for US civil rights groups at the time) quotas were imposed by the Local Authority restricting the number of Indian children in local schools. Whatever the initial motivations for the policy, it created considerable problems for Indian children and parents in the area, as it necessitated Indian children being 'bussed' out to schools across the borough, sometimes up to twenty miles away from their home. Despite initially supporting the policy the IWA and Indian parents conducted a sustained campaign that led to the end of the so-called 'bussing' policy in 1978 (Southall Rights, 1981; Oates, 2003).

Clashes with the police

The collective action of Greenfield's Indian communities, specifically their action in response to racist violence and harassment, brought them into

conflict with the police in 1979 and 1981 when violence erupted on the streets of Greenfield. The riots of 1979 and 1981 were seminal moments not just in Greenfield, but in the history of British policing. In both instances the catalyst for the rioting was Far Right activity, however police intervention brought officers into direct conflict with Greenfield's Indian communities.

On 23rd April 1979 the National Front held a rally in Greenfield's town hall; according to the accounts of community groups and civil liberties organisations, the police had been informed via the long-established Police Community Liaison Committee that local people intended to hold a peaceful sit-down protest outside the town hall (Dummett 1980a; Southall Rights, 1980). According to community groups, the police made no prior objections to the protests yet on the day of the rally approximately 2,750 officers arrived in Greenfield, sealed off the town centre and prevented protestors from entering the area. The reasons for this last minute operational decision by the police are not recorded, and indeed this dispersal may have been an attempt to prevent conflicts between National Front Supporters and local people. Whatever the reasons it is clear that echoing themes from Waddington and Leopold's (1985) work on policing public protests, the police decision was interpreted as 'defending the indefensible', and seemed to suggest to local people and civil liberties organisations that the police empathised with fascists. This was perhaps best illustrated by a quote from an unofficial investigation into events funded by the National Council for Civil Liberties which described how local people were forced: 'To act as spectators of an occupying force [the

police] which sealed off the centre of their town, into which the propagators of racial hatred were to be escorted' (Dummett, 1980a: 7).

Within this tense situation violence quickly flared between the police and protestors; accounts of the violence are polarised between official accounts which blame the protestors for violent, disorganised behaviour and accounts by community and civil liberties organisations which claim that the police were disproportionately violent (Home Office, 1979; Dummett, 1980a; Dummett, 1980b). Wherever the balance lies, during the clashes a thirty-year old white teacher, Blair Peach, from New Zealand was killed. Accounts by community and civil liberties organisations and Peach's relatives claimed that a police officer had been responsible for Peach's death, delivering a fatal blow to his head (Dummett, 1980a; Dummett, 1980b; Southall Rights, 1980; BBC News, 27 April 2010). In the absence of an official inquiry into Peach's death the National Civil Liberties Council funded Professor M Dummett to chair an 'independent' investigation into events. Dummett (1980a; 1980b) claimed that eleven witnesses saw police officers striking the fatal blows that killed Blair Peach and that: 'Many have observed to us that they had never conceived that the British police could behave as they saw them behave on that day and that the police use of force during the demonstration was so heavy-handed that it is surprising that there were not more deaths' (Dummett, 1980a: 9).

The death of Blair Peach was a seminal moment not just in Greenfield but in Britain more widely. Peach's death and injuries to other protestors were

widely reported in the British Press, with even conservative papers such as the *Daily Telegraph* describing the police as 'cornering' and 'injuring' demonstrators (Benyon, 1986). In addition to the National Civil Liberties Council, other pressure groups including the 'Friends of Blair Peach Committee' (Ransome, 1980) were formed to lobby for the police to be held to account for their involvement in Blair Peach's death. Although there was an inquest at which witnesses testified they had seen officers strike Peach before his death, a verdict of death by misadventure was recorded (Ransome, 1980). However a Metropolitan Police investigation led by Commander Cass and released thirty-one years after Blair Peach's death reached a different conclusion stating that, in line with the accounts of pressure groups and witnesses, Peach was very likely killed by police officers who colluded to cover up the incident (Metropolitan Police Service, April 2010).

The very fact that thirty-one years' on the Metropolitan Police Service decided to release documentation relating to Peach's death illustrates the impact his death had on public perceptions of the police. At the time Benyon (1986) noted high profile incidents such as the events of 1979, where the police took tough action against minority ethnic people rather than the Far Right, bred distrust and cynicism amongst minority ethnic communities. Yet Peach's death not only influenced relations between the police and minority ethnic communities, but potentially undermined confidence in the police more widely. As I discuss in chapter eight, the police are one of the most fundamental organisations of democratic states and consequently need to be seen to exercise their powers equitably

(Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Lum, 2009; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). Deaths such as Blair Peach's cannot but have negative consequences for public confidence in policing and perceptions of police legitimacy, as the Lawrence Inquiry nearly twenty years later highlighted (see chapter eight).

In 1981 Greenfield was again the site of a seminal moment in British policing. As discussed in chapter one, in 1981 riots erupted in areas of the country with large minority ethnic populations – Brixton, Toxeth and Greenfield – resulting in the Scarman Reforms to policing. Scarman (1981) noted that the reasons underpinning the Greenfield riots differed from those in Brixton and Toxeth; whereas riots in Brixton and Toxeth were primarily a response to the repressive 'over-policing' of the area, in Greenfield the riots stemmed from National Front activity.

On 3rd July 1981 a large group of skinheads marched through the town centre of Greenfield on their way to a concert at the Hambrough Tavern, a public house associated with Far Right activity. En route the skinheads racially abused and harassed local people and smashed shop windows, resulting in confrontations between local youths and the skinheads. The violence rapidly escalated and resulted in the skinheads being pursued by local people to the Hambrough Tavern, which was burnt to the ground by people throwing petrol bombs (Southall Rights, 1981). Police attempts to restore order had little success and officers attempting to intervene were attacked by local people (Scarman, 1981). Scarman (1981) described how while the riots were not principally anti-police riots they reflected a lack of

public confidence in the police. Scarman (1981) noted that there was widespread consensus among all sections of the Asian community in Greenfield that the police did not do enough to protect them from racial attacks, resulting in Asian youths taking direct action against the skinheads rather than relying upon police protection (Scarman, 1981).

As Keith (1993) aptly observed, while dominant political narratives by the Thatcher Government cast the1981 riots as evidence of Black lawlessness and hooliganism, academics at the time described the events as a rational, inevitable response to decades of inappropriate policing (Gilroy, 1981; Keith, 1993). Research by Keith (1993) also contradicted dominant narratives that the riots involved 'Black youths' (Scarman, 1981), using his analysis of arrest data to illustrate how in Greenfield Asian people of all ages were involved in the clashes with skinheads and the police.

As in 1979, the 1981 riots and associated confrontations between police and certain sections of communities inevitably led to tensions between the police and local people, and as was apparent from the accounts of community groups, the police were again seen as failing to protect local people and attempting to defend the Far Right (Southall Rights, 1981; Scarman, 1981; Waddington and Leopold, 1985; Bains, 1988). Such were the ramifications of the Greenfield, Brixton and Toxeth riots that, as described in chapters one and eight, a series of influential reforms were put in place to restore the legitimacy of the Metropolitan Police, particularly among Britain's minority ethnic communities (Scarman, 1981; Keith, 1993).

Indications of reform

The scope and impact of the Scarman Reforms (1981) are discussed more fully in chapter eight. Due to the absence of empirical research it is not possible to determine exactly how the Scarman reforms (1981) influenced policing in Greenfield following the riots, or the extent to which policing changed in the aftermath of the conflicts. However the fact that no further large-scale conflicts have occurred in Greenfield since 1981 perhaps indicates that policing might have reformed and improved.

Local media reports from the early 1980s provide some indications of police attempts to implement the Scarman (1981) recommendations. For example the *Southall Gazette* (19th March 1982 and 16th July 1982) reported that in line with Scarman (1981) recommendations Greenfield police were actively trying to recruit Asian officers, setting up recruitment centres in the centre of Greenfield and attempting to counter perceptions amongst the 'highly qualified Asian community', that policing was not a respectable profession. The paper describes how young Asian people were encouraged to attend the centres with their parents to see for themselves how the police service offered a career with real prospects.

Similarly the Cantle Report (2001) into the riots in Asian neighbourhoods in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley in 2001 also visited Greenfield, Birmingham and Leicester, to determine why similar issues had not occurred in these areas. The report (Cantle, 2001: 15) cited good policing

as being one of the reasons that conflicts did not occur in Greenfield. The report said that the police in Greenfield:

> *'Had also made great efforts to get to know their community with the emphasis very much on community or 'micro' beat officers. In [Greenfield], the police also benefited from a robust network of people they called 'intervenors' who had the credibility in a diverse community at times of tension to be able to counter myth and replace rumour with fact',* (Cantle, 2001: 15).

It should be noted that the Cantle Report (2001) was based primarily on interviews with professionals and community workers in these areas rather than empirical data on local people's perspectives or observation of policing, therefore its assessment of progress cannot be regarded as definitive. However Cantle's (2001) Report does suggest that there have at least been attempts on the part of the Greenfield police to reform.

Contemporary challenges

Irrespective of the possible changes and reforms to policing over the past decades, it should be noted that in Greenfield, as in many other parts of Britain, the challenges involved policing ethnically diverse communities have increased, rather lessened with the passage of time (Eade, 1989; Keith, 1993; Baumann, 1996; McLaughlin, 1994). Most notably, as illustrated by ethnographies of the area, the diversity of its population has increased, with previous generations of Indian communities and a minority of West Indian people being joined by new waves of immigrants from Eastern Europe and Somalia (Aurora, 1967; Baumann, 1996).

Whereas Indian communities in Greenfield comprised mainly middle-class and lower-middle class people seeking to improve their socio-economic

position (Aurora, 1967; Bachu, 1985; Bains, 1988), an objective which they appear to have largely achieved from research documenting the economic, professional and educational success of Greenfield's Indian communities (Bachu, 1985; Bains, 1988; Bauman, 1996; Oates, 2003) the new immigrants to the area have come from very different circumstances. Most notably, Somalis though also mainly middle-class and educated, arrived in Greenfield not for economic reasons but to escape the civil war in their homeland (Harris, 2004). Arriving in Britain as refugees in the 1990s, Somalis in Greenfield had few economic resources and bore the scars of the violence of the civil war including murder, torture and the pervasive use of rape as a weapon of war (Griffiths, 2002; Harris, 2004; Tastsoglou and Dobrowolsky, 2006).

Consequently, Somalis are among the most disadvantaged groups in Britain; many Somalis leave education without qualifications, have low incomes, live in poor housing with language barriers exacerbating problems of poor health, isolation and unemployment in these communities (Harris, 2004; Ward and Spacey, 2008). While some Somalis are thriving in the UK there remain pervasive problems of social disadvantage and deprivation too (Harris, 2004). Furthermore, despite their limited number, research has described the considerable diversity within Somali communities, which comprises people of different clans, regions (urban and rural), generations and perspectives, (Griffiths, 2002; Harris, 2004).

The resident Indian population in Greenfield is in many ways no less diverse than the Somali incomers, having changed considerably since the 1950s (Aurora, 1967; Baumann, 1996; Oates, 2003). In marked contrast to the early Indian settlers described in Aurora's (1967) study who worked in unskilled factory roles, today's Indian communities are economically successful, employed in professional occupations or are part of Greenfield's burgeoning retail market (Baumann, 1996; Oates, 2003). Indeed Greenfield has established itself as a centre for Asian communities in the UK, and the shops, restaurants, cinemas, Indian banks and places of worship of 'Little India' are a magnet for Asian peoples across Britain. Bains (1988), an ethnographer who grew up in Greenfield, vividly documented the pressure on young Indian people to succeed academically and professionally and fulfil their parents' expectations. Similarly, an aspiration to achieve economic, educational and professional success runs through Bachu's (1985) study of East African Sikhs in the area, who used the skills and capital they acquired in East Africa under British rule to augment their position.

Yet beneath this picture of economic prosperity, there are divisions within Greenfield's Indian communities. While, overall Indians in Greenfield appear to be economically successful, despite the decline of the area's manufacturing industries creating an emerging retail market and entering professions, there are differences (Bains, 1988; Oates, 2003). Aurora's ethnography (1967) described how, even in the early days of settlement, differences in status were already emerging between Indians who owned property and those who had to rent, and those who had a better

knowledge of English and employment opportunities and those who did not. Similarly Bains (1988) describes how, despite the common economic aspirations of Indian communities in Greenfield, there are significant differences in the experiences and perspectives of richer and poorer families.

Furthermore while the early Indian settlers were primarily Punjabi Sikhs (Aurora, 1967), further waves of Asian immigrants have arrived from other parts of India (Gujerat), the Indian subcontinent (Pakistan) and Africa (such as East African Asians from Uganda). Consequently, while the majority of Greenfield's population remains Sikh, there are also sizeable Hindu and Muslim communities within the area and a small number of Christians (Baumann 1996). The 2001 Census figures for the two wards I studied in Greenfield provide an indication of the size and range of religious groups in the area.

Table 3.2: Breakdown of religion of population in Team A and B wards, Greenfield, 2001 Census**

Religion	Team A ward (%)	Team B ward (%)
Sikh	36.58	39.53
Hindu	20.35	15.99
Muslim	18.86	16.89
Christian	15.90	18.87

Source: Office for National Statistics, 2001 Census

http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/

**Figures for religious groups totalling less than 5% have not been included in the table. At the time of finalising this thesis ethnic and religious breakdowns were not available from the 2011 Census.

Even within religious communities there are considerable caste and regional differences (Ballard, 1994; Bachu, 1986; Baumann, 1996), indeed mirroring themes in the wider identities literature, ethnographies describe how people in Greenfield often have a multiple identities and allegiances (Baumann, 1996; Gilroy, 1997; Hall, 2009). As Baumann (1996: 5) aptly summarised in his ethnography of the area in the 1990s: 'All but the most single-minded of adult [people] it turned out, regarded themselves as members of several *communities* at once, each with its own *culture*'. Baumann (1996) described how, in line with the wider race and identities literature, the way people defined themselves was very much dictated by context:

> *'The same person could speak and act as a member of a Muslim community in one context, in another take sides against other Muslims as a member of a Pakistani community, and in a third count himself as part of the Punjabi community that excluded other Muslims but included Hindus, Sikhs and even Christians',* (Baumann, 1996: p5).

These shifting, fluid differences between different religious, national and regional communities in Greenfield have been accompanied by emerging generational differences in Greenfield and the presence of first, second and even third generation people (Baumann, 1996). While research suggests that young Indians in Greenfield had good relationships with their parents and shared many of their views, differences in their perspectives also began to emerge (Ballard, 1979; Bachu, 1986; Bains, 1988; Sharma, Hutnyk and Sharma, 1996).

The Southall Black Sisters have also underlined the considerable gender differences within Greenfield's communities, campaigning for increased recognition of the gender-based violence and oppression experienced by

some women in the area (Siddiqui, 2003; Gill, 2004). The Sister's arguments that women have very different experiences of Greenfield from men have been echoed in other studies (Robinson and Frankenberg, 2000; Valentine and Sporton, 2009). For example, Robinson and Frankenberg's (2000) research with young people in Greenfield found that Asian young women in the area were defined as the property of their male relatives, while young white women felt they were viewed very much as available for short-term relationships. Valentine and Sporton (2009) uncovered similar themes in their research on young peoples identities, describing how, while many people in Greenfield had a positive sense of belonging to the area, a young Asian Mauritian woman who was gay felt very much an outsider in what she felt was a conservative Asian community.

While Indian communities in Greenfield have produced some of Britain's key campaigning organisations such as the Southall Black Sisters and The Monitoring Group, those living in Greenfield have questioned the extent to which community organisations and leaders represent the majority of diverse peoples and perspectives in Greenfield (Bains, 1988; Joshi, 2003; Johal, 2003). For example, the Southall Black Sisters have criticised male community leaders and male dominated community organisations arguing that not only do they fail to represent women's interests, they have been hostile to the Sister's attempts to expose women's experiences of domestic violence and criticised them for undermining Asian family life, traditions and values (Joshi, 2003; Johal, 2003). Bains (1988: 240) has been equally condemnatory, arguing that the majority of what he terms

'professional ethnics' in Greenfield, who are consulted by statutory services do not represent the interests, perspectives and needs of the vast majority of people living in the area.

Conclusion

As I have described in this chapter, Greenfield is in many ways a unique area in which to study policing Britain's ethnically diverse communities. The ever increasing diversity of the population, the history of conflict between police and people, and the area's somewhat contradictory picture of community organisations (encompassing both inspirational collective action and unrepresentative leaders), means that in many ways the area exemplifies contemporary policing challenges. While the area's uniqueness may undermine the extent to which my findings are applicable to other contexts, the location of this study, with all its resulting contradictions and complexities provides perhaps an original insight into policing ethnic diversity. Having described Greenfield, its history and its peoples, the following chapter describes police officers' perspectives on the area and local communities.

Chapter Four: Police perspectives on Greenfield

Introduction

In this chapter I outline the main themes in officers' perspectives on Greenfield and its ethnically diverse communities. Before presenting my substantive findings I open with a discussion about why it was important that officers developed prior understandings of the people they were policing and the levels of knowledge officers could be expected to have about different communities. I then describe officers' perspectives on: Greenfield the foreign land; established Asian communities; Muslims, the suspect population; Somalis the 'problematic' new arrivals; other 'problem' populations; and how class, age and language intersected to shape officers' perceptions of people. I conclude by describing an incident which illustrated how a lack of information about Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities combined with a fear of disciplinary action could result in young, inexperienced officers policing ineffectively.

Understanding Greenfield

Exploring officers' perspectives on Greenfield inevitably involved implicit judgements about the levels of knowledge officers should have about different communities and the balance between having sufficient background knowledge and over-generalising about different ethnic groups. How individuals form prior understandings or 'stereotypes' about different ethnic groups has been the subject of much definition and debate in both the policing and race literature (Back and Solomos, 1996; Hall, 1997; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Murji and Solomos, 2004). As Bowling

and Phillips (2002: 37) note, far from being the, 'Exclusive preserve of bigots', stereotyping is actually an essential part of understanding and responding to the social world, as stereotypes fill the gap between the limited information individuals are given in any situation and their ability to interpret and act accordingly.

Yet as Hall (1997: 257) notes, power relations are implicit within the process of stereotyping, for it creates the potential for groups of people, specifically those from ethnic minorities to be reduced to simple, essential characteristics, defining them as separate from the white 'norm'. As illustrated in chapter one, there is a substantial body of evidence indicating that historically police 'stereotypes' about minority ethnic communities have at best been over-generalised and inapplicable to most members of the ethnic group, or at worst racist (Bowling and Phillips, 2002: 36).

Consequently, Hall (1997: 257-258) argues that we should adopt Dyer's (1977) distinction between *types* and *stereotypes*. Dyer (1977: 28 in Hall, 1997: 257) notes that we are always interpreting and making sense of the social world through wider categories that are either *types* or *stereotypes*. The *types* that we use to position people within the social world are simple, vivid, memorable widely recognised characterizations in which a few traits of the group in question are fore-grounded, offering opportunity for some degree of change or flexibility (Dyer, 1977, in Hall, 1997: 257-258). These types, necessary to enable us to understand the world, are distinct from *stereotypes*, which reduce everything about people to a few essentialized, fixed characteristics (Dyer, 1977 in Hall, 1997: 258-259).

The process of stereotyping also demarcates what is considered the 'norm' and those who are excluded from this, or are the 'Other' (Hall, 1997: 258-259).

Developing prior understandings or 'types' is particularly essential in policing, for as Bittner (1967: 701) noted in his early research, the police role often requires officers to respond to complex, conflicting, ambiguous situations and provide, 'A solution to an unknown problem arrived at by unknown means'. Muir (1977) emphasised the importance of developing what he termed 'good judgement', arguing it was a critical part of being a, 'professional policeman' able to predict future events and classify people and situations accurately. In Britain, Kinesey and Young (1982) also emphasised the critical role that good judgement played in policing, arguing that the police cannot suspect everyone equally of every crime and therefore developing prior understandings of communities and their crime issues was essential. However, implicit with these arguments is the notion that the 'types' officers use to understand and respond to the social world need to be sufficiently reflexive, responsive and above all accurate about the people and situations they are policing, instead of rigid, fixed stereotypes (Bittner, 1967; Muir, 1977; Kinesey and Young, 1982; Bowling and Phillips, 2002).

As described in the preceding chapters, existing research has focussed on whether racism continues to shape officers' thinking about minority ethnic communities (Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). While my thesis is about racism, I want to broaden my analysis to examine not only whether police officers' perspectives or 'types' about

different communities in Greenfield were racist, but also whether they accurately reflected the social world they were policing. My reasons for adding this extra layer to my analysis is perhaps best illustrated by the opening of Blum's (2002) seminal book, 'I'm not a racist but…the moral quandary of race'. Blum (2002: vii) describes how:

> '*Two years ago, the University of Massachusetts at Boston, where I teach, examined the 'racial climate' on campus, and students were encouraged to air their concerns. Karen and some other African American students concluded that the department did not feel hospitable to them. They reported their findings to members of the department and Joe, a white professor, was fairly representative of his colleagues in reacting defensively. He felt he had been charged with being a racist, and found it hard to hear what the black students had to say. Further investigation revealed that virtually all students, not just blacks, found the department generally unfriendly. Joe was relieved: 'At least it isn't racial'. The issue seemed to lose some of its urgency. Karen and her fellow students felt their concerns had been swept under the rug'.* (Blum, 2002: vii)

As vividly illustrated by this vignette, in the obsessive, emotive focus on whether the department was or was not racist, the central issue of whether it was a hospitable, supportive place for minority ethnic students ended up being overlooked. Consequently in this chapter, and indeed my entire thesis, I want to examine not only whether policing was racist, but also whether it was sufficiently responsive to the needs, perspectives and situations of the ethnically diverse people being policed.

While officers could not be expected to have intricate, detailed knowledge of the multiple peoples they were responsible for policing, officers could be expected to have a basic understanding of the main characteristics of different communities to enable them to use 'good judgement' when policing the area (Muir, 1977; Kinesey and Young, 1982). Furthermore, where further detailed knowledge or translator services were required, officers should have drawn upon further information and assistance as required. For example, while officers could not reasonably be expected to

all have an intricate knowledge of the clan differences among Somali communities, they should have been aware that such divisions existed and if necessary, approached Somali organisations for further information and advice. Similarly, officers could not be expected to have a detailed knowledge of the respective histories, cultures, languages and religions of Asian communities in Greenfield, but they should have been aware that the 'Asian' population comprised a number of different national, regional and religious communities.

The following sections describe the main themes or 'types' underpinning officers' understandings of Greenfield. However before presenting my substantive findings I open with a short descriptive piece on my first experiences of Greenfield police station's front office, to provide a sense of how it felt to enter the police station as an ordinary member of the public.

Greenfield Station 'front office'

During my initial fieldwork in September 2004 I spent much time, unintentionally, waiting in the public reception of Greenfield Police Station for officers from the 24- Hour Relief Team to collect me so that I could accompany them on patrol. During my initial scoping work I had always met senior officers of Inspector-level or above in Ebury Borough Headquarters, where I would be met on arrival by secretaries or the officers themselves and escorted into the building and supplied with refreshments. My time in Greenfield station reception was my first insight into entering a police station as an ordinary member of the public, rather than as a Home Office researcher.

Overall the experience was a depressing one – I would sit in the dreary, dirty, reception with other people (mainly of Asian origin) waiting to be allowed to approach the reception desk staff. This was more challenging than might first be supposed – people calling into the station had to wait in an outer office, partitioned off from the inner reception by a security door. Reception staff would intermittently let people into an 'inner reception' where they could speak to reception staff through a thick glass partition.

While the initial reasons for the physical structure of the reception may have been practical (it allowed members of the public a degree of privacy when speaking to desk staff and protected desk officers from violent members of the public) it gave an overall feeling that officers were far removed and inaccessible. Other elements of the physical environment reinforced the feeling that members of the public were unwelcome – the reception was shabby and the walls were adorned with tattered posters.

Most of these were warnings about crime and security – one prominently displayed poster stated, 'False reporting of mobile phone thefts is an offence', a warning, if one was needed, that liars would not be tolerated. The one poster providing information on the contact details of senior officers in Greenfield was out of date – some of the individuals named were no longer in post and the telephone numbers listed were incorrect.

The unwelcoming atmosphere of the physical space was reinforced by the reception staff who were invariably cold and dismissive – as I approached the desk they regarded me unsmiling, silent and standoffish. Sometimes, when I explained to the middle-aged white women behind the desk that I was meeting a specific officer for work purposes their manner would change and they would become friendlier, on some occasions ushering me behind a security door to wait with them.

However the middle-aged Asian male desk officer was invariably unfriendly, ordering me back into the outer reception to wait (as happened to most members of the public). My experiences were by no means unique - a number of people waiting with me would make passing remarks about the rudeness of the reception staff. A young Asian girl who came to report that she had lost her purse whilst shopping remarked as she came out of the inner office that the middle-aged Asian male desk officer was, 'A rude, horrible man'.

The people in the 'front office', as it was referred to, were perhaps what one might expect in any police station in a metropolitan area. Aside from the odd professional on business, (lawyer, social worker or doctor), or offender coming to report to officers in charge of their case, the majority of people were from the local area (young, old, men, women) who needed, for whatever reason to contact the police.

The atmosphere in the reception was usually calm and orderly – people queued patiently for their turn, often waiting for long periods of time, to be allowed into the inner reception. People were polite and friendly – there was no jostling, no pushing to get into the reception or conflict over the sparse seating. On a couple of occasions people offered their seats to women, children or the elderly and once even allowed a young Black man to move to the front of the queue as he had to hurry to work.

When one of the sergeants participating in my fieldwork realised I had been waiting in reception he said, 'Give me a ring on the mobile in future – we can't have you stuck out there with that lot!' It seemed to me 'that lot' were not the problem.

Greenfield - a 'foreign land'

Many white officers policing Greenfield viewed the area as a 'foreign', somewhat confusing place. Although many knew that, as discussed in chapter three, the area drew Asian people from around the UK most were somewhat bemused as to why they came. For example, as a white

sergeant who had worked in the area for a number of years, Officer 19, said: 'We get people coming from the North, Birmingham…I'd love to know why people come here, I mean what's the attraction?' apparently unaware that Greenfield was one of the main Asian shopping areas of Britain and included a range of places of worship and community organisations.

Despite finding the area foreign and confusing, the vast majority of officers were not hostile towards Greenfield and either regarded it with indifference, or said that they enjoyed working there. The idea of 'problem' neighbourhoods has been an ongoing theme in Criminology since the early studies of the Chicago School, (Downes and Rock, 2011), with recent analysis by Wacquant (2010) describing how disadvantaged, multi-ethnic neighbourhoods have become increasingly stigmatised as lawless, no-go areas. Yet these themes did not appear to be reflected in most officers' perceptions of Greenfield and, though most white officers found the area bewildering, they did not necessarily regard it as a 'problem' or high crime area. Only one officer, Officer 1, a middle-aged, white PC who had worked in the area for years expressed overtly critical, hostile views, describing Greenfield as a 'Ghetto', and, 'A dumping ground for the dispossessed'.

However by contrast many white officers said enjoyed working in Greenfield, citing the friendliness of 'local Asian people' and the fact that 'Asians' were 'pro-police' as being the main benefits of working in the area. A young male PC, Officer 2, when describing Greenfield and its crime problems said: 'To be honest, Greenfield's a pretty ok area to work

in – most people are friendly'. His remarks were echoed by a number of white officers, including two young female white PCs, Officers 9 and 10 who said local people were generally 'Really nice'. Officer 9 expanded on how helpful local Asian people were by recounting how, as she was pursuing a suspect through Greenfield early one morning, elderly Asian men taking their morning walks attempted to help her. She said, 'They were so sweet…I lost him [the suspect] and they were shouting 'he's gone that way!''

Many Asian officers also liked working in Greenfield; while, as described in chapter five, a minority of Asian officers wanted to work in the area to serve local Asian communities, the majority liked working in the area for more instrumental reasons as they felt their abilities to speak different Asian languages and cultural knowledge, gave them an advantage over white officers when policing 'Little India' (see chapter five).

Yet irrespective of whether or not they liked Greenfield, it was clear that most white officers regarded the area as 'foreign'. A young white male PC, Officer 2, summarised the view of many of his colleagues when he said: 'There's not many Londoners in Greenfield'. Yet somewhat ironically, as described in chapter three, Asian communities had been resident in Greenfield since the 1950s therefore most young Asian people would have been Londoners, born in the area (Baumann, 1996).

Furthermore, while it was perhaps understandable that many white officers found the area bewildering given its' plethora of different communities,

Greenfield's ethnic diversity was not unique, for as described in chapter one, the UK, and London in particular, has absorbed significant numbers of immigrants from India, Africa and the West Indies since the Second World War. The ethnic diversity of the capital at the time of my research was illustrated by the 2001 Census, undertaken just a few years before my fieldwork – the 2001 Census showed that 7.9% (4.6 million) of the UK's population was from a non-white ethnic group and that 45% of non-white people lived in London (ONS, 2005)[1].

Officers' confusion about Greenfield was perhaps most graphically illustrated by the challenges they had negotiating the area's geography. Although as described in chapter six, officers from neighbourhood policing teams had a better knowledge of their areas of Greenfield, the majority of white officers working in emergency response policing almost invariably had difficulties when trying to find addresses and locations in Greenfield when attending calls. Almost in direct contrast to the policing studies of Bittner, (1967), Muir (1977), Van Maanen (2006) and Loftus (2012) that describe officers developing an intricate knowledge of their areas, when officers received calls they usually had considerable difficulty in finding the street, house, temple, mosque, or shop that they needed. Problems were often compounded by the fact that radio reception was often poor, as one young white male PC remarked during a particularly bad morning: 'Radios are pretty shit today, it's like blankety fucking blank – fill in the missing words!'

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[1] Ethnic breakdowns of 2011 Census data for London were not available at the time of finalising this thesis.

Established Asian communities

Despite regarding Greenfield as foreign, most white officers recognised that 'Asians' were the area's established communities or as they sometimes put it, 'the indigenous population'. However, although Asian communities in Greenfield encompassed a diverse range of peoples, (Baumann, 1996) white officers in Greenfield overwhelmingly tended to classify different communities under the generic category of 'Asian', in a way that obscured, rather than illuminated the considerable diversity of peoples and cultures in the area.

Many white officers articulated views about the supposed characteristics and cultural practices of 'Asians'; underpinning their views was an idea that Asian communities were rigidly structured and hierarchical. For example, a white male sergeant, Officer 19 reflected the understandings of many of his colleagues when he described how in Asian communities: 'The man is the head of the family and above him there is the head of the temple'. Officers also perceived that these structures were very much male-dominated, with men acting as the authority figures in families and communities. Officer 1 summarised, 'Asian girls…they're second-class citizens', (see chapter seven for further discussion).

Echoing themes in wider media and political discourses (Alexander, 2002), many white officers believed that there were significant generational divisions, even conflicts in 'the Asian Community'. For example, a white middle-aged Inspector, Officer 23 said, 'Young people are more like us [English people] but they have to hide what they do from their parents'.

Officer 1 expressed more critical views, saying: 'Kids can't talk to the parents, they're [the parents] traditional, backward, trying to live as they do in India'. He argued that Asian parents' repressive attitudes exacerbated problems such as drug abuse, 'They don't know how to handle it [drug addiction] – they just get their kids…married off'. However officers' perceptions were not supported by the available research evidence on young Asian people in Britain and Greenfield itself, as the evidence suggests that far from being in conflict with their parents many young people from Asian communities share their parents' views on a range of issues, (Ballard, 1979; Bachu, 1985; Modood *et al*, 1994; Baumann, 1996; Wardak, 2000).

There was also a perception among some white officers that 'Asians' in Greenfield were unwilling to integrate into mainstream British society, a view which reflected themes in wider media and political discourses (Cantle, 2001; Phillips, 2006; Alexander, 2007). The most extreme views were expressed by Officer 1 who said: 'Asians have got no sense of community, they're just interested in their own little family and possibly their temple and that's it'. He also said: 'I've been a police officer here for years but I'm still an outsider…if I fell in love with an Indian girl they'd [local Asian people] never accept it'. Although mixed marriages were not common in Greenfield there were some instances, such as the Indian headmistress of the local primary school who informed Officer 1 that her son-in-law was a white Frenchman.

Officer 23, the white male Police-Community Liaison Inspector, while not expressing such critical views also complained that Asian people were reluctant to mix with white people and 'Integrate'. He said, "I get on alright with the Sikh members but even they never say, 'Come out for a meal, bring your wife'". However neither did the white representatives Officer 23 engaged with, yet he did not view this as a sign of 'not wanting to integrate'.

However not all white officers viewed Greenfield's Asian communities as unwilling to integrate. In direct contrast to the views of Officers 1 and 23, a white female superintendent, Officer 28 said: 'Asian communities are no different to anyone else - like the many communities that have come before them, such as the Jews, they are integrating and becoming part of British society'.

Similarly, a minority of white officers had more nuanced understandings of the diversity of Asian communities. For example, Officer 26, a young white male Inspector, recognised the diversity of peoples, religions and communities within the so-called 'Asian' group. While he had greater levels of knowledge about certain religions and cultures than others, where necessary he would draw upon advice from minority ethnic officers to ensure he fully understood the people and situations he was policing (see chapter five). Similarly Officer 24, a young white male Inspector leading on community liaison, was also keenly aware of the differences between Asian communities, and sought to ensure that the divergent

views of different Asian communities were fully taken into account in community consultation.

Furthermore, a young white male PC on an emergency response team who was married to an Indian woman, Officer 12, appreciated that the majority of Asian people in Greenfield were Indian and had a basic understanding of the religious and cultural differences within these communities, unlike many of his colleagues. Furthermore, unlike many of his white colleagues who assumed that 'Asian' people in Greenfield were 'pro-police', Officer 12 had a heightened sensitivity or awareness of local people's opinions of the police and almost an anxiety that police actions should not appear insensitive or discriminatory. He said, 'My wife and family think the police are racist…I try and tell them it's changed now'.

Officer 12's anxiety about public perceptions of the police was perhaps best illustrated by an incident that occurred when I was accompanying him and one of his colleagues on a routine car patrol of Greenfield. As we waited at a set of traffic lights a minibus carrying elderly Indian people pulled up next to the police car and when I glanced up I saw that the elderly people were staring at us with undisguised curiosity, perhaps surprised to see a young Indian woman in the back of a police car. While I found the situation amusing Officer 12 became visibly uncomfortable, and turning bright red he said, 'Oh God, they're probably thinking why have we [the police] got hold of that nice respectable young girl'. When his colleague made some remark to the effect that there was no real issue, Officer 12 replied, 'It doesn't look good'.

Crime problems

Both white and Asian officers regarded Asian communities in Greenfield as generally law-abiding. Though officers made some references to drug addiction being a problem amongst young Asian people, most felt that, in the main, Asian people committed few crimes. A young white male PC, Officer 8, said there were no serious crime problems among Greenfield's Asian communities but that, 'You sometimes get problems because of their cultural practices like arranged marriages'. Similarly, a middle-aged Pakistani sergeant, Officer 17 said: 'You don't get much crime round here…Asian people are more law-abiding, more moral'.

Although Asians were regarded as generally law-abiding, officers believed fraud and bribery offences were crime problems within 'the Asian community'. As a young White sergeant, Officer 21, summarised, 'With Asians it's mainly fraud', echoing views expressed by officers in early studies (Cain, 1973; Graef, 1989). An example of 'Asian fraud' was the allegedly pervasive problem of people claiming mobile phone insurance fraudulently. A young white female PC, Officer 11, said: 'They were all scamming their insurance and reporting their mobiles stolen even when they weren't so they could claim – in the end we had to put a notice up in reception'.

However, one of my former Home Office colleagues, a Black Metropolitan Police Superintendent, explained this was a misperception and he was present when it was decided to put these notices in all stations across London, not just Greenfield. He explained:

'It was just a stupid conversation in the pub, this DI said he reckoned mobile phone theft figures had gone up because of false reporting – we thought we could try putting up notices in stations to try and bring the figures down – it's nothing to do with Black and Asian people committing fraud, the notices went up all over London'.

Crime data for the area also contradicted officers' perceptions. Police statistics for the two Greenfield wards included in my study show that in 2005, only 56 of a total of 3,366 offences were listed as being for fraud or forgery.

Some officers also expressed fears that Asian people in Greenfield would try to bribe them. For example, an Asian officer, Officer 17, said that Asian people would, 'Try and bribe me, so I keep my distance', believing that as an Asian officer he would be more likely to be approached. When I asked Officer 17 to elaborate what he meant by bribery he said, 'You know, be all friendly, give me stuff and then expect me to turn a blind eye'. Similarly a white community-liaison Inspector, Officer 23 said: 'You know what Punjabis are like - I'm always careful with them, if they offer me a free meal or anything I mean, as I don't want any allegations or claims on me later on'.

This heightened concern about bribery among some officers could have in part reflected the fact that during my fieldwork a formal complaint was made by some Sikh people in Greenfield who alleged that senior police officers were, 'In the pocket', of the head of one of the main Sikh temples in the area. The allegations centred on a fracas at the temple, during which the seventy-four year old Head of the Temple allegedly assaulted someone. Officers attending the incident did not arrest the Head of the

Temple (according to officers because there was insufficient evidence), and some Sikh people interpreted this as evidence of police corruption. The assumption among some Indian people that corruption was involved might have stemmed from the fact that police corruption is a widely acknowledged problem in India (Belur, 2009).

Yet despite professing to be concerned about possible bribery attempts, Officer 23 never appeared to consider how his own behaviour could potentially prompt an approach. In contradiction to the views he expressed above about being 'careful' with 'Punjabis', Officer 23 would visit certain restaurants in Greenfield with the express intention of claiming free meals, on occasion offering to 'treat' me, at the restaurant owner's expense. Echoing themes from Punch's (1985) research into police corruption in Amsterdam, Officer 23 did not appear to recognise that his acceptance of even these small gifts, might, as Punch (1985) put it, alter the relationship between the giver and himself, potentially indebting him. Nor did Officer 23 consider how his conduct might appear to local people, or whether it might create an impression that he would give favours in return for hospitality (Punch, 2009).

Muslims - the suspect population

However the main crime problem in the 'Asian community' that pre-occupied many officers was not fraud, but Islamic terrorism. In some ways this was perfectly understandable given the extensive political, public and media concern with terrorist crimes during my fieldwork (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Mythen *et al*, 2009; Dornhof, 2009; Brittain, 2009;

Pickering and McCulloch, 2010; Murray, 2010; Schierup and Alund, 2011;

Zemni, 2011). However many officers appeared not to appreciate that only

a minority of Muslims have been involved in terrorist offences (Thiel,

2009), or that following terrorist incidents Muslims themselves have

become more vulnerable to racist attacks (Allen and Nielsen, 2002;

Mythen *et al,* 2009).

The most extreme views were expressed by the middle-aged, white PC,

Officer 1 who frequently lectured his colleagues on Islam saying, 'Islam is

fundamentalist – there's no argument with them, 'It's in the Qu'ran', is the

justification' and said of Muslims, 'They're all fucking terrorists'. Officer 1's

views appeared to reflect themes in wider political and media discourses

which have framed Muslims as religious fundamentalists (Kundnani, 2007;

Dornhof, 2009; Zemni 2011; Schierup, and Alund 2011). His views also

chimed with opinions expressed by some officers in Loftus' (2012)

research, who regarded Muslims as illiberal and holding values that were

in direct opposition to mainstream British society.

Although the majority of officers did not express views that were as

extreme as those of Officer 1, many felt that terrorism was one of the

principal crime problems in Asian or Muslim communities. A young white

male sergeant, Officer 21, summarised the view of many of his colleagues

when he said:

> *'Call me a racist but it's a fact - there are racial differences in crimes…take these
> terrorist attacks last month, the fact is they were carried out by Asians, now we'd
> be stupid if we started targeting old grannies, we need to be targeting the people
> doing this, Asians, Muslims'.*

Even officers who had positive views of Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities tended to be pre-occupied with issues of terrorism, as perhaps best illustrated by the example of Officer 24, a young white male Inspector who took over from Officer 23 as community-liaison officer. Despite being keen to engage with different ethnic communities, Officer 24 was suspicious of Muslims who he believed, 'Did not want to integrate', and were pre-disposed to terrorism. Officer 24's preoccupation with terrorism tended to dominate his interactions with Muslim communities as perhaps best illustrated by his visit to a local mosque. The visit was essentially a community-relations exercise, and intended to reassure mosque officials who, during an incident involving a man disturbing the peace, had called the police for help and received no response. Officer 24 decided to visit the mosque personally, explaining to me that, 'We've given them a bit of a poor service so I want to apologise, find out what their problems are and get them sorted'.

Upon arriving at the mosque Officer 24 was met by senior officials who served him tea and explained their problems. The mosque officials said that a mentally unstable member of the congregation had been lurking in the shower area of the mosque, even during times when it was reserved for the exclusive use of female worshippers. Although officials did not wish to ban the man from the premises he had become aggressive and obstructive and as a last resort senior mosque officials had called the police for assistance but no-one had come. Officer 24 was friendly, respectful and helpful, taking the time to fully understand the issues

involved and agree a course of police action that the mosque officials found acceptable.

Having successfully resolved the issue, at the conclusion of the discussion Officer 24 then asked the officials, with no preamble, 'So what do you reckon to all this Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism?' Officials were quick to deny any links or sympathies with radical groups. After we left the premises I asked Officer 24 what prompted his question and he responded, 'They're all a bit like that, not wanting to integrate or tolerate others'. When I said that the mosque officials had denied links with radical groups Officer 24 responded, 'they have to give the politically correct line but that's not what they really think'.

Echoing themes from the wider literature (Hall, 2012), officers tended to interpret their interactions with Muslims in ways that reinforced rather than challenged their preconceptions, as illustrated by a team of officers who attended an Eid dinner to build relations with local Muslim communities. The team comprised a white male Superintendent leading on community and partnership working, the two white male community liaison Inspectors (PCLOs), Sikh and Muslim neighbourhood policing sergeants and a young white female PC. With the exceptions of the two sergeants - Officer 17 (who was a Muslim himself) and Officer 20 - all the officers voiced critical views of Muslims privately to me during the evening.

For example, a young white female PC, Officer 9, was preoccupied with the idea that the Muslim men she met at the function were sexist, largely

because they did not shake hands with her (although in some Asian cultures it is considered inappropriate for men to initiate physical contact with women). Officer 9 said, 'You know what they all think – they think we're the mistresses of these old men [the other officers]'. However she was unable to give any substantive evidence to support her view.

The two keynote addresses at the dinner, one by the Pakistani Ambassador to the UK and another by an Imam, voiced differing Muslim perspectives. While the Ambassador urged Muslims to integrate into British society, 'If you have no love for them, they will have no love for you', the Imam made various references to, 'Non-Muslim friends joining us', and differences between Muslims and 'idol-worshippers' (Christians and Hindus), during his speech. Rather than interpreting this as evidence of the diversity of perspectives in Muslim communities, the PCLO, Officer 23 said, 'We told you the Muslims don't want to integrate'. When I pointed out that the Ambassador had been very much pro-integration, the other PCLO, Officer 24, interjected, 'She has to give the politically correct line'.

It should be noted that not all officers viewed Muslims as suspect populations. For example, a middle-aged Sikh sergeant, Officer 20 said, 'There's criminals in every race, it's a minority of Muslims involved in terrorism we need to protect the law-abiding', a view that was echoed by the officers reporting to him. Similarly some officers were alert to the fact that following terrorist incidents minority ethnic, most notably Muslim communities, might be at greater risk of racist attacks (Allen and Nielsen, 2002; Mythen *et al*, 2009). A young white Inspector, Officer 26, initiated a

campaign to address race hate crimes in Greenfield. He said: 'After incidents [terrorist attacks] you're bound to see an increase in hate crimes…you get these mindless idiots who victimise innocent people, they can't tell whether someone is Sikh, Hindu or Muslim'. Officer 26 instructed all the neighbourhood policing teams in Greenfield reporting to him to distribute leaflets to houses in Greenfield, display posters and conduct outreach work (such as setting up stalls in community centres), to encourage reporting of racist attacks and provide reassurance to local people. Officer 20 and his team were particularly diligent in performing these tasks, holding police surgeries and conducting extensive enquiries to uncover any instances of racist victimisation in their ward.

Somalis - 'problematic' new arrivals

As described in chapter three, one of the most recently arrived communities in Greenfield were Somalis who had begun arriving in Greenfield since the conflict in their homeland during the 1990s (Baumann, 1996). Given that Somalis were a relatively newly arrived group, it was perhaps to be expected that there would be gaps in police officers' knowledge of Somali communities. However there were sources of information for officers to draw on - as Harris (2004), notes, there is a plethora of research on Somalis and indeed some 100 Somali community organisations in London alone. However most officers I observed appeared to have little awareness of the issues within Somali communities surrounding deprivation and the after effects of civil war (as described in chapter three).

Instead officers overwhelmingly tended to view Somalis in Greenfield as a problem population or as Van Maanen (2006) described in his early study, 'assholes', that is to say a problematic group challenging the established order of Greenfield (Reiner, 2000a). Again, the most extreme views were voiced by Officer 1 who, when asked what Somalis were like, replied: 'They're fucking horrible – no-one likes them.' Although not all officers voiced such virulent views, many agreed that Somalis were a 'problem' in Greenfield. For example, a white male PC, Officer 8 said: 'Asians aren't too bad, they don't commit much crime, it's the Blacks, especially the fucking Somalis – they're so aggressive – I know they've had a civil war in their country but that's not everyone else's problem'.

Officers' perceptions appeared to stem partly from complaints from resident Asian communities about Somalis. For example, a white male sergeant, Officer 19 described how Somalis were the, 'New immigrants', and how their behaviour and habits caused problems for, 'local Asian people'. He gave numerous examples of the 'problem' behaviours of Somalis, including the tendency of Somali men to 'hang around' the streets. He said, 'On Fridays after their prayers they hang around outside their café on [Road X] and Asian women feel uncomfortable and can't walk about freely anymore'. A number of other officers referred to problems with, 'Gangs of Somali lads hanging around', and Officer 1 referred to, 'A big fight between Sri Lankans and Somalis – three people were stabbed'.

In some ways these problems were predictable, given that immigrants often experience hostility from the resident population when they settle in

new areas (Foster, 1999; Solomos and Back, 1996; Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Yet what is noteworthy is not that officers referred to these issues and tensions, but that they appeared to accept that it was Somalis who were problematic, rather than recognising that the complaints they received could stem from prejudice and hostility towards the incomers. For example, though Officer 19 acknowledged that, 'how much [of reported problems with Somalis] is perception and how much is actual harassment is difficult to tell', he viewed the root cause of problems being the behaviour of Somalis, not the misperceptions or hostility of Asian communities.

As in the case of Muslims, officers tended to engage with Somalis in ways that reinforced their preconceptions that Somalis were aggressive. This was perhaps best illustrated by an incident involving a young white female PC from a neighbourhood policing team, Officer 11. As we were patrolling Greenfield, we saw a Somali man illegally parked at a bus stop; Officer 11 marched up to the man's vehicle and banged her fist on the bonnet of the car, shouting, 'Do you want a 200 quid fine? Do you? Shift that now!' The man responded angrily, jumping out of his car and shouting, 'You think you can talk to me like that? I have a law degree, I know the law, I know my rights!' Another Somali man hearing the fracas came out of a local shop and tried to calm the situation, pushing the man back into his car and encouraging him to move the vehicle whilst apologising effusively to the officer, 'Sorry, sorry, he will move, thank you'. As she walked away from the incident Officer 11 remarked, 'I told you, they're fucking aggressive – I could have had him for public order'.

Crime problems

Somalis were also viewed by officers as having a tendency to be involved in drug abuse and drug-related offending. Most officers referred to the widespread use of a hallucinogenic called Khat within the Somali community. Khat use was not illegal at the time of my research, however officers claimed that it caused numerous crime problems, as Somalis under the influence of the drug would be involved in car accidents and become violent.

The tendency among officers to assume that Somalis were involved in drug-use, irrespective of their wider characteristics was perhaps best illustrated by Officer 1's interpretation of a call he attended at a Somali hairdresser shop in Greenfield. The hairdressers, a couple of shabby rooms above a Pakistani Halal butcher shop on a main shopping street, functioned as a meeting place as well as a hair salon for local Somalis. The elderly woman who ran the premises contacted her neighbourhood policing team after receiving a leaflet advertising their services and the call was allocated to Officer 1. Upon arriving at the hairdressers, the elderly woman, using a young Somali man as a translator, explained to Officer 1 that young Black and Asian men lurked at the bottom of the iron stairs that provided access to her shop, taking drugs. She said despite calling the emergency response police, no one had come to help and that the Asians who owned the building and ran the butcher's shop were not aware of the problem, hence her appeal to the neighbourhood policing team for help.

Officer 1, though civil provided little assistance, telling the elderly woman that she could call him if there were further problems and he would come if he happened to be on duty but that otherwise she should dial 999, even though she repeatedly attempted to explain that previously when she had called the emergency response teams no-one had come. As we left the shop and moved out of earshot, Officer 1 told me that he believed the woman to be involved in drug activity herself. When I asked why he believed this to be the case he said, 'I told you – she's Somali, they're all into drugs, Khat mainly…what do you think they do up there when they meet?'

Home Office research with people from Somali, Yemini and Ethiopian communities (Sykes *et al*, 2010) found some evidence to support officers' perceptions that Khat use was common among Somalis, as the researchers found that Khat use was widespread in these communities. However, a review examining the available evidence on the social problems allegedly associated with Khat use (such as crime), concluded that contrary to officers' perceptions, there was insufficient evidence that Khat use was linked to wider social and crime problems within Somali communities (Anderson and Carrier, 2011). Instead Anderson and Carrier (2011) argued that any apparent problems within Somali communities were more likely to be linked to the pressures Somalis suffer, including problems of integrating into a new society and the after effects of civil war in their homeland.

It should be noted that not all officers in Greenfield regarded Somalis as a 'problem' and indeed some officers were working to build links with local Somali communities. For example, a middle-aged Sikh sergeant who headed a neighbourhood policing team, Officer 20, was aware of the potential difficulties faced by Somalis as new immigrants, and instructed his team to regularly visit a Somali café to build informal, friendly relationships with local people (see chapter six). The police had raided the café previously on suspicion that it was being used for drug activity, and Officer 20 wanted to restore Somali people's confidence in the police and ensure that: 'They know we're here to help them as well'.

While it is not possible to assess how Somalis in Greenfield felt about the way the way they were policed, the IPCC's qualitative research into public perceptions of the police in London and other Metropolitan areas suggested that recently arrived Somalis are not as supportive of the police as other migrants (Wake *et al,* 2007). Wake *et al* (2007) found that newly arrived migrants from India, Eastern Europe, China, Poland and Pakistan tended to be overwhelmingly 'pro-police', viewing the British police as superior to the police in their countries of origin and incorruptible, helpful and fair. Wake *et al* (2007) explained the positive perceptions of new migrants as due to the fact that their views were based largely on preconceptions, rather than actual contacts with the police. However the notable exceptions to this were Somali migrants, none of whom were pro-police (Wake *et al,* 2007)[2].

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[2] However the researchers noted that Somali people's low levels of confidence in the police could also have been partly explained by local factors such as the death of a Somali man at a police station in London at the time of their research (Wake et al, 2007).

Other 'problem populations'

Somalis were not the only people to be viewed as a 'problem' group in Greenfield, and officers referred to other people who caused problems in the area, specifically Eastern Europeans, asylum seekers, travellers and Black people.

Eastern Europeans

While Ebury had a long-established Polish population who had been resident in the UK since shortly after the end of the second world war, the majority of Eastern Europeans in Greenfield had arrived more recently in the 1990s and were mainly economic migrants (Baumann, 1996). While Eastern European people were not problematised to the same extent as Somalis, a minority of officers referred to the difficulties with these communities. For example Officer 1 made passing references to problems with 'Polish drunks' who were 'aggressive'. Similarly a middle-aged, Indian male PCSO who lived in Greenfield, Officer 30, made remarks about, 'The Poles', being 'aggressive', to his colleagues on his neighbourhood policing team.

Asylum seekers

Some officers also referred to problems with 'asylum seekers', discussing national media reports of crimes committed by these groups. For example, an Asian male PCSO in a neighbourhood policing team, Officer 30, would frequently refer to articles he had read in *The Sun* newspaper about crimes committed by so-called 'asylum seekers'. Both he and a PC from the same neighbourhood policing team, Officer 11, tended to view people

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who were 'asylum seekers' in Greenfield with suspicion, as perhaps best illustrated by an incident that occurred during one of their routine foot patrols of Greenfield. As I was accompanying Officer 11 on a patrol of the neighbourhood, Officer 30 sought us out, claiming that he had found a man he believed was an asylum seeker 'lurking in a car park'. Officers 11 and 30 proceeded rapidly to the car park where we found a man of Asian appearance in his thirties standing by a somewhat packed car. Officer 11 immediately began questioning him aggressively, demanding to know what he was doing in the car park and asking to see his 'papers'.

The man was polite and deferential, explaining in his limited English that his wife had thrown him out and that he had to sleep in his car. He produced some papers (which I could not look at closely), and though Officer 11 informed him that, 'You can't sleep in the car park', her attitude towards him began to soften, mainly due to the man's continued deference and submissiveness. As we walked away Officer 11 confided to me, 'I always check their [asylum seeker's] papers but to be honest I don't really know what I'm checking for!'

Travellers

While only a minority of officers made references to problems with asylum seekers and Eastern Europeans, the perception that travellers were problematic was far more widespread, particularly among rank and file officers. Officers generally referred to travellers as 'pikeys' in a way which echoed officers' routine use of racist terms such as 'Paki' and 'Nigger' when referring to minority ethnic people, prior to the Macpherson Reforms

(Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Macpherson, 1999; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al,* 2005). Many officers referred to the problems travellers caused and some even expressed an overt dislike of these communities. For example, a young white male PC, Officer 8, cheerfully remarked to me after he arrested two travellers for selling stolen goods, 'Travellers are a fucking pet hate of mine'. Similarly Officer 11 described how, after travellers had stolen items from her garden shed, she put metal carpet grip on the inside edge of the fence so that if they attempted to climb the fence to get into her garden again their hands would be severely cut.

Even conscientious officers who worked hard to build links with Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities tended to view travellers as a problem group. For example a young white male PC who was a conscientious member of a neighbourhood policing team, Officer 4, praised an Inspector, Officer 26, as: 'He doesn't take any shit from the Pikeys!' Officer 4 recounted to his colleagues and myself how Officer 26 violently pushed and swore at a traveller during a neighbourhood dispute shouting, 'Get out of my fucking sight you Pikey trash or I'll fucking do you!' to the approval and amusement of officers. It should be noted that Officer 26 was in general a conscientious Inspector, who as described above initiated activity to address potential increases in hate crimes following terrorist attacks.

James (2007) has argued that a combination of successive public order laws problematising gypsy and traveller communities has resulted in police

engagement with travellers occurring primarily in adversarial circumstances, thus colouring officers' perspectives on these communities. The fact that travellers rarely participate in police-community consultation structures exacerbates the problem, giving officers a one-sided view of travellers (James, 2007). These underlying issues might explain why even conscientious officers in Greenfield who responsive to the opinions and needs of local people (such as Officers 4 and 26), tended to view travellers as a 'problem'.

Black communities

Some white officers, most notably those who had worked in areas of London with large West Indian communities, referred to the fact that West Indian, or as they termed them, 'Black' people were 'anti-police'. Officer 1 said, 'I've not been rolling around on the ground with many Asians unlike Blacks'. Similarly, Officer 23, a white middle-aged male Inspector, stated, 'They [Black people] just want to beat us up'.

As discussed in chapter one, officers' perceptions were not wholly misplaced as relations between the police and British Black communities have historically been tense and even adversarial (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rowe, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007). Yet officers rarely acknowledged the wider historical and contextual factors that could result in Black people being 'anti-police' (Mama, 1989; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rowe, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007), and instead tended to dismiss any hostility from Black people as simply belligerence or aggression. For example a young white male PC, Officer 2, described how:

'I stopped this woman, driving all over the place she was, and she started foaming at the mouth and shouting we only stopped her because she was Black and then her old man stuck his head out of the car and said 'Love you were driving like shit' and then she turned on him and he shrank back in the car'.

Furthermore, echoing themes from earlier race and policing studies (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988) a minority of white officers made references to Black people being disproportionately involved in drug-related offending and robbery. For example, a young white male sergeant, Officer 21, said, 'When I was policing in Lambeth 99 out of 100 people I nicked for street robbery were young Black lads'. Yet the limited quantitative data available on crime levels in the two Greenfield wards I studied did not appear to support officers' perceptions that Black people were disproportionately involved in certain types of offending. Of the 890 people accused of a crime in 2005, 210 were African Caribbean compared with 540 who were Indian/Pakistani. In relation to drug-related offending, police data on persons accused of drug offences in the two wards shows that of the 277 people accused of drugs offences in 2005, the majority were Indian/Pakistani (177), while only 65 were African/Caribbean (31 were white).

Even conscientious officers, who never expressed prejudicial views on Black communities sometimes almost unthinkingly assumed that Black people were involved in crime, even when there was little evidence for this. This was perhaps best illustrated by an incident involving a young white male PC, Officer 4, who was a conscientious officer, friendly and helpful to both his West Indian colleagues and West Indian members of the public (see chapter six). I accompanied Officers 4 and 5 to a magistrates court to attend the hearing of a prostitution case. The officers

had petitioned to seize a house in their ward from the defendant renting the premises, as she was alleged to be using the property for prostitution and drug activity. As we sat waiting for the hearing to begin, a young, casually but smartly dressed young Black man entered and sat down in the public seating, politely acknowledging officers. At the conclusion of the hearing, Officer 4 asked, 'Who was that bloke?' referring to the young Black man. When Officer 5 said that he was a student and the son of the Black magistrate officiating Officer 4 replied, 'Oh, I thought he might be one of [the defendant's] punters, or a dealer or a pimp'.

Intersections with class, age and language

In line with findings from other research (Reiner, 2000a; Foster, 2008), the notion that certain people were respectable while others were not was implicit throughout policing in Greenfield. As illustrated by the preceding sections, ethnicity played a role in shaping officers' perceptions of local people, however it was not necessarily the primary influence, as class, age and ability to speak English all shaped officers' views as to whether people were 'respectable' (Reiner, 2000a; Foster *et al*, 2005; Foster, 2008). Officers' notions about who constituted 'respectable' people were best encapsulated by the remarks of two young white female PCs, Officers 9 and 10, as they discussed a recent news story about an injured woman who had received no help from passers by. Officer 9 said: 'This poor Chinese woman was run over and lying in the road and people just drove round her – I'm not being horrible, but if you can see she's nicely dressed and not a junkie or homeless person or something you would surely stop'.

Class

In Greenfield, people who were professionals (doctors, teachers, successful business people) were often treated with greater respect than other members of the public. For example Officer 1 who, as described in this chapter, had hostile views of the area and local people, established good relationships with professionals and the more prosperous shopkeepers in the area who participated in borough-wide police community consultation groups. He had a good relationship with the Indian headmistress of the local primary school in his ward, visiting her regularly. Similarly he would visit the more prosperous shop owners who participated in the Independent Advisory Group (IAG)[3] on his patrols to check whether they needed any police assistance.

The respectable elderly

Middle-class elderly victims also appeared to be viewed sympathetically by officers. For example, a white male sergeant, Officer 19, explained his determination to catch the individuals who assaulted and robbed a retired Indian doctor as he cycled through an underpass on the outskirts Greenfield. Officer 19 said: 'What I can't understand is - he's a retired doctor, a respectable man – ok you rob him, but why do you have to beat him black and blue?' Similarly a young Black female PCSO, Officer 32, said that one of her greatest achievements while working in Greenfield had been the support and reassurance she had been able to provide to elderly people living in the area. Officer 32 cited the example of an elderly

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[3] The IAG constituted the main police-community consultation group for Ebury, the borough in which Greenfield is located.

Indian woman who had her bag snatched, saying 'We visited her a few times after it happened to check she was alright and it really made a difference to her, made her feel there was someone around if something happened again'.

Furthermore, where the elderly committed transgressions officers tended to take a more lenient view. Although two middle-aged male PCs, Officers 13 and 14, had no hesitation fining two young Asian men for travelling in a car without seatbelts, Officer 14 told me that while he had no sympathy with the young men, he felt unhappy about having to issue a fine for the same offence to elderly Asian women during a previous shift. Officer 14 explained how the sergeant he was accompanying forced him to issue a notice against his own inclination, saying: 'There were these two Asian old ladies in a car – he [the sergeant] made me issue them a notice, I felt so bad…poor things'.

Problematic youths

By contrast young people, most notably young men, were viewed as being more likely to be involved in offending or anti-social behaviour than other groups (Reiner, 2000a; Alexander, 2002). For example Officer 26, the Inspector leading the implementation of a new neighbourhood policing initiative explained that its main aim was to tackle the problem of, 'Groups of youths, hanging around, engaging in anti-social behaviour and generally making everyone's life a misery', when in fact the main aim of the initiative was to build relationships with local people (see chapter six). Officer 1 expressed more overtly critical views, informing me that he would not visit

the local secondary school on his beat as the pupils were, 'yobby little shits', who he could 'cheerfully strangle'.

Officers' perceptions were to some extent supported by police statistics on 'persons accused of a crime' in the two wards I studied in Greenfield. In 2005, 783 (88%) of the 890 persons accused of a crime in the two wards I studied were male, the majority of whom were under forty years old, as illustrated by table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Age breakdown of males accused of a crime in Team A and B wards, Greenfield, 2005

Age group of males	Number/percentage accused of a crime
1 to17 years	111 (14%)
18 to 29 years	427 (55%)
30 to 39 years	144 (18%)
40 to 49 years	64 (8%)
50 to 59 years	29 (4%)
60+	8 (1%)
Total	**783 (100%)**

Source: Metropolitan Police data (unpublished management information).

Young men were also cited as being the primary 'Troublemakers' during the evening street celebrations that were held in Greenfield to mark the main Hindu, Sikh and Muslim festivals (Divali, Vasaki and Eid). These celebrations were informal and largely spontaneous, generally involving large groups of people from across London converging on Greenfield's town centre to visit restaurants and places of entertainment, or simply walk or drive around the streets enjoying the atmosphere.

Like all large-scale public events, the evening celebrations caused some difficulties most notably increases in traffic and noise, as Greenfield's narrow streets would be even more crowded than usual, almost grid-locked with cars and pedestrians. Furthermore, there had instances of inter-ethnic tensions at the events and according to officers fights tended to break out between young men from different Asian communities (Sikh, Muslim), often sparked by gestures such as the waving of rival national flags.

Despite complaints from residents that their town was 'taken over' during these unofficial celebrations, the events brought considerable trade to local shops and restaurants catering for the revellers. To negotiate these complexities, the white male Superintendent leading on community and partnership working, Officer 29, held a public meeting open to all residents to discuss how local people wanted these events to be policed. However at the meeting it quickly became apparent that attendees were overwhelmingly male and middle-aged.

Officer 29 opened the meeting by framing the main problem of the evening celebrations as being, 'Gangs of young lads, getting into street fights and assaulting young girls', emphasising that the aim of the police was to protect 'families' and 'young girls' and ensure they could enjoy festivals without fear of harassment. It should be noted that in some ways Officer 29's views chimed with the narratives of the Southall Black Sisters who have highlighted that evening celebrations can be risky events for young women, who can be harassed by groups of young men (Dhaliwal, 2003).

Furthermore, local residents attending the meeting reinforced the idea that the main problem associated with the events was, 'gangs of young men' who were 'Troublemakers'. One local person joked with Officer 29 that, 'You should put a warning sign on the road – 'Troublemakers Avoid [Greenfield]''.

The views of Officer 29 were partly supported by the arrest data for the 2005 Eid, Vasaki and Diwali evening celebrations, which showed that the majority of arrestees were young men. A total of 39 arrests were made on the nights of the Eid, Diwali and Vasaki evening celebrations in 2005 and 38 of the 39 arrestees were male (the other was listed as unknown). Of the 39, 16 arrestees were aged 25 years or under, 15 were aged between 26 and 35 years and seven were aged 40 or above. However the younger profile of those arrested during the celebrations could also reflect police targeting of young men during the celebrations, not simply higher levels of offending by these groups.

The white, middle-aged Inspector leading on community liaison, Officer 23, also told me that young Muslim men in particular were a problem during evening celebrations. He said: 'Vasaki and Diwali aren't so bad, the youngsters are a bit lary but basically good kids, however the lads we get on Eid [the Muslim celebration] are the ones we do nick'. Unfortunately, police arrest data for the 2005 evening celebrations were not broken down by event or ethnicity of the arrestees so it is not possible to assess whether Officer 23's perceptions were supported by actual arrest data. All that can be deduced from the data is that out of total of 39 arrests made,

16 arrestees were Asian, 16 were either white Northern or Southern European and seven were Black.

Yet it should be noted that not all officers viewed young people as a problem group in Greenfield, indeed the middle-aged white male PC who worked as the Schools Liaison PC, Officer 6, liked young people and said spending time with them was the best part of his job. He said: 'I've been doing this for years and I can only think of one or two instances where I really haven't been able to talk to or engage with a kid, once you get past the exterior they're all good kids'. Similarly, the young white male Inspector leading on community liaison, Officer 24, was keen to engage with young people in the area and build their confidence and trust in the police (see chapter six).

Although it is not possible to infer how young men in Greenfield felt about officers' perspectives on them, Wake *et al's,* (2007) research suggests that minority ethnic young men, particularly those from poorer backgrounds tend to be among those who are most critical of the police or, 'Highly disengaged'.

Language

Echoing findings from other research (Foster *et al*, 2005; Loftus, 2012) language was also a key influence on officers' perceptions of people in Greenfield, reflecting not simply practical communication difficulties, but a view among a minority of officers that those who could not speak English were in some way unwilling to integrate into British society. Echoing the

views of officers from Loftus' (2012) research, Officer 1 described the problems involved in policing a multi-lingual area like Greenfield, stating that in his view people should be made to speak English and people who could not speak English did not want to 'integrate'.

While officers could not be expected to understand the multiple African, Asian and Eastern European languages spoken in Greenfield, given the long-standing ethnic and linguistic diversity of the area there should have been standard procedures for drawing upon interpreter services. However instead, mirroring themes in Foster *et al's* (2005) evaluation of policing in the aftermath of the Lawrence Inquiry, language barriers were a common problem in Greenfield, and during their interactions with people who could not speak English officers rarely drew upon, and indeed did not seem to be aware how to access, interpreter services. Consequently people who could not speak English often had their views or requests ignored or disregarded, as officers could not understand what they were attempting to communicate. The most graphic illustration of this was the case of an elderly Muslim woman who, because she was unable to communicate fluently in English, received no help from officers when she complained that she had been assaulted by her son (see chapter seven).

In the absence of translation and interpreter services, some officers used their own knowledge and language skills to communicate with people. For example Asian officers, specifically Officers 7, 20, 30 and 34 all said that they used their command of different Asian languages when policing in Greenfield. Yet Asian officers were not the only officers in Greenfield who

attempted to overcome language barriers; a white male, middle-aged sergeant who had worked in Greenfield for many years, Officer 22, learned Punjabi and Hindi to a high standard, completely at his own initiative. Officer 22 said: 'I could not communicate with the people I was policing and that really frustrated me – I needed to understand what they were telling me'. Officer 22's Hindi and Punjabi were superior to that of some Asian officers who were regarded as 'experts' on Asian communities however, as described in chapter five, Officer 22's knowledge and language skills were not always drawn upon in the organisation.

Fear and ignorance

It should be noted that the gaps in officers' understandings of Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities described above, stemmed partly from the fact that new officers arriving in the area appeared to receive little information or education about different communities, despite the area's long-standing ethnic diversity. The only information or training given to new officers, beyond the standard race and diversity awareness training delivered across the Metropolitan Police Service, was a tour of the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim places of worship in Greenfield. The tour was led by Officer 1 who, despite his critical views of Greenfield and its ethnically diverse peoples, was widely regarded by senior officers as an 'expert' on local Asian communities, having worked in the town for many years. Irrespective of Officer 1's personal views, such one-off visits could only provide limited information on the area's ethnically diverse peoples.

This lack of information or education about Greenfield's ethnically diverse peoples appeared to be combined with a fear or anxiety among white officers about disciplinary action in relation to racist conduct (Foster *et al,* 2005; Loftus, 2012). This was most obviously manifested in the fact that, as discussed in chapter two, most white officers were initially cautious when discussing issues of race with me and often felt that their views on different ethnic communities and racialised crime problems in Greenfield could not be openly expressed.

There were indications that the combination of a fear of disciplinary action and a lack of knowledge led some young white officers to withdraw from certain situations due to a lack of confidence, or fear of acting inappropriately. This was perhaps best illustrated by an incident described by the white middle-aged Inspector leading on community liaison, Officer 23. Officer 23 recounted to his colleagues in the canteen how two young white PCs from an emergency response team were called to a Hindu temple in Greenfield to deal with an alleged kidnapping and intimidation.

According to Officer 23, when they arrived they found a senior official at the temple (a middle-aged Indian man) and a group of younger Indian men arguing in a mixture of Punjabi and English. The official appeared quite frightened and was reticent about speaking to officers, as the younger men were threatening him in Punjabi. Rather than attempting to separate the complainant and speak to him privately (as per standard practice) the officers had withdrawn from the scene without fully investigating what was happening. It subsequently emerged that the official had been held

against his will, intimidated and forced to hand over substantial funds

which were donations that had been collected for temple renovations.

Aggrieved that the police had taken no action to prevent this despite

attending the incident, the official had made a formal complaint. Officer 23

attributed the officers' withdrawal to under confidence saying, "They were

scared, they didn't know what to do and just wanted to be out of there', to

the widespread agreement of the other officers present.

The incident involving the young officers echoed findings from Muir's

(1977) early study of policing in an African American neighbourhood. Muir

(1977) found that the Police Chief's 'reign of terror' and disciplining of

officers for misconduct resulted in officers becoming overcautious as they

policed the area. Muir (1977) argued instead a climate should be created

in which officers were educated and supported by their sergeants to try

new approaches as they policed the area.

Conclusion

As described in this chapter, officers' perspectives on Greenfield and its

ethnically diverse communities appeared to encompass both elements of

change and continuity. For example, despite the fact that Greenfield has

been home to Indian communities since the 1950s and had a majority

Asian population for some time, many white officers had little if any

knowledge about different Asian communities in Greenfield tending to

classify people under the generic category, 'Asian', in a way that obscured

rather than reflected their differences. Furthermore, despite the multiple

languages spoken in the area, officers appeared to be largely unaware of

how to draw upon translator services, often resulting in them being unable to communicate with people who could not speak English.

Similarly, echoing themes from early studies of policing (Reiner, 2000a; Van Maanen, 2006) certain communities in Greenfield – most notably Somalis and travellers – tended to be viewed as 'problem' populations. While Asian communities were regarded as being the established, indigenous peoples of the area, the newly arrived Somali communities and travellers were regarded as disrupting the stability of Greenfield with their problematic behaviours.

Furthermore, echoing themes in earlier studies of the criminalization of Black communities (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988) officers tended to view Muslims in Greenfield primarily in terms of the potential terrorist threat within these communities. Overall their views appeared to reflect wider media and political discourses problematising Muslim communities as sources of terrorism and religious fundamentalism (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Mythen *et al*, 2009; Dornhof, 2009; Brittain, 2009; Pickering and McCulloch, 2010; Murray, 2010; Schierup and Alund, 2011; Zemni, 2011).

Building upon this, a minority of officers expressed views echoing themes earlier research describing how young Black men were constructed as a 'threat' and portrayed as disproportionately involved in certain types of crime such as robbery and violence (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988). As I described in this chapter, some officers such as

Officer 4, almost unthinkingly assumed that young 'Black' men were involved in offending when there was no other evidence to suggest this was the case while others, such as Officer 21, though not overtly hostile towards Black people, believed there were higher levels of offending in these communities.

Yet despite these continuities there were examples of officers, white and Asian, who did not share these dominant views within the organisation and were working to improve the policing of Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities. The numerous examples included: Officer 22 who, when confronted with language barriers in Greenfield, learned Hindi and Punjabi so he could communicate more effectively with local people; Officer 26, who initiated action to address race hate crime in Greenfield, concerned that Muslims and other ethnic minorities might be more vulnerable to racial attacks following terrorist incidents; and Officer 20 who sought to build links with Somali communities.

Furthermore, although officers sometimes voiced critical views of different ethnic communities, I never heard them use overtly racist language in my presence. Indeed if anything there appeared to be a heightened anxiety about disciplinary action amongst many white officers which on occasion appeared to make them withdraw from situations, as in the case of the temple kidnapping (Foster *et al,* 2005; Loftus, 2012). Yet as discussed in chapter two, as an outsider in the police organisation I had no way of knowing whether the patterns I observed were merely an 'acceptable face' (Reiner, 2000b: 220). However, as I discuss in the following chapter, Asian

officers, as insiders in the organisation, were able to provide an insight into

the extent my observations were correct, and whether, and indeed how,

policing ethnic minorities had changed.

Chapter Five: Asian officers - looking from the inside

Introduction

As both members of minority ethnic communities and serving police officers, Asian officers in Greenfield were perhaps uniquely placed to reflect on the policing of the area's ethnically diverse communities (Cashmore, 2001; Cashmore, 2002). Furthermore, as discussed in chapter one, the recruitment of increased numbers of minority ethnic officers has been one of the key measures intended to improve the policing of ethnic minority communities in Britain and other countries such as the US, Northern Ireland, Canada and Israel (Scarman, 1981; Patten, 1999; Macpherson, 1999; Bolton and Feagin, 2004; Ben-Porat, 2008; Weitzer and Hasisi, 2008). Superficially Ebury, the borough in which Greenfield is located, appeared to have embraced this reform – 2005 police data showed that 72 (10.5%) of the 679 officers in Ebury were from a Black or minority ethnic background, which was higher than England and Wales average in 2004/05 of 3.5%.

In this chapter I open by summarising why there has been such emphasis on recruiting increased numbers of minority ethnic officers before examining Asian officers' insider perspectives on how the police service's approach to issues of race has changed, contrasting Asian officers' historical and contemporary experiences within the organisation. I then describe how Asian officers in Greenfield often had the status of 'experts' on Asian communities, and critically assess the extent to which officers either challenged or reinforced existing thinking within the organisation,

describing how officers' approaches to policing ethnically diverse communities could be broadly classified as *reforming, racist* or *passively prejudiced.* I conclude with a discussion of how, in line with findings from other UK research, (Foster *et al,* 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus 2012) some Asian officers believed that racism had not been eradicated from policing, but had merely adopted more covert, insidious forms.

It should be noted that the sample of Asian officers included in my research was small, comprising only nine officers, all of who were men and were what Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (2006) termed 'street cops', not 'management cops', that is to say rank and file officers rather than senior officers. Consequently I was unable to explore potential gender dynamics, (Martin, 1994; Holder, Nee and Ellis, 1999) or differences in officers' perspectives across different ranks within the organisation. Yet despite its limitations, my sample was varied, comprising officers who differed in terms of age, roles, experience, length of service and ethnic and religious background (see the table at Annex B). Consequently even within this small sample there was a rich diversity in officers' perspectives illustrating Cashmore's (2002: 337) point that there is no 'single voice' of minority ethnic officers.

Minority ethnic officers: representation and reform

Increasing numbers of officers from religious or ethnic minorities has been one of the main policy responses of police organisations in the US, Northern Ireland and mainland UK when crises have occurred in the policing of ethnic minorities (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999; Patten,

1999; Bolton and Feagin, 2004). The drive to increase the numbers of officers from minority ethnic communities is partly attributable to the fact that, as I discuss in chapter eight, the police are one of the most fundamental institutions of democratic society and as a result need to be seen to be representative of the people they serve (Jones *et al*, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). This is perhaps best illustrated by the examples of the US and Northern Ireland, where increased representation of minority officers in police forces has been a critical part of political and civil liberties campaigns and has been regarded as being of equal importance to securing representation in the political sphere (Patten, 1999; Bolton and Feagin, 2004; Mulcahy, 2008).

In the US, the Civil Rights Movement to secure equal rights for African American citizens emphasised the importance of increased representation of African Americans in both politics and policing, as both were considered fundamental to securing the enfranchisement of African Americans (Bolton and Feagin, 2004). Similarly in Northern Ireland, reforming policing was a key part of the political agreements ending the conflict between Catholic and Protestant communities, with the recruitment of representative numbers of Catholic officers to Northern Ireland's police service forming a key part of the policing reforms (Patten, 1999; Mulcahy, 2008; Gethins, 2011).

In both the US and Northern Ireland affirmative action or positive discrimination policies have been employed to rapidly increase numbers of minority officers from African American and Catholic communities

respectively (Patten, 1999; Bolton and Feagin, 2004; Mulcahy, 2008; Gethins, 2011). In Northern Ireland levels of confidence in the historically Protestant dominated Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) were so low among Catholics communities that they relied on paramilitary organisations to carry out policing type functions in Catholic neighbourhoods rather than approach the RUC for assistance (Patten, 1999; Mulcahy, 2008; Gethins, 2011). Similarly, in the US certain Southern states have employed affirmative action strategies to overcome the considerable historical and structural barriers impeding the entry of African Americans into the police service (Bolton and Feagin, 2004).

While in mainland Britain affirmative action strategies have not been used, the two major policy reports following crises in the policing of minority ethnic communities placed considerable emphasis on the recruitment of minority ethnic officers (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999). The Scarman (1981) reforms included increasing numbers of minority ethnic officers in the Metropolitan Police Service, and the Macpherson Report (1999) written nearly twenty years later built upon this, specifying that targets should be set for increasing minority ethnic representation in the police service and that progress should be regularly reviewed. The Macpherson Report (1999: recommendations 64 and 66) stated:

> *'64: That the Home Secretary and Police Authorities' policing plans should include targets for recruitment, progression and retention of minority ethnic staff. Police Authorities to report progress to the Home Secretary annually. Such reports to be published.*
> *'66. That HMIC include in any regular inspection or in a thematic inspection a report on the progress made by Police Services in recruitment, progression and retention of minority ethnic staff'.*

In addition to fulfilling an important representational function, increasing numbers of minority ethnic police officers can bring wider benefits and play

a critical role in helping to reform police organisations from within (Scarman, 1981; Mapcherson, 1999; Marks, 2000a; Sklansky, 2007).

In the US Sklansky (2007:34) has argued that the increase in minority officers (including women, ethnic minorities and gay and lesbian officers) is: 'Slowly but dramatically transforming a profession that 35 years ago was virtually all white'. Sklansky (2007) argued that minority officers diversify perspectives and thinking within the organisation, transforming and fragmenting police occupational subcultures that have historically been hostile towards minorities (Reiner, 2000a). Furthermore Sklansky (2007) has argued that minority officers play an important role in improving relationships between the police and different communities (such as gay, minority ethnic people). Sklansky's (2007) arguments are supported by Bolton and Feagin's (2004) research with African American officers in the Southern US, which found numerous examples of African American officers challenging existing approaches to policing Black communities, and building links with these communities despite long-standing tensions between the police and African Americans.

Similarly in the UK, Loftus' (2008; 2012) study of two English police forces described how the dominant white, male heterosexist culture of the police service was being challenged by officers from minorities (women, ethnic minorities, lesbians and gays) and some white officers. Loftus (2012: 31) wrote: 'Alternative cultures are emerging to challenge old ones. New contestations have evolved not only from minority officers, but from current generations of white, heterosexual male officers'.

One of the most powerful accounts of how minority ethnic officers can change police culture is Marks (2000a) study of the South African Police. Marks (2000a) described how a Black officers' trade union, the Police and Prisons Civil Rights Union (POPCRU), challenged the policing of Black Africans during the 1980s and 1990s at the height of apartheid. POPCRU protested against the use of the police to uphold apartheid laws, despite being attacked with tear gas and dogs during their meetings by white South African Police Service (SAPS) officers. POPCRU's campaigns and protests increased public awareness of the police role in the abuse of human rights and improved the external accountability of the police. Following the end of apartheid, POPCRU focussed on increasing numbers of Black officers in SAPS and eradicating racism from the service (Marks, 2000a).

However the wider evidence on the ability of minority ethnic officers to change police cultures and improve the policing of minority ethnic communities remains mixed (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997; Cashmore, 2002; Skolnick, 2008), and minority ethnic officers themselves have critiqued the idea that increasing their numbers alone can change policing (Cashmore, 2002). In Britain, Cashmore's (2002: 327) research on minority ethnic officers' perspectives on efforts to increase their numbers found that it was: 'Cynically regarded as 'window-dressing', the policies are not seen as helpful, nor even harmless, but pernicious in that they contrive to give the appearance of progress, while achieving little'. As a minority ethnic officer in Cashmore's (2002: 333)

study summarised, increasing numbers of minority ethnic officers might be, 'Good for PR, but it wont make a scrap of difference to how the work gets done'.

Part of the reason that minority ethnic officers have not always been able to have a transformative influence is that they themselves have been marginalised and treated as outsiders within the police organisation. In mainland Britain evidence suggested that despite the attempts of the Scarman (1981) reforms to increase their numbers, minority ethnic officers were subject to exclusion and racist bullying during the 1980s and 1990s (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997). For example, Smith and Gray's (1985:390) study of the Metropolitan Police following the Scarman reforms (1981) found that minority ethnic officers were subjected to racist abuse from the public and also had to endure the racist jokes and talk of their colleagues. Although white officers did not necessarily engage in such banter to bully their minority ethnic colleagues, often assuming that their colleagues did not mind, many minority ethnic officers said that they found racist jokes offensive (Smith and Gray, 1985). In addition to having to tolerate racist banter, some minority ethnic officers in Smith and Gray's (1985) research were subject to racist bullying. Overall Smith and Gray (1985: 426) concluded: 'It is clear that for most black and brown people, being a police officer puts them under considerable strain. They have to take abuse from the public and put up with racialist language and jokes from their colleagues'.

Similarly Holdaway and Barron's (1997) research in the 1990s with

minority ethnic officers who had resigned from the police service found

that racist bullying and the pervasive racism within the organisation were

often the main reasons minority ethnic officers left the police service.

Minority ethnic officers reported being treated as 'outsiders' due to their

ethnicity and, as in Smith and Gray's (1985) research, this was most

obviously emphasised through racist banter and jokes (Holdaway and

Barron, 1997).

Research on Catholic officers' experiences in the RUC during the height of

the conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland

uncovered similar themes (Gethins, 2011). Gethin's (2011) research,

comprising a quantitative survey and qualitative interviews with Catholic

officers serving in the RUC and its successor the Police Service Northern

Ireland (PSNI), found that Catholic officers felt marginalised in the

predominantly Protestant RUC. The widespread sectarianism, allegiance

of Protestant officers to the Protestant Unionist State, and the fact that

many Protestant officers were members of exclusively Protestant

institutions such as the Orange Order and the Masons, led to Catholic

officers feeling isolated and excluded within the organisation. Catholic

officers were also ostracised by some members of their own communities

as they were seen to be betraying their own people by serving in the

Protestant dominated RUC (Gethins, 2011). Forms of rejection ranged

from officers being denied membership of Catholic sports clubs, to being

targeted in attacks by Republican paramilitaries.

As discussed in chapter one, evidence suggests that policing in mainland Britain has changed considerably since the Macpherson (1999) reforms, with the removal of overtly racist language and banter from policing (Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus 2012). However, the extent to which minority officers are now fully accepted within the police organisation, and whether they are able to reform police cultures, remains unclear. Indeed evidence suggests that racism, far from being removed, has simply shifted to more covert forms within the police service (Morris, 2004; Foster *et al,* 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007) and that minority ethnic officers' attempts at reform are being met by resistance, or even backlash from white officers (Morris, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007; Loftus, 2008).

Yet more fundamentally, academics have questioned whether, irrespective of opposition, minority ethnic officers can change internal police cultures or whether, as Skolnick (2008: 42) puts it: 'Over time and in the main, cops tend to think like other cops'. Though Skolnick (2008) acknowledges that affirmative action policies in the US have brought a necessary change in the composition of police forces, ensuring they are more reflective of the people they serve, he argues minority officers do not necessarily change the organisation's culture, thinking or practice. Skolnick (2008:35) argues that the occupational culture of the police service is such that:

> *'Being a police officer is a defining identity, almost like being a priest or rabbi. 'The day the new recruit walks through the door of the police academy', the former New Haven police chief James Ahern wrote, 'he leaves society behind to enter a profession that does more than give him a job, it defines who he is. He will always be a cop'* (Skolnick, 2008:35).

Therefore, rather than bringing their external perspectives to the organisation, police officers, including minority ethnic officers, adopt the existing practices, perspectives and even identity of the police organisation (Skolnick, 2008). There is some support for Skolnick's arguments in Cashmore's (2002) research on minority ethnic officers in the British police. An officer in Cashmore's (2002) study described how he adopted the dominant thinking of the police in relation to issues of race, describing how: 'You soon get sucked into it. Before you know what you're doing, you're forgetting to ask the questions' (Cashmore, 2002: 333).

However, debates on the extent to which minority officers are reforming police cultures remain underpinned by limited empirical evidence (Sklansky, 2007; McLaughlin, 2007; Skolnick, 2008) and in Britain, with the exception of some small-scale studies on minority ethnic officers (Cashmore, 2002; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007) and some references to their perspectives in wider policing studies (Foster *et al*, 2005; Loftus, 2008; Loftus, 2012), the contemporary evidence base on minority ethnic officers' is limited. The following sections attempt to contribute to debates by providing an insight into Asian officers' perspectives in Greenfield. Before presenting my substantive findings I open with a short descriptive piece on my encounter with two Asian officers to contextualise the subsequent discussion.

The Young Policeman

A significant proportion of my fieldwork in Greenfield was spent standing around in the rain with officers, making small talk while we waited for something to happen. The policing of elections at the main Sikh Temple in the area was no exception. I was designated to spend the morning with two Sikh officers, Officers 3 and 18. Officer 3 was a handsome, turbaned young man of my age who came from a professional family.

As we stood in the rain, Officer 18 dominated the discussion, delivering his opinions on a range of subjects including the fact that in his view, 'There's no racism in the police force nowadays, there used to be, not any more'. While he talked on, Officer 3 stood in silence, giving his polite assent on the few occasions Officer 18 appealed to him to confirm his opinions, and directing the odd conspiratorial, amused wink at me as Officer 18 droned on. Eventually Officer 18 spotted some potential 'troublemakers' at the other side of the compound, two young men who appeared to be accompanying their families, and he marched swiftly across the ground, trailing Officer 3 in his wake.

Relieved to be rid of Officer 18 I spent some time reflecting on the atmosphere in the temple grounds and observing officers interactions with people. My reverie was interrupted by Officer 3 who suddenly reappeared at my side; he said rather urgently, 'I wanted to tell you, you know what the sarge said, about there being no racism in the force? Well there is, I mean people don't say it so openly now, but you know who's racist, d'you know what I mean? You know who's racist…' he trailed off. 'I think I know what you mean,' I said hesitantly.

We stood, side by side in silence for a while. After a pause he said, 'My brother was a police officer you know and he got so much bullying. He's really Westernised, he's married to a white woman, he's cut his hair and everything, not like me. He was a policeman in the West Midlands and he got so much shit. He actually passed his Inspector's exams my brother, he was promoted to Inspector but left before he got his first post, he just had enough…He went to this call and these guys started laying into him and he radioed for help and his team turned up and just stood there laughing at him – they just stood around laughing while my brother was lying on the ground getting a kicking. After that, he just said forget it'.

'I'm so sorry…is he ok now?' I asked hesitantly, at a loss to know what I could possibly say in response to this painful tale. 'Yeah, he's doing alright now', he shrugged. 'But you became a police officer despite what happened to him? How have you found it? I mean, have you been alright?' I asked, genuinely concerned. 'Yeah, it's not been as bad as it was for him, but like I said you can tell who's racist – there's a couple of Inspectors, sergeants, you know how it is', again he broke off, shrugging his shoulders and giving me a wry smile. I smiled back, reluctant to press him further.

Eventually Officer 18 reappeared with the Superintendent's 'runner' who had come to drive me back to the station to have lunch. As I turned to leave Officer 18 said, 'Well I think I've given you lots of material there, here's my card just call if you want to talk further'. Keen to ensure that I gave Officer 3 a further opportunity to talk about his experiences if he wanted to, I turned to him and asked, 'And how can I get in touch with you?' Giving me a flirtatious wink he said, 'I'll give you my card'.

I never did get to speak to Officer 3 again about his experiences. I heard two weeks later that he was killed, mown down by a car driving at high speed as he left the station after his shift.

Asian officers: insider perspectives on race and policing

The three long-serving Asian officers included in my sample, (Officers 17, 18 and 20), who had worked in the police service for twenty years or more were particularly well-placed to confirm whether and how the policing of minority ethnic communities was changing. All three officers were unanimous in their agreement that, in line with findings from wider research, policing had improved considerably since the 1990s and that the organisation had become a far less hostile environment for minority ethnic police officers (Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). As Officer 20 summarised: 'If the service was still as bad as it was eighteen years ago when I joined I wouldn't be in the job'.

Confirming patterns from wider research (Foster *et al*, 2005; Foster, 2008; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007) Officers 18 and 20 both stated that the Macpherson Report (1999) had been the catalyst for many positive changes within the service. Indeed both officers welcomed the report's emphasis on eradicating racism, believing that it had been one of the main drivers for creating a shift in police culture. As Officer 18 summarised, 'The Met needed to be told they were racist'. The extent of change within the police service post Macpherson was best illustrated by the contrast between Asian officers' historical and contemporary experiences within the organisation.

Pre-Macpherson: The defining feature of racism

Officers 18 and 20 both confirmed that, in line with findings from other research, racist language, attitudes and behaviour were rife in the police service in the 1980s and 1990s, prior to Macpherson reforms (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997; Macpherson, 1999; Foster *et al,* 2005; Foster, 2008; Loftus, 2012). Both officers also informed me that they had experienced racist bullying and while Officer 18 did not elaborate on his experiences, Officer 20 was keen to give me a full account of what both he and his fellow minority ethnic officers had endured. Officer 20 explained that his experiences of bullying had a profound effect upon him. He said: 'It does demoralise, it does take your confidence away and I remember in those days I didn't think of going for promotion because people…could undermine me and take my confidence away'.

Echoing themes in other research, (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997), Officer 20 explained how seemingly innocuous banter and teasing was used by some white officers to undermine and marginalize him:

> '*There was another sergeant who always made racist jokes, but they were not really jokes. I mean in those days we all made racist jokes, sexist jokes or whatever in those days but he was malicious, and you know in the 80s you could just pass it off as banter…You know whether people are laughing with you or at you, whether they're having a dig at you and I always knew he was using it as a cover. That's one of the reasons why nowadays racist or sexist jokes are not allowed even if they are very funny and if there is no malice meant because people can hide behind it and that guy did'.*

Officer 20's historic experiences of racist bullying were not confined simply to banter and jokes but also included situations where he was physically endangered. He gave examples of how both he and his minority ethnic colleagues had been placed in danger by their white colleagues:

> *'One of the things you have to do, you may not like your fellow officers but when they call for urgent assistance, i.e. when they press the button and say 'I need help, I'm in danger' you have to respond...I heard stories of Asian officers calling for assistance and no-one responded, no-one responded on the radio. Everyone could hear and said 'Oh I'm busy doing this, doing that' but it doesn't matter what you're doing, you drop everything to assist your fellow officers'.*

Officer 20 described a specific example where a white PC refused to patrol with him, endangering them both:

> *'Because it was quite a dangerous area, there was a lot of drug dealing going on, we were supposed to walk in pairs, but this PC did not want to walk with me so whenever he was posted with me he would even go to the extent of walking on the other side of the road'.*

While hostility from his rank and file colleagues was problematic, Officer 20 explained that racist senior officers presented even more of a problem. He said, 'With the racist sergeants or racist police officers you can deal with it because in a team you normally have three to five sergeants, twenty to forty PCs, you can avoid individuals, but when an inspector is racist then you've got a big problem'. Officer 20 described how:

> *'My team Inspector was a bit of a racist…he found it difficult to handle that I with my brown skin had powers to arrest white people. If I came in with an Asian prisoner or a Black prisoner, no problem, but if I came in with a white prisoner it clearly upset him that someone like me could arrest a white man, a couple of times he accused me of perjury, of lying, because obviously the white prisoner must be telling the truth, he's White, he must be innocent'.*

Officer 20 stated that due to the close knit nature of police culture, he and his colleagues rarely complained about their experiences, instead developing coping strategies for responding to discrimination, such as avoiding racist individuals, transferring away from teams or stations, or trying to 'stick it out', a pattern reflected in other studies of the time (Holdaway and Barron, 1997). Officer 20 said:

> *'My attitude was these bastards, mind my language, but these bastards are not going to drive me out of a job that I enjoy. As I said there were a lot of good officers who I was more than happy to work with and these racist officers who are in a minority were not going to drive me out of a job'.*

However the bullying that Officer 20 received from the Inspector referred to above became so unendurable that he finally decided to appeal to his Superintendent for help, however the Superintendent dismissed his complaints. Officer 20 said:

> '*The Superintendent said to me, I remember this, 'Why are you complaining about my Inspectors? I don't want anyone complaining about my Inspectors. If you complain about my Inspector once more you'll be walking the beat in Brixton the next morning… Brixton, Tottenham or places like that were tough in the 1980s, there were a lot of racists [in the police force], a loss of community trust, so he said he'd post me to Brixton…I'd just done four years in Notting Hill which was a similar sort of station so I went away thinking what the hell am I going to do?*'

Officer 20 was so demoralised that he was on the point of leaving the force when, by chance, the Inspector was caught drink driving and removed from his post. Wider research suggests that Officer 20's experiences were far from unique and that other minority ethnic officers received little or no help when they complained about bullying in the 1980s and 1990s (Holdaway and Barron, 1997; Macpherson, 1999; Loftus, 2012).

However Officer 20 also gave examples of how his white colleagues and senior officers had supported him. He said, 'I have faced plenty of racism but I've always been ok because there have always been a lot of white officers who've been there for me'. For example, Officer 20 recounted how when he was a probationer white officers had stepped into protect him from a racist sergeant:

> '*Before me there had been a Muslim female officer and this sergeant had managed to drive her away from the police service…continually you're the*

subject of negative criticism…and now the three officers on the team, they were fearful when they saw me, they thought the racist sergeant was going to drive me away as well so what they did, and I only found out later, was they ganged up, they looked after me, they gave me such good reports when I was walking around with them, when I was dealing with an incident they gave me very good reports. The effect of this was that I was one of six officers who joined…they were all above average officers…but these three officers with the reports they gave me put me above them'.

Officer 20 also described how in another instance his sergeant and Inspector took punitive action against a white PC who subjected him to racist bullying.

'There's an unwritten law, you don't grass up, but they weren't blind, the sergeant and Inspector, but they didn't do anything there and then because I didn't put a complaint in…a few months later he wanted to go and sit his sergeant's exam, to go for promotion in those days you had to have the sergeant or inspector to endorse you and they had to have very good reason to refuse you, it was kind of a rubber stamp…he was told there was no way he'd ever sit his sergeant's exam because of the way he treated me. They [the sergeant and inspector] said, 'if you treat [Officer 20] that way when you're a PC how much more damage will you do …when you're a sergeant''…It didn't stop me suffering for six months, but it was nice when I found out about it afterwards'.

Despite these instances of support, Officer 20 explained that minority ethnic officers often felt isolated in the police service:

'Were a little bit isolated because if the non-racist officers were socialising with the racist officers, that's understandable, they're all part of the same community, but it made it harder for us to socialise with the non-racist officers because you know that the racist officer will still be there…and then we would be isolated…we would be seen as aloof, 'Oh they don't want to mix with us''.

Furthermore, as identified in other research of the time, traditional forms of rank and file police socialising, such as going to pubs and drinking to excess, were often incompatible with Asian officers' lifestyles (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997). Officer 20 said: 'I don't drink, I don't see why I should go to the pub and get drunk to socialise, a lot of officers do and if you don't socialise with them you tend to get seen as aloof. I had a family, after work I wanted to go home and see my family'.

Contemporary Greenfield

However as I described above, Officers 18 and 20 believed that the Macpherson Reforms (1999) had been a major catalyst for change (Foster *et al,* 2005; Foster 2008) and transformed the organisation's approach to dealing with racist language and bullying. For example, in stark contrast to the incident described above when Officer 20's Superintendent had refused to deal with the racist behaviour of his Inspector, during my fieldwork the Borough Commander took a proactive approach to uncovering and addressing racist bullying. Following the July 2005 terrorist attacks in London she held a series of confidential meetings with minority ethnic and Muslim officers in the Borough to discuss their experiences within the force in the aftermath of July 2005 and provide them with a safe forum in which to raise any issues or concerns. The meetings brought to light the overtly racist views and conduct of a middle-aged white male PC, Officer 1, who as described in chapter four had hostile views of minority ethnic communities.

The Borough Commander acted immediately, removing Officer 1 from his post on a neighbourhood policing team and launching a full disciplinary investigation. The high profile disciplinary action against Officer 1 sent shock waves through the police organisation in Greenfield, and was a clear indication that racist conduct would not be tolerated. The Commander's actions were discussed extensively by rank and file officers and some Asian officers told me that, although they did not know Officer 1, they welcomed the Commander's actions. A young British Pakistani PCSO, Officer 34, said: 'I think a lot of the Commander for doing that, it was really good. It shows the respect they do have for their officers'.

Another indication of how policing had changed in Greenfield was the role of minority ethnic officers' organisations within the force. The first, main association for minority ethnic officers, the Black Police Association, (BPA) was formed in the 1990s following the Bristol seminars held in July 1990 at Bristol Polytechnic (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2004). Senior officers convened the seminars, concerned that the Metropolitan Police seemed unable to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of minority ethnic officers (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2004). The so-called Bristol seminars were intended to provide a safe forum for minority ethnic officers within the force to discuss their experiences and following the seminars minority ethnic officers continued to organise reunion events to share their experiences and counter their feelings of isolation (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2004), eventually establishing a formal association - the BPA (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007). Officer 20 described the establishment of the BPA in 1994 as a 'life-line' for minority ethnic officers.

However in contemporary Greenfield it appeared that minority ethnic associations were no longer hosting events solely to help minority ethnic officers' overcome their isolation, but that events were now being attended by some white officers, such as two young white male Inspectors, Officers 24 and 26. For example, Officer 26 attended some Sikh Association events including a sponsored bike ride for charity and Vasaki celebration, to socialise with his Sikh colleagues. Similarly Officer 24 would occasionally attend different minority ethnic associations' events for social or educational reasons. Furthermore while other recent research has

suggested that white officers can resent minority ethnic officers'
associations, believing them to have a pernicious role in advancing the
personal interests of minority ethnic officers (Loftus, 2008), this did not
appear to be the case in Greenfield. Indeed white officers appeared to be
either indifferent to these organisations, or in the case of Officers 24 and
26, they participated in and supported their activities and events.

Asian officers: expert status

However, perhaps the best measure of how the policing of minority ethnic
communities had changed was provided by the status of Asian officers in
Greenfield. While earlier studies described how minority ethnic officers
were marginalised and often subject to hostility from their white colleagues
(Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997), Asian officers in
Greenfield tended to be valued as 'experts' on Asian communities by
senior officers and their colleagues. While some minority ethnic officers in
earlier studies resented the assumption they were experts on minority
ethnic communities (Holdaway and Barron, 1997), Asian officers in my
study all relished this role. Indeed, five of the nine Asian officers included
in my research, (Officers 7, 17, 20, 30 and 34), expressly stated that they
had wanted to work in Greenfield, as their knowledge of Asian
communities gave them an advantage over their white colleagues.

Furthermore, in contrast to the views of some minority ethnic officers in
Cashmore's (2002) research who dismissed the recruitment of minority
ethnic officers as a 'PR exercise', six of the Asian officers in my study felt
that it was important to have increased numbers of Asian officers in

Greenfield for symbolic reasons. A young British Pakistani PCSO, Officer 34 said: 'I am glad that the Met are trying to encourage officers from all ethnic backgrounds, because London being such a major city with so many people in it from ethnic minorities, if you have officers from all different backgrounds it will help…increase trust and understanding'.

In many ways the value placed upon Asian officers' knowledge of 'Asian' communities was a sign of advancement, as it indicated that the police service in Greenfield was attempting to provide a culturally sensitive service to Asian communities. Furthermore it was perfectly logical for the police organisation in Greenfield to draw upon the skills and knowledge of its' Asian officers to inform the policing of an area with diverse, complex Asian communities. Indeed one of the main rationales for increasing numbers of minority ethnic officers has been to ensure policing is culturally sensitive and informed by knowledge of different communities' needs and perspectives (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999).

In some instances drawing upon Asian 'experts' worked well; for example a young white male Inspector, Officer 26, when leading an investigation into the fatal stabbing of a Sikh man drew upon the advice of his practising Sikh colleagues, Officers 14 and 18, to good effect. The suspected assailants, also Sikhs, had denied attack, claiming that despite being found in the vicinity of the stabbing in a car carrying large amounts of swords and knives, they were carrying weapons solely for religious purposes (Sikhism stipulates men and women should carry a 'kirpan' or dagger). Although this was a somewhat dubious explanation for carrying

such a vast array of weaponry, Officer 26 wanted to understand the tenets of Sikhism in detail to ensure he acted appropriately. He confirmed with Officers 14 and 18 that while Sikhs are required to carry one small dagger, there is not requirement for them to carry such extensive weapons and, furthermore, knives play a limited role in Sikh rituals and celebrations.

However consulting Asian 'experts' did not always result in improved policing, largely because it was predicated upon the somewhat simplistic assumption that as 'Asians', officers would be experts on 'Asian' communities, irrespective of their differing ethnic and religious backgrounds and levels of knowledge. The inherent inadequacies of the organisation's approach to drawing upon the expertise of its Asian officers were perhaps best illustrated during the policing of the elections at Greenfield's main Sikh temple. Sikh officers were drafted in from across London to police the elections, however some of the officers were not practising Sikhs and did not have the requisite language skills or knowledge of Sikhism. For example, a Sikh Detective Inspector leading the briefing, though equipped with a substantial knowledge of Sikh communities and the crime problems associated with events such as the temple elections, when asked to check leaflets that the police were distributing to worshippers in Punjabi confessed that although he could speak the language, he could not read it.

A white middle-aged sergeant, Officer 22 who, as described in chapter four, had policed Greenfield for many years and had learnt Punjabi at his own initiative stepped into the breach, much to the surprise of many

officers. He used his extensive command of the language to check the leaflet, identifying a couple of mistakes in grammar and terminology. However he was not consulted during the rest of the day and his knowledge was left largely unused, while Asian officers with little or no knowledge continued to be deferred to as 'experts'.

Furthermore the organisation's blanket reliance upon the expertise of Asian officers when policing ethnically diverse communities failed to take into account the considerable divergence in Asian officers' attitudes. As illustrated by the findings in chapter four, white officers had very different perspectives on Greenfield, ranging from Officer 1 who viewed its' ethnic diversity with hostility, to Officers 26 and 22 who were working to improve the policing of the area's different ethnic communities. Similarly Asian officers' views varied considerably; at one extreme three Asian officers in my study could be considered *reformers* seeking to ensure Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities were policed in a sensitive way that took into account their culturally specific needs. At the other extreme, one officer - Officer 17- could be considered a *racist* as he expressed overtly hostile, vitriolic views about Asian communities other than his own. Finally, five of the nine Asian officers in my study were *passively prejudiced*, that is to say while they did not profess antipathy towards any particular ethnic groups, they unquestioningly accepted 'facts' that certain groups were predisposed to commit certain types of crime and that certain communities caused policing problems. (For further discussion of these definitions see chapters eight and nine).

Reformers

Three of the nine Asian officers in my research explicitly stated that they had joined the police service to serve their communities, improve relations between the police and minority ethnic groups and increase understandings of different ethnic communities within the organisation (Marks, 2000a; Sklansky, 2007). Echoing the remarks of officers from early research by Holdaway and Barron (1997) and Stone and Tuffin (2000) two PCSOs, Officers 30 and 34, both stated that they had joined the police service to address crime problems in their local areas. Officer 30, a middle-aged Indian resident of Greenfield, explained: 'I live in this area, unlike my colleagues, it's not the safest thing to do, live and work in this area, but being part of the community you see so much happening around you and you want to be a part of it and hopefully you put your two pence into it and make it work'.

Similarly Officer 34, a young British Pakistani said:

> 'Coming from an ethnic [minority] background myself I thought I've got a lot to give…I can put something back into the community, race relations, being a young Asian myself. There should be trust between youngsters and the police, I really thought I had something to give to the people, to the community'.

The views of Officers 30 and 34 could be partly reflective of the fact that as PCSO's, their role was far more community-focussed than that of mainstream officers (Caless, 2007; Johnston, 2007). However Officer 34 also informed me that he was working towards being promoted as a PC, partly for instrumental reasons (such as career progression) but also to increase police understandings of Muslim communities. He said:

> 'I want to be a PC as well, because I am a Muslim and with the recent events, bombings and all, I feel I should really get back into it…what the media portrays that's an image a lot of people will believe and that's not the case…you can't say

all Muslims are terrorists, all Muslims are suicide bombers, I'm sitting in front of you, I'm not a suicide bomber…it's a matter of educating people'.

However the most striking example of a reforming officer was Officer 20, a middle-aged Sikh sergeant heading a neighbourhood policing team. Despite having endured considerable racism during his twenty-year career, Officer 20 was committed to improving the policing of minority ethnic communities. During the 1980s and 1990s when racist language and banter were rife in policing (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997), Officer 20 told me that he tried to explain the impact of seemingly harmless racist banter to his white colleagues. He said: 'Even the good officers, they didn't know what they were doing, but if you tell them and try to educate them they were willing to learn'.

During my fieldwork Officer 20 also attempted to educate his colleagues about different Asian communities in Greenfield in a non-didactic way, playing Indian music and bringing Indian food and sweets into the office. A young white sergeant who led another neighbourhood policing team, Officer 21, was very critical of Asian communities, dismissing India as, 'Just a country full of poor people'. However he explained that Officer 20 had attempted to change his views, saying, '[Officer 20] Tells me I've been to the wrong bits [of India] – he said I should go to the North'.

In addition to attempting to educate his colleagues informally about diverse Asian communities, Officer 20 also sought roles where he could undertake community service type work. For example, he applied to lead a neighbourhood policing team, when many of his colleagues avoided these

roles, regarding them as low status and not 'real police work' (Miller, 1999; Reiner, 2000a). As described in chapter six, Officer 20 led his team to good effect, ensuring that his ward was policed effectively and good relations were established with local people.

Officer 20 also volunteered to act as Family Liaison Officer (FLO) to the family of a man who had fatally stabbed. The victim was a convicted drug dealer whose suspected assailants were rival drug dealers and as a result he and his family attracted little sympathy from most officers, echoing patterns in Foster's (2008) research on murder investigation which found that officers often had little sympathy with victims who had criminal connections or were regarded as having contributed to their own demise. A young white PC, Officer 5, summarised the views of many officers when he said of the victim: 'As far as I'm concerned they can all just murder each other - it would be great if they all just took each other out'. However Officer 20 took a different view saying: 'If he's [the victim's] a criminal that's not the family's fault. They're quite scared at the moment, they know who did it but are too intimidated to give us names, I'm visiting them regularly and trying to offer them some protection'.

Officer 20 was also an effective, supportive line manager to the officers reporting to him. These officers unanimously agreed that, in the words of Officer 4: 'He [Officer 20] may have his little faults but he's basically a really good boss and a good bloke'. Officer 20 provided particular support to the young Pakistani male PCSO in his team, Officer 34, who aspired to be a PC. Officer 34 told me how he had received substantial support from

Officer 20 after he failed to complete his training at Hendon. Officer 34 said:

> *'The day I left Hendon I was so upset, really upset. Coming back to the borough was a big shock and I had a few problems but my sergeant's really good and he's helping me…he listens to all your problems, if you have problems he's willing to help you, he shows you a lot of respect… all in all he looks out for your welfare at work or domestic'.*

Officer 20's perspectives and conduct were similar to that of some African American police officers in Bolton and Feagin's (2004) study, who endured considerable racism within the police so that they could serve their communities. One African American male, senior officer said:

> *'There are some things you have to endure. I endured things like certain stuff: I'd sit on the front row, and [white officers] would say things like, 'Yeah, we caught some of those niggers breaking in a car last week'. And that was distasteful of course…I was able to endure because my rationale was, not everyone is like that…I was able to fulfil my mission, my mission was at least to make a difference…down the line after all that I wind up being chief of community affairs which, of course, improves the relationship with the public community'.* (Bolton and Feagin, 2004: 5-6)

Overall Officer 20, and indeed many of the officers in Bolton and Feagin's (2004) research, could be described as fitting Muir's (1977) model of 'professional policemen'. Muir (1977) viewed these officers as the ideal to which all officers should aspire, describing how they combined passion for their work and the public good with good judgement and intellectual objectivity.

It is also worth noting that Officer 20 was far less cynical than his white colleagues with similar lengths of service. Despite having experienced much bullying and discrimination during his career, Officer 20 said that when he worked as an engineer before joining the police:

> *'My sickness record in those days was pretty poor. I don't think I've ever pulled a sickie here [in the police service]…because you never know what's going to happen and also it does matter if you turn up or not because you could arrest*

somebody or you could save a colleague's life…I've walked around a corner, talking to a police officer like you and I are talking now and the next minute we're tackling a fire!'

Officer 20's views contrasted directly with Officer 19, a white middle-aged sergeant who had a similar length of service. Officer 19 said: 'I've been an officer over twenty years and I don't know why I've bothered, it's been a total waste of time…I've been a copper for nearly thirty years and I can only think of one day where I actually made a difference, when it was worth bothering to come in'.

The racist

Almost in direct contrast to the behaviour of Officer 20 described above, one Asian officer in my study, a middle-aged Pakistani sergeant heading a neighbourhood policing team, Officer 17, voiced opinions that could be defined as *racist*. He voiced overtly hostile views about Asian communities other than his own, most notably Sikhs. Although he did not express his views to his Sikh colleagues, he frequently discussed his hatred of local Sikh people and Sikh officers with the white PCs and PCSOs who reported to him. A young white female PC, Officer 11, said: 'He hates [Officer 20] because he's a Sikh, he's always going on about him, how he's a bastard'. Furthermore Officer 17 had sexist views of Asian women and expressed views that appeared to condone violence against women (see chapter seven).

The overtly hostile views expressed by Officer 17 were in some ways unsurprising, as it has long been recognised in the race and ethnicity literature that minority ethnic people themselves can hold racial prejudices

against communities other than their own (Back and Solomos, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Blum, 2002; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Hall, 2012). Given that 'Asian' communities in Britain comprise a range of communities with differing cultures and histories it was perhaps predictable that some Asian officers would not feel an affinity with Asian communities other their own (Modood, *et al*, 1994; Modood and Ahmad, 2007). However it is noteworthy that Officer 17 expressed his overtly racist views openly to junior officers (though never senior officers), when, as described in chapter four, white officers were often reticent on the subject of race, and appeared to have a heightened awareness of the potential threat of disciplinary action.

As described in chapter six, Officer 17 led a ward team that was responsible for policing an area that covered Greenfield's town centre and had a majority Sikh population. While I never observed Officer 17 behaving in an overtly discriminatory way towards local Sikh people, the way he led his team bordered on professional misconduct and he failed to fulfil some of the basic requirements of his role (see chapter six for further details).

In addition to failing to police the ward effectively, Officer 17 and Officer 1, who he designated his 'Second in Command', bullied the junior members of his team. Most notably Officer 17 subjected a young Pakistani male PCSO, Officer 33, to overt, sustained bullying. A white female PCSO working in the team, Officer 31, said: 'He's always having a go at [Officer 33] saying, '[Officer 33] you're fucking useless''.

While Officer 17's bullying of Officer 33 was not racially motivated it did have a significant impact on Officer 33's morale. Officer 33 told me that Officer 17 had tried to block his application to become a PC by refusing to sign his application form. Officer 33 appealed to his former line manager, a young white Inspector, for help who immediately signed the form. However, when Officer 17 learned that Officer 33 had approached his Inspector for a reference he had been enraged and the bullying had increased. Officer 33 told me that the bullying had become so intolerable that if his application to become a PC was not approved and he was unable to transfer out of the team he would leave the police force. Overall Officer 33's experiences reflected themes from the wider literature on PCSOs, which has found that PCs and sergeants can be overtly hostile to PCSOs, viewing them as incompetent and contributing little to the police service (Caless, 2007; Johnston, 2007).

The passively prejudiced

However, between the somewhat extreme examples of Officers 17 and 20, there were five Asian officers who were neither racist nor committed to reform, but merely *passively prejudiced*. Echoing findings from other research, which has found that, as Skolnick (2008: 42) puts it, 'Over time and in the main, cops tend to think like other cops' (Cashmore, 2002), these officers appeared not to reflect on issues of ethnic diversity, regarding Greenfield as defined by a series of racially specific crime problems.

For example, Officer 18 when describing crime issues in Greenfield stated that Pakistani Muslim communities had disproportionate levels of domestic violence and alcoholism due to a mixture of poverty, and repressive cultural practices (such as prohibitions on alcohol and the widespread practice of arranged marriages). Similarly Officers 18 and 14 also made references to 'problems' with Somalis. Officers who aspired to be reformers could also, on occasion, voice passively prejudiced views. For example, as described in chapter four, Officer 30, though committed to improving the policing of Greenfield's Asian communities, viewed Eastern Europeans and asylum seekers in the area as 'problem populations'.

Officers also voiced prejudiced views about their own communities during conversations with me. For example, during a discussion about the under-reporting of certain crimes such as domestic violence and drug offences within Asian communities, Officer 18 told me that problems were exacerbated by Asian people's desire to maintain a respectable image saying: 'You know what Asians are like – it's all about face'. Similarly when I told Officer 14 how some local Asian people seeing me at the back of a police car had assumed I had been arrested, much to my amusement, Officer 14 said: 'That's typical Asians - always looking for the bad'.

Some officers, most notably a middle-aged Sikh sergeant, Officer 18, would also frequently initiate or engage in jokes and banter mocking 'political correctness', with their white colleagues. For example, when one of his colleagues asked for a black coffee during the tea round Officer 18 laughed, 'You can't say that mate, it's racist!' While it is not possible to

assess whether Officer 18's remarks were a true reflection of his views or an attempt to gain acceptance from his white colleagues (Holdaway and Barron, 1997), his remarks and behaviour appeared to have the effect of endorsing some white officers' views that the strong disciplinary line on racism within the organisation was excessive and unwarranted.

On occasion I also witnessed Officer 18 behaving in an insensitive way when policing Greenfield, and while his behaviour could not be construed as racist, it had the potential to cause offence to local people. The most notable example was his behaviour during the policing of the elections at Greenfield's main Sikh temple. As described in the preceding sections, Sikh officers had been drafted in from across London to police the elections to ensure that policing during the day was culturally sensitive and appropriate. As a Sikh officer in Ebury, Officer 18 was one of the officers designated to police the elections.

During the briefing the white male Superintendent who was the senior commanding officer for the day, Officer 29, had been emphatic that the police presence at the elections should be low-key, friendly and provide reassurance to local people. Although there had been intelligence that there might be fighting between rival election factions and instances of people attempting to intimidate voters, the Superintendent insisted, 'I don't want people to feel over-policed'. Instead he instructed officers to behave in a friendly way and chat informally to local people to provide reassurance and ensure that in the event of any problems, people would feel able to approach officers for help.

However during the elections Officer 18 behaved in a domineering way, patrolling the temple compound and aggressively questioning people he suspected of being 'hired thugs' or 'troublemakers', and instructing PCs reporting to him to do the same. A white female Inspector, witnessing his behaviour intervened and instructed the PCs to wait quietly at the entrance of the temple, saying: 'He's [Officer 29] said he doesn't want people over-policed'.

From overt to covert racism

Two Asian officers, while acknowledging that policing minority ethnic communities had improved considerably, felt that racism persisted in the organisation. While, as described in my opening vignette, Officer 18 believed that, 'There's no racism in the police force nowadays', Officers 3 and 20 believed that racism had merely become more covert.

The views of Officers 3 and 20 echoed findings from wider research, which has found that while overtly racist language has been excised from the service, underlying prejudices and covert forms of racism persist (Foster *et al,* 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). As a Chair of a BPA participating in Holdaway and O'Neill's (2007) research on policing post-Macpherson (1999) aptly summarised, racism in the police service had merely shifted from overt to covert forms which were more difficult to identify and define. He said:

> *'Covert racism. It's the stuff that gets in the bloodstream of an organisation and that's how I describe institutional racism. And that's really because you can't see it, you can't smell it, you can't taste it, but you know if you go for a job you ain't*

going to get it because it is always internal. And you can't put your finger on what, but you know in your heart of hearts why' (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007: 397).

The nebulous, difficult to define nature of covert incidents was also a theme in the accounts of officers in my study. Officer 20 attempted to give tangible examples of where he had been subject to covert racism, citing instances where he had felt sidelined by white colleagues:

> *'Opportunities are not given to you, sometimes they [white officers] think they're doing you a favour…but it's like any job you have to push yourself a little bit and do more challenging jobs…I remember this one operation, I had to do all the research, we were observing drug dealing in this pub and we had to walk past these drug dealers and I was prepared to disguise myself and walk into this place but the Inspector would not let me follow it through…whoever did got the credit, when they went for promotion in six months time they could use it as an example'.*

Officer 20 cited further examples:

> *'You still get incidents, you know, minor incidents, some of them make you laugh actually. For example let's say there's a female sergeant on the team and a male sergeant on the team, the officers will pay more respect to the male sergeant even if the female sergeant may be more experienced…it's the same with me, if I tell them to do something they'll get it done but if they want advice they might listen to a white sergeant more than me…I was custody sergeant at [X] and these two officers brought in a prisoner…this is my duty and I'm sitting at the sergeant's desk but there's this very young PC and he's my jailer, his job is to look after prisoners and basically assist me, make me a cup of tea every hour…I remember these two police officers brought in a prisoner, they looked at me and walked past me and went straight to the jailer and they started telling him why they arrested this person and I just sat there…the poor jailer, he was just a probationer with a year's service, he was looking at me, very embarrassed. In the end he said, 'Why are you telling me? I think the custody officer needs to know, I don't need to know', so they walked back to me sheepishly, it never occurred to them that I might be the sergeant and the white officer my junior'.*

While the incidents described by Officer 20 might not have been racist in motivation, the critical point is that these incidents were *perceived* by him to be racist and, in the absence of a mechanism for discussing or addressing his complaints, Officer 20 was left feeling undermined.

Conclusion

The testimonies and experiences of Asian officers suggest that, in line with my observations in chapter four, overt racism appeared to have largely been excised from the police service in Greenfield. The advances that the police had made in relation to addressing issues of race were illustrated by the contrasts between historic and contemporary examples of leadership on racism and racist bullying in the organisation. While Officer 20 described how his Superintendent refused to deal with the racist behaviour of an Inspector, in contemporary Greenfield the Borough Commander took a proactive approach to uncovering and addressing any instances of racist conduct following the July 2005 terrorist attacks in London. Furthermore, the fact that Asian officers were prized for their expertise on 'Asian' communities in contemporary Greenfield provided some indication of the organisation's commitment to policing the town's Asian communities sensitively and effectively.

However against this progress there were worrying elements of continuity, with the police organisation tending to assume that 'Asian' officers would be 'experts' on 'Asian' communities, irrespective of their levels of knowledge or even personal prejudices. Indeed this seemingly blanket reliance on 'Asian experts' resulted in a white officer with greater levels of knowledge, Officer 22, being sidelined during the policing of the temple elections, while Asian officers with fewer abilities were deferred to as 'experts'.

In this chapter I have also contributed some empirical evidence to current academic debates on the extent to which minority ethnic officers are changing the policing of minority ethnic communities and police occupational cultures (Marks, 2000a; Cashmore, 2002; Sklansky, 2007; Skolnick, 2008). My findings on Asian officers in Greenfield provide evidence to support both the opposing viewpoints in the current literature, describing how some officers (such as Officers 14 and 18), were passively prejudiced, adopting the existing ways of thinking of the organisation (Cashmore, 2002; Skolnick, 2008); how others (such as Officer 20), were reformers committed to improving the policing of minority ethnic communities (Marks, 2000a; Sklansky, 2007); and how one individual (Officer 17) was racist.

Overall my findings suggest minority ethnic officers' perspectives on issues of race and diversity and their influence in the police organisation is more varied and complex than has been described in the literature to date. Most notably, in my study Asian officers' views could be contradictory, as was perhaps best illustrated by the example of Officer 30 who was both a reformer committed to improving the policing of Asian communities, and yet also in some ways passively prejudiced, viewing asylum seekers and Eastern Europeans as 'problem' populations. These themes reflected patterns in the wider race literature, which has described how individuals' perspectives on race can be complex, contradictory and inconsistent (Cashmore, 1987; Blum, 2002; Hall, 2012). However the police organisation appeared not to recognise these divergences and

complexities in Asian officers' perspectives, tending to classify all 'Asian' officers as 'experts' on 'Asian' communities.

Having described the ways in which the internal reform of increasing numbers of Asian police officers influenced policing in Greenfield, in the next chapter I describe how a key external reform - community policing - influenced the organisation's understandings of the area's ethnically diverse communities.

Chapter Six: Community policing in Greenfield - educating the police or the public?

Introduction

In Britain community policing has been one of the main external measures undertaken to improve the policing of minority ethnic communities and build public confidence in the police (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999). Superficially Ebury, the borough in which Greenfield is located, appeared to embrace community policing, putting in place extensive consultation structures at both borough and ward levels. However, as illustrated in chapter four, this did not necessarily result in more comprehensive, consistent understandings of different communities within the organisation. In this chapter I explore why this was the case, examining the implementation of community policing across Ebury and Greenfield.

I begin by summarising the evidence on community policing and its potential for shaping police organisational knowledge and practice before describing how two very different policing approaches emerged in Greenfield. The first regarded community policing merely as 'business as usual' or an endorsement of police activity; and the second regarded community policing as a major change and an opportunity for local people to provide 'critical challenge' to police thinking and practice. In the latter parts of the chapter I examine the underlying reasons why two such divergent approaches emerged and why consultation did not have a greater influence on the organisation's understandings of ethnically diverse communities.

Community policing: a radical change?

Community policing has a long history in Britain and can be traced back to the formation of the police in the early nineteenth century and the way the organisation's mandate was established and legitimated (Weatheritt, 1988). British policing is based on 'policing by consent', that is to say only legitimate and effective if it is undertaken with the consent of the community; consequently approaches that seek to work collaboratively with the community have long been applied in Britain (Weatheritt, 1988: Bowling and Foster, 2002). However, the specific language of community policing emerged in the mid 1970s and is usually associated with the work of the John Alderson, Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall Police (Weatheritt, 1988). In 1979 he published 'Policing Freedom' in which he set out a series of practices for delivering a community-focussed service. Though many of the practices he outlined had been in existence for sometime, his work drew them together under the philosophy of 'community policing' (Weatheritt, 1988).

In Britain there has been an increased emphasis on the use of community policing approaches, most notably to establish legitimacy and relationships of trust with minority ethnic communities. The Scarman Report (1981) on the disorders in Brixton and other areas with large minority ethnic populations put community policing and consultation at the centre of policing, changing its status from a marginal activity to a core requirement (Weatheritt, 1988; Fyfe, 1992; Bennett, 1993; Bowling and Foster, 2002). Under Scarman's (1981) recommendations, Police Consultative

Committees (PCCs) were established in the Metropolitan Police District in London and more widely across forces in the UK (Scarman, 1981; Fyfe, 1992). The PCCs were committees, comprising community representatives, convened by the police to enable them to consult local communities about the policing of their area to ensure that police action was culturally sensitive and had the support of those being policed (Scarman, 1981). The PCCs also had the wider aim of establishing relationships of trust with local communities, particularly in areas such as Brixton where they had become increasingly fractured (Bowling and Foster, 2002). The subsequent Macpherson (1999) Report, written nearly twenty years later, placed a renewed the emphasis on community consultation, resulting in the successors to the PCCs, Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs) being established in London and police forces across the country.

In addition to the increasing use of consultation there has been a succession of community or neighbourhood policing initiatives in the UK (Bennett, 1993; Tuffin *et al*, 2006; Casey Review, 2008; Lowe and Innes, 2012). Most recently the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) ran from 2003 to 2005 in sixteen sites across England. This sought to develop and trial a model of neighbourhood policing that focussed on not only addressing crime levels but also increasing public confidence in the police and reducing fear of crime (Tuffin *et al* 2006; Morris, 2006; Lowe and Innes, 2012). The NRPP laid the foundations for a major neighbourhood policing initiative, rolled out from 2005 across the country. Under this initiative, branded as 'Safer Neighbourhoods' by the

Metropolitan Police Service, all wards in England and Wales were allocated a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing team comprising police officers and Police Community Support Officers focussed on consulting with local communities and providing them with a community-focussed and directed service (see pages 205-207 for further details on the programme and its implementation in Greenfield).

Despite the extensive use of community consultation and neighbourhood approaches, their influence on policing has been mixed. This is largely because community policing is a philosophy rather than a practical policing approach (Weatheritt, 1988; Bennett, 1993; Skolnick and Bayley, 1998; Fielding, 2005; Myhill, 2006). The philosophy is predicated upon the police working with the public whenever possible to solve local crime problems, and a belief that the police should take into account the wishes of the public in defining and evaluating operational policy (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990; Bennett, 1993; Fielding, 2005; Myhill, 2006). However who actually constitutes 'the community', particularly in ethnically diverse areas such as Greenfield, remains ambiguous (Bauman, 1996; Miller, 1999; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Fielding, 2005). In addition, community policing philosophy also fails to acknowledge the fact that communities often comprise diverse groups with varying, even competing interests and demands of policing (Skogan, 2008).

Furthermore, due to the breadth of the philosophy, the practices defined as community policing encompass a wide range of policing activity (Skolnick and Bayley, 1988; Bennett, 1993; Bowling and Foster, 2002;

Casey Review, 2008). Such is the breadth of the philosophy and indeed the divergence of the practice that, as Fielding (2009: 1) aptly puts it: 'Community policing is like democracy - everyone agrees it is a good thing but the consensus extends little further. Its scope and objectives are contested, and its role in policing is as uncertain as the methods by which it should be achieved'.

Furthermore there are a number of inherent tensions within community policing that inevitably limit the extent to which it is able to fulfil its aims of providing a community-focussed service. One of the most fundamental challenges with the approach is that, as Reiner (2000a) notes, the police mandate is both to protect and control and consequently policing cannot be undertaken with the consent of all people all of the time. Furthermore, as Fielding (1995) observes, policing cannot simply reflect 'community' perspectives and needs, as communities are rarely homogenous, and areas such as London and indeed Greenfield, often comprise many different peoples and groups, often with divergent, competing and even conflicting histories, needs and perspectives (Banton, 1973; Baumann, 1996).

Following on from this, community or neighbourhood policing requires a fundamental change in the role of frontline officers, reinventing their role from crime fighter to that of a specialist community worker and broadening their remit to include a range of functions not traditionally considered 'real policework' (Fielding, 1995; Bennett, 1994; Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1998; Miller, 1999; Lumb and Breazeale, 2002; Savage, 2007). This

change from tough, macho crime fighter to a more feminine role with a social work orientation (Miller, 1999; Skogan, 2008; Herbert, 2010) is particularly challenging to implement in the police, an organisation that is conservative, resistant to change and places considerable emphasis on machismo (Miller, 1999; Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002).

As Reiner (2000a) notes, evidence suggests that while senior officers may support community policing approaches, rank and file officers are often resistant, dismissing community policing as not 'real policework'. Skogan (2008) in his article on why reforms such as community policing fail, discusses the role of leadership in greater depth, describing how middle managers and sergeants play a critical role in determining the implementation of community policing initiatives. Skogan (2008) notes that senior support for initiatives is also critical, describing how the arrival of a new Chief in Chicago, whose focus was on crime fighting not community policing, resulted in the community policing programme established over many years being abandoned, despite the benefits it delivered.

In addition to barriers within the police organisation there are also numerous challenges within communities. Foremost, as McLaughlin (1994) noted in his early study of PCCs in Greater Manchester, 'communities' do not exist, as people define their identities and affiliations in a range of ways and therefore there are rarely 'representatives' with whom the police can engage, a finding mirrored in other studies (Eade, 1989; Keith, 1993). Indeed Keith (1993) warned in his early study of policing in Brixton following the 1981 riots, the pressure upon the police to

consult could potentially lead to the police being forced to virtually 'create' community representatives simply to fulfil formal consultation requirements. Building upon this, Cohen (1985) has argued that discourses surrounding community-focussed crime initiatives form part of, 'social control talk', used by criminal justice workers to explain and justify their actions and deflect criticism. Who actually constitutes the 'community' often remains unclear and ill-defined, yet their supposed endorsement is used by criminal justice professionals, most notably the police, to legitimise their actions (Cohen, 1985).

Furthermore as Skogan (2008) notes, community policing initiatives require the participation of communities and those who are the most disengaged or have historically had poor relationships with the police can often be unwilling to participate. This was graphically illustrated by McLaughlin's (1994) and Keith's (1993) studies in Greater Manchester and Brixton respectively following the Scarman reforms. In both Moss Side (Manchester) and Brixton relations with African Caribbean communities were so fractured that they refused to participate in police consultation. Keith (1993) vividly documented how a public consultation meeting held by the police in Brixton following the riots descended into a fiasco, such was the level of anger and hostility towards the police among local people.

The difficulties in engaging people who are hostile to the police, or marginalised in society have been ongoing themes in the community policing literature (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Matrix, 2007), and mirrored in international studies of community policing. For example in Israel,

though community focussed approaches have been attempted the cleavages between Arabs and Jews are so great that they have failed (Weitzer and Hasisi, 2008). Similarly in Northern Ireland although there are extensive consultation structures there remain huge barriers to overcome in relationships between the police and Catholic communities, (Patten, 1999; Mulcahy, 2008; Topping, 2008).

Furthermore, communities need to be sufficiently equipped to be able to participate in community policing initiatives and direct and evaluate how their areas are policed as illustrated by Huey and Quirouette's (2010) study. In their evaluation of a community policing initiative to encourage reporting of victimisation of the homeless in Edinburgh, Huey and Quirouette (2010) found that while the initiative was very valuable, the homeless people the police were trying to reach were often those who were the most marginalised and could not access community policing services. Furthermore, community organisations were not resourced to fulfil the role that the police wanted them to play, namely publicising the initiative and helping homeless people access services.

Given that the most disengaged and disempowered are often either reluctant or unable to participate in consultation, it is perhaps unsurprising that research has found that consultative committees tend to be dominated by the privileged sections of society, namely middle-class white men (McLaughlin, 1994; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Myhill, 2006; Newburn and Jones, 2007). This is somewhat contrary to the aims of community policing which, as Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1990) note should not

favour the rich and powerful but enable the poor and powerless to direct policing.

Even if communities are willing and able to participate in community policing initiatives, the extent to which they are able to shape policing is inevitably limited, as communities will always have an unequal power relationship with the police (Fyfe, 1992). Senior officers will always have greater knowledge and control of police resources, consequently the extent to which communities are able to direct policing will always be limited, as illustrated by Fyfe's (1992) early study of community consultation in London post Scarman. Furthermore, as Fyfe (1992) observed, there will always be a gulf between decisions and discussions at borough level consultation meetings and the way policing is delivered on the ground. However, as I describe on pages 205-207 the Metropolitan Police had sought to reduce this gulf by establishing consultation structures at the more localised level of wards rather than boroughs (Tuffin, 2006; Morris, 2006; Foster and Jones, 2010).

Yet despite the tensions and difficulties around its implementation community policing remains a core part of policing not only in Britain but also in many countries across the world including the US, Northern Ireland and Holland (Skogan, 2008; Topping, 2008; Van de Klomp, Adang and Van den Brink, 2011). Indeed as Lum (2009) notes, police chiefs in democratic countries favour community-orientated approaches because, as the most visible enforcer of governmental authority, police agencies

must be seen to exercise their extensive powers with the consent of the people.

As Lowe and Innes (2012) observe, in the UK perhaps more so than in other jurisdictions, what the public think about the policing matters. This is partly attributable to the fact that, as Jones (2005) notes, the fundamental powers the police possess to regulate the liberties of the public and the political nature of their role mean that it is essential that representative bodies and citizens have the opportunity to direct and hold the police to account. Furthermore, community policing has a range of benefits including improving the prevention and solution of crime problems and building collaborative relationships with communities (Trojanowicz and Buqueroux, 1990; Morash *et al*, 2002; Rodgers and Robinson, 2004; Innes, 2005; Myhill, 2006; Tuffin, 2006; Innes and Jones, 2006).

While the results of community policing approaches have historically been mixed (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002), this might in part be due to the fact that as Skogan (2008) notes, it is impossible to measure 'what matters' when evaluating community policing initiatives. This is largely because community policing focuses on dealing with clusters of longer-term problems, which are harder count than individual incidents (Skogan, 2008). Furthermore community policing encompasses a range of police activities including both formal and informal contacts with communities, which because they are often ill-defined can be difficult to evaluate (Mistry, 2007).

Yet despite these tensions, recent studies suggest that community policing can deliver significant improvements in relations with the public, confidence in the police and crime levels if implementation difficulties are overcome and aims and objectives clarified. For example, Foster and Jones' (2010) action research with officers implementing Safer Neighbourhoods demonstrated that despite the problems surrounding the fact that the initiative was predicated largely on a philosophical approach, and there was no real guidance on the challenges and complexities in consulting communities, by working with officers the researchers were able to help teams overcome these difficulties and deliver a service responsive to local needs. The researchers did this by primarily by helping officers to use more systematic analysis to both clarify and evaluate their objectives and activities. For example, when a range of problems for action were raised in community consultation meetings, the researchers helped the police prioritise the issues, by drawing upon wider crime data and qualitative information.

Similarly the evaluation of the National Reassurance Policing Programme found that while the programme did not reduce recorded crime, it reduced fear of crime, improved public perceptions of crime and perceptions of risk. Furthermore it increased public confidence in the police and police engagement with local communities (Tuffin *et al*, 2006; Morris, 2006). Similarly Lowe and Innes' (2012) evaluation of the delivery of the Neighbourhood Policing model in Sutton, Surrey, found that Neighbourhood Teams were valued by residents.

Therefore, despite the numerous challenges and tensions involved in community policing, it does have the potential to deliver critical benefits, most notably ensuring that policing is tailored to the needs of the people that it serves, and that it has the support of those being policed. Furthermore, evidence from Holland suggests that community policing, though unable to completely prevent breakdowns in relations between the police and public (Skogan, 2008), can help mitigate and contain crisis situations (Van de Klomp, Adang and Van den Brink, 2011). Van de Klomp, Adang and Van den Brink's (2011) study of riots in a deprived neighbourhood in Utrect described how community policing established robust relations between the police and local people that helped contain and mitigate the impacts of a riot following the police shooting of a civilian wielding a knife in the neighbourhood. The long history of police engagement with local people, meant that established neighbourhood officers were able to provide reassurance to the public, communicate information about police activity to deal with the shooting and work with the family of the victim to calm tensions (Van de Klomp, Adang, Van den Brink, 2011).

Building upon the literature and ideas about community policing, the following sections describe the community policing approaches used in Greenfield and key issues associated with them.

Community policing in Ebury

In Ebury, the borough in which Greenfield is located, community policing was structured as follows: at the borough-wide level an Inspector, the

Police Community Liaison Officer (PCLO), was responsible for ensuring that policing in Ebury, from the policing of community events and critical incidents to day-to-day crime-fighting operations, was informed by the views of different communities in the area. In line with the recommendations of the Macpherson (1999) Report, the PCLO established an IAG comprising community representatives to advise on policing and convened a minimum of six Police Consultative Group (PCG) meetings per year, open to everyone living in the borough. Where appropriate, the PCLO also convened smaller sub-groups such as GOLD groups, which were brought together at short notice to advise on the police handling of critical or high profile incidents (such as murders or political demonstrations), or events likely to have a community impact.

At ward level, the Neighbourhood Policing model outlined on pages 196-197 was being introduced in Ebury and pan-London during my fieldwork. Each ward was assigned a dedicated Safer Neighbourhoods policing team, comprising a sergeant, two PCs and three PCSOs, dedicated to addressing crime and policing issues specific to the area. Officers were primarily accountable not to senior officers but local people, who dictated the team's work priorities and focus. Teams were required to hold regular public meetings, establish a community representatives group to oversee and direct policing activity and undertake extensive day-to-day public engagement using their PCSOs. To further increase their accessibility, teams were based in community locations (such as community centres, leisure centres) rather than police stations.

As I described in the preceding sections, there have been numerous community policing initiatives in Britain, and Safer Neighbourhoods replaced a former neighbourhood policing system - Community Beat Policing - whereby PCs were assigned a specific beat, in which they were required to assume long term responsibility for building relations with local people and addressing local crime problems. PCs worked in teams of six, reporting to a ward sergeant. However, unlike Community Beat Policing, Safer Neighbourhoods aimed to make officers primarily accountable to local people, and work from the priorities that they set.

As described in chapter two, I conducted interviews with the two Inspectors with overall responsibility for co-ordination of Safer Neighbourhoods and observed two different Safer Neighbourhood teams policing adjacent wards in Greenfield. At borough-wide level, during my research the borough's PCLO changed, enabling me to observe how two different officers performed the role of borough wide liaison. The following section describes the characteristics of the officers I spent time with to contextualise my findings.

Community officers

The two PCLOs and the two ward teams I observed differed radically in terms of their approach not only to community policing, but policing in general. In the case of the two PCLOs, this was partly attributable to the fact that they were very different individuals. Officer 23 was a white man in his mid-forties who had spent his twenty career serving in the Metropolitan Police. Prior to joining the service he studied at a polytechnic college with

the aim of becoming a teacher. He was conservative in his views, and though he rarely expressed overtly prejudicial attitudes he tended to have partial understandings of the peoples and groups he came into contact with.

His successor, Officer 24, also white and male, was a graduate in his mid-thirties with ten years' experience working for the Metropolitan Police. Prior to joining the force he had worked as a tax accountant in a city firm, during which time he met his wife, a professional accountant of Pakistani origin. Partly as a result of his marriage, his friendship and familial circle included people from a range of diverse backgrounds.

The two ward teams were also led by very different officers; the first team, team A, was responsible for policing a central ward covering Greenfield's town centre. The main shopping areas, places of worship and community centres were all concentrated in a relatively small number of streets, which were invariably bustling and crowded. As I described in chapter three, people from all over England visited these main streets as Greenfield was one of the main Asian shopping areas in the country and included a number of Muslim, Hindu, Christian and Sikh places of worship. Directly behind the main shopping streets were residential roads, comprising tightly packed terraced housing. The popularity of the area, the crowds it attracted and the multiplicity of shops, restaurants, cafes and places of worship meant that the area, while bustling and vibrant was also overcrowded and blighted by traffic problems, litter and the usual problems that attend large commercial centres (i.e. shop-lifting, illegal trading).

The team policing the area was headed by a middle-aged British Pakistani sergeant with twenty years' policing experience, Officer 17 who as I described in chapter five, had hostile views of other Asian communities (particularly Sikhs). Working to him were a white middle male PC with twenty years' experience (seven of which had been policing the area they covered), Officer 1, who as I described in chapter four, voiced critical views of Greenfield and its' ethnically diverse communities. The other PC on the team was a young white female, Officer 11, who came from a family of police officers, and had three years' experience. There were also three PCSOs on the team: Officer 33 a young British Pakistani male with three years' experience; a young white female with two years' experience, Officer 31; and an Indian Christian middle-aged male who lived in the area, Officer 30.

The second team, Team B, policed a central area of Greenfield, adjacent to Team A's ward. While this area included one or two busy streets, unlike Team A's ward the majority of the area comprised quieter, mainly residential streets. The two more central streets of the ward were beset by similar problems to Team A's shopping area (shoplifting, illegal trading), and the rest of the area comprised housing, schools a community centre and a large park, with crime problems centring on anti-social behaviour in the park, robberies and drug taking.

The team was led by Officer 20, a middle-aged Sikh sergeant with twenty years' service, who unlike Officer 17, was a graduate who had worked as

an engineer prior to joining the police. As I described in chapter five, Officer 20 differed radically to Officer 17 in his perspectives and approach and was a reformer who sought to improve the policing of minority ethnic communities. Officer 20's team included two young white male PCs both of whom were reluctant to remain in community policing. Officer 4 was a university graduate and life-long Londoner, with five years' service. Officer 5 had few formal qualifications and had grown up in rural Scotland only coming to London a couple of years before joining the police service. The two PCSOs on the team were a young West Indian woman in her early thirties, Officer 32 and Officer 34, a young British Pakistani man with two years' service. The third PCSO allocated to the team was on long-term leave (the table at Annex C provides further details on the two teams).

Business as usual

Officers 25, 23, 17 and 1 all viewed public consultation as having a limited role in policing. At best they viewed consultation as a means of enabling the police to 'educate' people in Ebury about their activities and secure their support for ongoing police action, rather than a means whereby people could challenge existing thinking and practice. However in the worst instances, these officers viewed consultation as having no role to play in policing at all, undertaking it simply because it was a formal requirement of their role.

Officer 25, the white middle-aged Inspector responsible for the overall implementation of Safer Neighbourhoods in Ebury dismissed consultation as a 'bit of a PR exercise', viewing Safer Neighbourhoods as primarily an

opportunity to tackle ward level crime problems'. It should be noted that

Officer 25 was a committed officer who worked hard and often went

beyond the formal requirements of his role to help members of the public

who sought his assistance. Despite the aims of Safer Neighbourhoods

being to empower local people and enable them to direct policing, Officer

25 regarded the main purpose of consultation with local communities as

being to 'educate' people about the crime issues in their area and gain

their support for police efforts to address them. He explained:

> *'We will lift their knowledge of crime matters to make them realise actually,*
> *'turning right at the cross-roads doesn't really affect you, but this burglary*
> *problem does, we're making you aware it's on the estate'. So they will start*
> *coming to us and saying actually one of our focuses of crime will be burglary'.*

Overall Officer 25 regarded people in Greenfield, particularly those living in

deprived areas of the town as not having, as he put it, the 'education' to be

able to direct or shape policing. He said:

> *'Education's going to take a few years because, I'm not being rude here, but*
> *we're talking about ordinary members of the public – do you know what the*
> *average reading age is in this country? Twelve…you've probably got a far more*
> *in-depth knowledge of police, crime and trends of crime and problems of fighting*
> *crime than the average person who sits on a housing estate'.*

Although this attitude was not perhaps the best approach to community

consultation, in some ways Officer 25's perceptions were correct, for as

Skogan (2008: 32) noted in his review of why reforms fail:

> *'In the case of community policing, police executives have learned that if the*
> *public is going to take a significant role they will need educating. Civilians will not*
> *know what they can newly expect from the police, nor what they themselves can*
> *contribute to solving neighbourhood problems'.*

Furthermore as Skogan (2008) noted, communities that are poor,

marginalised or dis-empowered are often particularly ill-equipped to

perform the role of critically appraising and directing policing. This was

perhaps best illustrated by Huey and Quirotte's (2010) study of the

community policing programme in Edinburgh intended to engage with local homeless people, which found that homeless organisations lacked the capabilities to lobby the police effectively while homeless individuals themselves lacked the confidence and knowledge to be able to effectively explain their needs.

Furthermore, Officer 25's focus on crime fighting was also perhaps unsurprising given the focus on crime fighting in police culture (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Brodeur, 2010) a goal which has remained constant despite the increasing focus on adopting more community-focussed approaches (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999; Parnaby and Leyden, 2011). As I discuss in chapter eight, the focus on crime fighting is not solely attributed to internal police dynamics and resistance to change but also the fact that, as Brodeur (2010) notes, wider society continues to demand that the police reduce crime. As Barnes and Eagle (2007) describe, the focus to meet top-level crime targets set by senior officers and the Home Office often creates tensions with community or neighbourhood policing programmes. Foster and Jones' (2010) study of the delivery of community policing in an English police force uncovered similar themes, describing how officers were often torn between delivering crime targets and community policing.

While Officer 25's attitudes were in some ways understandable, more blatantly hostile attitudes towards engagement were expressed by the officers leading Team A - Officer 17 and Officer 1, who was designated 'Second in command' by Officer 17. As I described in chapter four, Officer

1 viewed Asian people in Greenfield as 'uneducated' and dismissed the area as 'a ghetto'.

The more junior officers in Team A, most notably the PCSOs, did not necessarily share Officer 1's views and tried to consult and engage with local people. However Officers 17 and 1 blocked these attempts, regarding them as a waste of time. As Officer 1 said: 'Focus groups, that's a terrible phrase…you can just see it can't you, all dog shit and parking disputes'.

One of the PCSOs, Officer 30, explained that despite the reluctance of Officers 17 and 1, the team held a public consultation to introduce their Safer Neighbourhoods team, as it was a formal requirement of the initiative and Officers 25 and 26 demanded it. The PCSOs recorded the issues local people had raised, which ranged from concerns about traffic offences to more serious problems including drug-taking and violence. However Officer 30 explained: 'We had a meeting and there were a lot of problems [raised by local people]…after we had two days off and we came back I said 'where's all those papers?' We put their names on them, they'd [Officers 17 and 1] just destroyed it'.

Officer 17 also failed to establish a focus group to oversee his team's work for nearly eight months, despite this being one of the few core requirements of Safer Neighbourhoods. When, after pressure from senior officers, he finally did establish a group, he ensured it comprised only those people who would endorse police activity and excluded those who

were potentially challenging or critical of the police. As Officer 31 explained, 'We have a focus group whereby our sergeant has chosen certain people from the [Greenfield] community so it's his choice who he wants on his focus group'. Officer 30 said:

> 'They [Officers 17 and 1] only want certain people on their forum. They don't want… [person X] and I said 'Why don't we want someone who's outspoken, why? Why do you want only people who are very pro police? Get people who are anti-police, get input from them at least it balances it out'.

The repeated attempts of Officers 30 and 31 to conduct any further engagement were vociferously blocked by Officers 17 and 1 who claimed it would, 'duplicate' the work of their focus group. Officer 30 did not accept this, as he explained: 'Everyone in [Greenfield] cannot be represented by a group of people…he [the sergeant] says we'll have representatives but how many people go to representatives?'

These patterns were not unique to Greenfield and mirrored findings from other community policing evaluations. For example Foster and Jones' (2010) action research into the implementation of Safer Neighbourhoods in an English police force uncovered similar patterns in one team, which invested minimal engagement with communities at the direction of the sergeant leading the team. Similarly as Skogan (2008) noted in his summary of why reforms fail, frontline officers often resist community policing and consultation as they are outside their traditional crime-fighting role.

Having dismissed the central consultative elements of Safer Neighbourhoods as irrelevant or unimportant, officers in Team A struggled to cite what was new or innovative about Safer Neighbourhoods. Officer 1

could only volunteer, 'More resources?' but then went on to elaborate that in his view this was only a superficial increase as the majority of extra officers were PCSOs.

Although the Home Office Green Paper on neighbourhood policing (Home Office, 2008) cited PCSOs as having a crucial role to play in building public confidence and delivering an effective policing service, Officer 1 dismissed them as an attempt at, 'policing on the cheap', adding that: 'The quality is atrocious…some of these people wouldn't get a job in Macdonalds'. Officer 31 also told me that Officer 1 had said to her that, 'You're just fucking plastic…overpaid uniform carriers, a waste of tax payers' money'.

Officer 1's views echoed wider research which has found widespread hostility towards PCSO's amongst rank and file officers. For example in his study of two London boroughs Johnston (2007) found that PCSOs were generally regarded by other officers as being of variable quality and rather than being useful, placed burdens upon other officers. The prevailing ignorance about the role of PCSOs and the hostility towards them resulted in their being under-used and generally labelled as poor performers. Yet as Caless (2007: 187) found, though PCSOs were dismissed by officers in his study as, 'Numties in Yellow Jackets', they performed a valuable role in building links with communities by engaging and consulting with people in a variety of ways, including informal discussions and day-to-day contacts.

Overall in Team A there was a prevailing sense that officers were merely conducting 'business as usual'. Officer 1 who had been a beat officer in Greenfield prior to the introduction of Safer Neighbourhoods summarised the situation when he said: 'I've told [Officer 17] I'm used to being the Sheriff round here…he's said I can carry on as before'.

'Carrying on as before' resulted in officers often being under-occupied and bored, with the lack of direction from either senior officers or local people resulting in them having little to do. Officer 1 continued with a project he had begun as a beat officer, which involved policing the sale of illegal copies of Bollywood DVDs and CDs. Echoing themes from Cohen's (1985) theories on social control talk, Officer 1 justified his activities by saying that the local 'community' supported his DVD operation and that the sale of illegal DVDs funded, 'organised crime and terrorism', though he was unable to substantiate these claims.

Officer 1's daily patrols and repeated searches of shops for illegal DVDs seemed to cause tension with some local shopkeepers. Despite being initially happy to allow Officer 1 access to their premises, some owners began to resent his almost daily inspections. He would enter premises and begin searching through merchandise and cupboards often without asking permission or giving any word of greeting. On one occasion, a shopkeeper, frustrated at having his premises searched for the second time that day demanded aggressively, 'Can I help you?' On another occasion a shopkeeper challenged the PC: 'You do nothing about the shoplifters and yet you search me'.

During one patrol the PC arrested a young Sikh stallholder selling pirated Bollywood DVDs, making rude remarks to the young man and his colleague during the arrest. He stopped them from using their mobile phones saying, 'I know what you Afghani Singhs are like…you'll be warning all the others I'm out'. Both young men responded with contemptuous amusement laughing, 'You're British – you don't phone every other British person when something happens!'

Yet irrespective of the potential implications for relations with local people, the DVD operation constituted the only substantive ongoing work in the team. Officer 17 was rarely present in the office, Officer 11 told me: 'He [Officer 17] fills in his sheets saying he's been here but he's at home watching the cricket or at that shithole estate with her [his girlfriend]…the other week he phoned in and said, 'I'm not coming in, I'm in Brighton''.

Officer 11 and the PCSOs were restricted to conducting a certain number of stop and accounts per shift by Officer 17 who used it as a form of performance management. They confided they found it awkward stopping people with little or no reason, Officer 11 said, 'If there's a reason I will stop people but I can't otherwise'.

When Officer 11 attempted to initiate action to address drug taking and alcoholism in the area her efforts were blocked by Officer 17. She secured a dispersal order, single-handedly putting together all the paperwork, which empowered officers to disperse groups of drunks and drug addicts

loitering on public benches in the ward. These efforts proved fruitless as Officers 1 and 17 refused to allow officers in the team to enforce the order resulting in it being effectively useless and leading Officer 11 to observe: 'I don't know why I bothered'. The lack of commitment from Officer 17 and his refusal to allow attempts by his officers to initiate new activities and projects resulted in an overwhelming feeling of apathy in the team, as Officer 11 remarked, 'he doesn't bother so why should we?'

On the occasions that local people made specific requests for help the service they received was limited and variable. Though ward teams were required to adapt shift patterns to respond to the needs of people in their area, Team A rigidly worked from 10am until 6pm each day, in line with Officer 1's preferences. Where crimes occurred outside of these core hours, they would often remain unaddressed. For example, officials at a Hindu temple reported drug taking in the temple toilets during the early hours of the morning, however as this fell outside the core hours of the team Officer 17, rather than changing the team's working pattern, merely advised temple officials to contact the emergency response team. Eventually Officer 11 changed her shift pattern to visit the temple at her own initiative.

Officer 17 did undertake a couple of isolated drugs and brothel raids in the ward, which he presented to senior managers and the focus group as evidence of his team's activities, along with the numbers of stop and accounts conducted by officers. Like organisations being audited in Power's (1999) research, Officer 17 used these isolated operations to

create a 'front stage' for external scrutiny that obscured or hid other 'internal' practices.

It is worth noting that while the team were conducting 'business as usual', there were indications that there were serious crime problems in the ward that were not being addressed. Officer 30 who lived in the area was adamant that domestic violence was a major problem and that it was often unreported (see chapter seven). He also believed that Greenfield had a major drugs problem, (indeed this was raised at the team's public launch meeting) however he said that Officer 1 was: 'Only interested in DVDs. My problem is, there is a crime with this, ok, fine, but how much is it really affecting the community? I mean on a scale of drugs and DVDs - I mean where's the scale?'

While police data for Team A's ward did not necessarily support all of Officer 30's assertions, the statistics indicate that there were significant levels of crime in the area. Statistics for 2005 show that a total of 1,880 offences were reported in Team A's ward; of these were 565 offences of violence against the person; 21 were sexual offences (including 9 rapes); 491 were theft and handling offences; 261 were criminal damage offences (including 11 cases of arson); and 212 were drugs offences.

Endorsing policing activity

At borough level, while neither of the PCLOs I observed entirely dismissed the value of consultation with communities, both had very different perspectives on the role of consultation in policing. As I described in

chapter four, Officer 23 who had been a PCLO in Ebury for two years had simplistic views of different communities and regarded the purpose of consultation as primarily to secure endorsement for police activity, rather than to challenge the organisation's thinking and practice. He explained, 'The main purpose of the IAG is to ensure the communities support what we're doing'.

From our first acquaintance Officer 23 was keen to establish, 'What are you?' that is to say my religion and ethnic background. While he had some respect for the fact I was a high caste Hindu (as was apparent by his remarks to the effect that I was superior to the majority of people in Greenfield) he said: 'Everyone's pretty ok in Greenfield, it's just the Hindus who complain all the time'. Officer 23 tended to view different communities in one-dimensional terms, and often seemed ill-equipped to respond to the inevitable complexities and ambiguities involved with policing ethnically diverse, continually evolving communities. As Officer 23 himself said to community representatives and myself on a number of occasions: 'I'm not politically correct but people like me!'

For example, when liaising with local Sikhs he asked me about the relative social position of different groups: 'The Jats say they're the high caste ones like you [Brahmins] and the Ramgharias are low down'. I explained that Ramgharia Sikhs tend to be craftsmen, unlike farmer or landowner Jats, and that many Ramgharia Sikhs would argue that they were certainly equal, if not superior, being more skilled and in some cases considerably wealthier than Jat Sikhs as they had migrated from East Africa. Officer 23

demanded, 'Yeah, but who's right?' dissatisfied with my explanation that both were.

Given his inability to cope with the complexities of the diverse communities of Greenfield, and his attempts to fit people into simple categories, it is perhaps unsurprising that Officer 23 was critical of the fact that 'Asian' communities in Ebury were in his view 'disorganised' and 'there isn't that single person we can go to'. The one group he praised as being 'organised' were the 'Jewish community'. He said: 'You turn up at temples and there's no-one to show you round…the Jews are always organised and ready to meet you'. However, rather than reflecting the organisation of the Jewish community in Ebury, Officer 23's experiences could have been due to the fact he was engaging with a long-standing, predominantly English group, who had more commonalities with him than the Asian and African peoples of Greenfield.

Officer 23 regarded the main purpose of consultation as being to secure public endorsement for police activity. To some extent, his views were not entirely incorrect; the main aim of community consultation is to establish relationships of trust with different communities and provide reassurance (Barnes and Eagle, 2007; Savage, 2007; Lowe and Innes, 2012). Indeed in Britain there has been an increasing emphasis on community approaches when there has been a crisis in police legitimacy or police community relations (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999; Bowling and Foster, 2002).

However, where Officer 23's views became problematic was in his insistence that he would only engage with people he believed to be tractable or pro- police. The IAG he established comprised only those representatives he believed to be supportive of police activity, those who were regarded as hostile or anti-police, such as the local women's group the Southall Black Sisters, were excluded from the consultative groups. He stated, 'There's no point having people who want to beat us up'. However, much of the theory around community policing emphasises the need to engage with communities who are removed from or even hostile towards the police, to ensure that policing has legitimacy amongst all sections of the public (McLaughlin, 1994; Skogan, 2008). While the difficulties in engaging such groups has been extensively documented, (Keith, 1993; McLaughlin, 1994) and the extent to which community policing alone can build trust with hostile communities has been questioned (Skogan, 2008), there is widespread consensus that increasing legitimacy with marginalised communities is one of the main purposes of consultation.

However, the IAG Officer 23 convened was a somewhat passive group of predominantly middle-aged, middle-class men who, instead of proactively calling meetings with the police and setting agendas as they were supposed to do, would wait for Officer 23 to set meetings and topics for discussion. The discussions at meetings reinforced rather than challenged stereotypical views of certain communities, most notably Black and Muslim communities, with members sometimes voicing overtly prejudiced views. For example, at one meeting a Sikh IAG member reporting on the outcomes of a policing and multiculturalism conference he had attended

claimed it was dominated by 'Blacks' and 'coloureds' who were unfairly hostile to the police and 'kept going on' about the Lawrence Report and stop and search.

Both the Sikh member and the Chairman of the IAG, an elderly white middle-class male, expanded on this theme, proceeding to discuss the crime problems associated with 'Blacks'. Black IAG members, most notably the Chair of Ebury Race Equality Council (REC) informed me that the Sikh IAG member frequently undermined their contributions in IAG meetings. For example, when the Chair had attempted to raise the problem of racist victimisation of Asian people in Ebury, he had stated that she was not qualified to speak about issues within Asian communities. She countered this by reminding him that she was Chair of the REC and, 'I told him, my mother was Asian'.

Similarly when undertaking consultations on specific topics at the request of senior officers, Officer 23 only selected participants he believed would endorse police thinking and practice. During my fieldwork, the public sector practice of undertaking Equality Impact Assessments, (EIAs) when launching new policies or initiatives was coming into force and Officer 23 was often responsible for completing these. EIAs were intended to enable organisations to assess the impacts of their policies, initiatives or practices on all sections of the public prior to implementation. However Officer 23 said, 'I've told management, there's no point consulting some people as they'll just tell us it's a bad idea', overlooking the fact that main purpose of

undertaking the assessments was to identify whether there were any specific issues or problems for different communities.

Officer 23's approach to consultation was perhaps best illustrated by his consultation on the implementation of Recommendation 61 of the Lawrence Report. The recommendation required all officers to record stops as well as stops and searches so that any disproportionality or unequal use of the power could be identified. Officer 23 arranged a meeting for all IAG members to discuss the recommendation, however on the day of the meeting only the Chairman of the IAG arrived. While we waited in case other attendees emerged, the Chairman made various remarks about problems with terrorists in Muslim communities, recounting to Officer 23 how: 'I was listening to Nicky Campbell's phone-in…there was this man going on about how it's unfair to label all Muslim communities and Nicky Campbell just turned round and said, 'How many terrorists are Muslim?'' The Chairman also discussed the benefits of colonialism and how former colonies should be grateful for all that the British had done for them. Rather than challenging these views Officer 23 assented.

After some time it became apparent that no other members were attending and Officer 23 proceeded to the main business of the meeting, namely consulting on Recommendation 61. The Chairman was critical of the recommendation, describing it as, 'political correctness gone mad' and making a number of comments about how the recording of stops and searches had resulted in increased levels of offending by Black people. He

believed that the recommendation should not be implemented and that the police should not be encumbered with 'excessive paperwork' and instead be left to do what they 'should be doing'. Instead of challenging these views Officer 23 merely shrugged and said, 'Well I'll take that back, but I can't say anything will be done'. When I later asked whether Officer 23 would be consulting with anyone else he said, 'I invited them all to the meeting'. When I pointed out that the meeting had been held during the middle of a weekday, which could have prevented community representatives in full-time employment from attending, he became defensive and stated there was no need to consult further. Officer 23's behaviour chimed with themes in Foster and Jones' (2010) research on community policing which found that while some officers were aware that few people attended their consultation meetings, they made no effort to undertake further work to engage local people.

Critical challenge

In direct contradiction to the views and practices described above, other officers I observed in Ebury regarded consultation as an important means of ensuring that different communities were able to critically appraise and challenge police thinking and practice. Officer 24 who succeeded Officer 23 differed radically in his approach; whereas Officer 23 said that there was no point in talking to 'people who want to beat us up', Officer 24 said, 'There's no point consulting with people who just tell you what you want to hear'. Overall Officer 24 believed that people who were most critical of the police were often those who were best able to identify problems with existing thinking and practice in the organisation.

Officer 24's arrival coincided with that of a new Borough Commander, who wanted to improve community consultation across the borough, particularly with groups who were hostile to the police, such as young people. Officer 24 took up this role with enthusiasm; in previous roles he had undertaken voluntary work with young offenders (taking them on weekends away) and he drew upon this experience when preparing an engagement strategy. After shadowing Officer 23 for a couple of weeks he decided to reform the existing IAG, reviewing their terms of reference and membership. Officer 24 said, 'When I was a PC in Kensington and Chelsea we had a great IAG, but I don't know what this bunch do'. He continued: 'I've got this group, no-one knows why these people are there, who they represent…they don't do anything, they just get spoon-fed by us, they should be setting the agenda, calling us to account'.

Officer 24 was particularly critical of certain IAG members, most notably the Chairman and an elderly middle class white woman from a residents' group, who frequently voiced stereotypical, even racist views about minority communities in Greenfield. He described their attendance at a community event in Greenfield: 'They were wandering around like tourists or those old school British colonials…[the Chairman] might as well have been in shorts with binoculars…[Officer 29] thinks he's great, but I just find him embarrassing'.

As a first step, Officer 24 met with certain individual members of the IAG (such as the Chair of Ebury REC and a community worker) to identify

ways in which existing consultation practices needed to be improved. Both women were highly critical of the group, believing some members to be unrepresentative of local people and, in some instances, even prejudiced towards minority ethnic communities. Both expressed frustration that the group had produced no tangible outputs in two years and were keen that it should become more active, informing and shaping police activity. Officer 24 acted immediately on their advice, undertaking a comprehensive review of the IAG's membership to ensure the group reflected the demographic of Ebury and comprised members who would provide robust critical advice and scrutiny of policing in the area. He also made particular efforts to ensure that women's groups were included on the IAG (see chapter seven).

Officer 24's efforts echo some of the themes raised in the Morris Report (2004), which made various recommendations on improving the extent to which IAGs were representative of the public they served. The Morris Report (2004) included a range of recommendations intended to improve the transparency of appointments, arguing that IAG members should be appointed via an open competition and advertisement, be assessed for their suitability against a formal specification (which should be made public) and have the terms and tenure of their appointment made public.

Furthermore, while Officer 23 simply accepted the views of his IAG members uncritically, Officer 24 challenged remarks that were prejudicial or based on limited knowledge. For example, Officer 24 held regular review meetings with the REC and detectives from the Crime and Safety

Unit to scrutinise the policing of race hate crime. At the review meetings participants would examine a random selection of anonymised cases to identify whether incidents were being handled effectively and how the service provided to victims could be improved.

During one meeting both detectives and REC staff were dismissive of a complaint by a middle-aged Asian male who reported being the victim of anti-semitic attacks. An REC representative said: 'He can't be Jewish…the local synagogues don't even know him'. Officer 24 intervened firmly, stating that if the individual defined himself as Jewish then this should be accepted by all concerned, 'We or the local synagogue can't tell him who he is', and emphasising that his complaints should be properly investigated, in line with the guidelines on policing racist incidents introduced by the Macpherson Report (1999). The Asian man in question may have been an Indian Jew who, given cultural differences, may not have felt comfortable visiting English synagogues.

At a more localised level, Team B adopted a similar approach to consultation and, unlike their colleagues in Team A, made engagement with local people central to their strategy for policing their ward. Officer 20 who led the team explained he wanted to have, 'More of a direct link to them [local people] than there has been previously'. Like Officer 24, he wanted his focus group to comprise people who would not simply endorse police activity, but critically assess and challenge his team's work. Following the first public meeting to launch the team and identify policing priorities, he allowed, 'Anyone who wanted to be on our focus group at our

public meeting', to become part of the group. Officer 20 also wanted the group to be community, not police led, explaining: 'I chaired the first one [focus group meeting] but that's not how it's meant to be, they're meant to be chairing, telling us what we should be doing'. He allowed members to set the timing, agenda and structure for meetings and used the group to assess the extent to which local people were satisfied with the policing of the ward. He said, 'I also want them to tell us how we're doing, how we could do better, what we're doing wrong if anything'.

Yet Officer 20 acknowledged, 'the focus group won't represent the concerns of everyone'. Therefore he encouraged his team, particularly the PCSOs, to undertake activities including running police surgeries, participating in community events and building informal contacts, to access a wider range of local people. On every patrol of the local area PCs and PCSOs would visit shops, cafes and community centres to build relationships of trust and ensure that they were accessible and approachable for local people. They regularly visited the community centre managed by a West Indian woman, participating in events at the centre ranging from those for young mothers and children to events for the elderly.

Officer 4 also routinely visited local shops to chat informally with staff and find out if they had any problems. During one visit a shopkeeper said, 'Well there's always shoplifters…the police never come though, I suppose it's low priority'. Officer 4 assured the shopkeeper that he would take action, 'I'm gagging to nick these people', and gave him his mobile number

so that he or his staff could call him directly whenever there was a problem. He also agreed to visit regularly to help deter potential offenders. Having been alerted to the issue Officer 4 then visited the other shops in the area informing them of his plans to deal with shoplifting and encouraging them to provide information on suspected offenders.

PCSOs played a particularly crucial role in reaching the more marginalised sections of the community, including those who could not speak English. For example, Officer 34 was instructed to use his command of Asian languages to talk to elderly people and young mothers in the local park to discover if there were any unreported crime problems. This resulted in drug dealing and robberies of elderly people coming to light and arrests being made. Park workers and elderly people expressed their gratitude to officers and said that they felt that they were once more able to make full use of their park. In addition to engaging with different Asian communities, the team also made efforts to engage with more recently arrived communities in the area including Somalis and, as I discussed in chapter four, took tea regularly at the local Somali café. However, during our visits it became apparent women were never present in the café, as Officer 32 said, 'I don't know where all the women go!'

Despite the team's efforts, it was clear that there were certain groups of local people, most notably those who were from the marginalised, 'problem populations' described in chapter four, who had no opportunity to provide input into police thinking and practice. The most notable examples were Somali women, travellers and asylum seekers or those with

uncertain immigration status. Despite Team B's intentions to reflect the views of all local people, the ward team's focus group was still dominated by middle-class professionals living and working in the area and not necessarily fully representative of people in Greenfield.

It should be noted that this problem was not unique to Team B; Foster and Jones' (2010) study of neighbourhood policing in an English police force, found that there were no strategies in place to engage the hard to reach and that furthermore both neighbourhood teams included in the study had gaps in their consultation, with some groups being un-represented. The existing community policing literature provides extensive evidence on the difficulties in engaging with marginalised groups (McLaughlin, 1994; Skogan, 2008), not least of all because these groups are often the most hostile and reluctant to engage with the police. Furthermore even those individuals who are willing to engage can get 'consultation fatigue' (Herrington and Millie, 2006).

Despite the limitations of the consultation undertaken by the team, their efforts were not fruitless. Their extensive engagement with local people brought to light a range of crime issues in the area, which the team acted upon. All officers had ongoing projects on issues identified by the community, most notably graffiti, drugs and prostitution. Each officer took responsibility for their own long-term project; while PCSOs were given low-level, antisocial behaviour problems to address, Officer 20 tasked Officers 4 and 5 with working on crime problems in the area. This had brought some results, as Officer 5 explained: 'Since January we've had one

crackhouse closure which [Officer 4's] done, we're doing a second

crackhouse closure hopefully in a couple of days…On top of that we've

managed to set up a dispersal order, get a few good arrests'.

However the greatest contrasts between Teams A and B were in relation

to the activities and achievements of the PCSOs. Whereas PCSOs in

Team A were under occupied and their limited use became an almost self-

fulfilling prophecy like PCSOs in Johnston's study (2007), Officer 20

regarded PCSOs as a critical part of his team. He said:

> *'They're meant to be eyes and ears of the police but more importantly to sort of talk to the public and interface with the public a little bit more, be more visible…members of the public are more likely to wander up to a PCSO engage them in conversation and tell them stuff than they are a PC'.*

The PCSOs in Team B, Officers 32 and 34, undertook a range of

community engagement activities, informing me that this was the most

satisfying and enjoyable part of their work. Again this echoed findings from

wider research, which has found that PCSOs are more enthusiastic about

community engagement (Johnston, 2007).

Team B received some commendation from the Inspector overseeing

Safer Neighbourhoods for their work and the effective working

relationships between PCs and PCSOs. Officer 25 said: 'There have been

some great jobs recently…in [Area X] a PCSO spotted a drugs deal and

collectively together they took out a team who had been dealing drugs you

know and recovered a lot of heroin'.

However, the team's proactive approach to identifying local problems resulted in them uncovering more issues than they could feasibly deal with. Prioritising was inevitably problematic, as Officer 20 explained:

> 'We were given directions that we'd have a focus group meeting and we'd have five priorities, they picked that as a manageable figure for us to deal with. Now I found it incredibly difficult on my first focus group meeting to say…we won't deal with yours pointing to the sixth, I can't do that, that's wrong…who am I to say these are the five most important ones? I don't think that's good service'.

These tensions around prioritisation were also described in Foster and Jones' (2010) research, which found that Safer Neighbourhoods Teams did not effectively prioritise issues raised by members of the public, or assess (on the basis of wider evidence and data on crime problems) which were genuinely important issues that required action, or what activities could be dealt with by the community themselves. However by working with researchers the police developed a system for prioritising issues effectively as opposed to attempting to deal with everything raised.

However many of the issues that Team B had to deal with did seem to be of a serious nature and included harassment and robbery of elderly people in a local park, drug-taking and illegal employment of immigrant workers. In contrast to Team A who were under-occupied, Team B felt they needed at least one more PC to effectively address all the crime and policing issues in their area. However, under the Safer Neighbourhoods system set numbers of officers were allocated per ward team, regardless of the location or demographics of the ward and there was little flexibility to allocate further resources. The team attempted to work around this by occasionally enlisting the help of cross-borough or cross-MPS units such as the Public Order Police.

However there were problems associated with having officers with no prior knowledge of the local area being drafted in to deal with specific crime problems. For example, Team B called on the Public Order Police to help clear the local park of robbers and drug dealers. After a few raids, criminals using the park were dispersed and deterred from using the area. However when a PCSO called for assistance when threatened by youths in a residential street, the Public Order Police cleared the street, arresting not only those who threatened the PCSO but also manhandling residents. Officer 5 explained how the team had taken action to try and limit the damage to police-community relations: 'We had fifty year old men with cuts and bruises, so afterwards we had to go door to door and apologise and explain that we were different from these officers and hand out leaflets telling them if they wanted to make a complaint this is how they could'.

Not real policework

The question arises, why did two such opposing approaches to consultation emerge in Ebury? One of the central reasons was that in line with wider research on community policing it was regarded as marginal, low-status and not 'real police work' (Miller, 1999; Reiner, 2000a; Skogan, 2008; Herbert, 2010). As in some other forces the Metropolitan Police attempted to address the low status of community policing by placing an increased emphasis on customer satisfaction and community-focussed examples in promotion boards (Miller, 1999). While this resulted in some ambitious, capable officers such as Officer 24 occupying community policing roles, the fact remained that community policing had less kudos

than mainstream crime-fighting activity. As Officer 23 aptly summarised, the PCLO role was, 'seen as an important role, but not as good as being a DI [Detective Inspector]', which was perhaps attributable to the organisation's entrenched focus on crime fighting, despite the fact that this formed only a small part of the organisation's day-to-day activities (Reiner, 2000a; Barnes and Eagle 2007; Skogan, 2008; Parnaby and Leyden, 2011).

Although some dynamic sergeants were attracted to Safer Neighbourhoods as it provided opportunities to secure evidence to support their promotion applications, rank and file officers overwhelming regarded it as being low status, dull and suitable for officers waiting for retirement. As Officer 4 observed, working in a ward team was, 'Alright for an easy life…it's alright if you're waiting for retirement'. In some cases being sent to a ward team was even used as a punishment. For example Officer 5 said the reason he joined a ward team: 'wasn't through sort of choice, I mean there was a statutory sort of thing, every team was asked to provide two people and my duty Inspector and I didn't really see eye to eye and he kicked me off to here'. Officer 1 explained, 'my only other option was going back on response and I'm getting a bit long in the tooth for that'.

As in the case of many community policing initiatives, officers tended to regard Safer Neighbourhoods as being 'dull', 'boring' and having, 'not as much action as there is on the 24-relief [emergency response policing]', almost mirroring comments from officers in Herbert's (2010) research in the US, who felt most community policing work was 'chicken shit'. Even

officers in Team B said that although they had come to enjoy their work, ultimately they wanted to transfer back to emergency response policing or CID.

However, after completing their time in neighbourhood policing the officers in Team B could have potentially used their enhanced knowledge of local communities when they returned to emergency response policing or CID. For example, Miller (1999) found that after working in community policing officers retained their enhanced knowledge of different communities and were able to use it when working in mainstream crime-fighting roles.

The marginal status of community policing to mainstream crime fighting was perhaps most graphically illustrated by the status of PCSOs in different teams. The main function of PCSOs was to build relations with the public, gather intelligence and build public confidence in the police. This was reflected in the official powers and equipment issued to PCSOs, who were civilian officers who had no powers to arrest or stop and search people or the standard crime fighting equipment issued to PCs. In teams where consultation was regarded as a marginal activity, PCSOs were treated as low status team members who, because of their inability to contribute to crime fighting were regarded as having little or nothing to contribute.

PCSOs were also subject to bullying, reinforcing their low status - for example in Team A, two of the three PCSOs were bullied and harassed by Officers 17 and 1. It also seemed that the patterns I observed were not

merely confined to this team but reflective of more widespread problems across the borough. For example, Officer 25 said rolling out Safer Neighbourhoods, 'was an absolute nightmare given all the welfare problems and all the discipline problems', the majority of which involved PCSOs. Again these problems were not unique to Ebury; Johnston's (2007) research in two London boroughs found that there were widespread problems around disciplining PCSOs.

As in Greenfield, many of these discipline problems stemmed from officers misunderstanding the role of PCSOs, or negative perceptions of PCSOs being unprofessional and under-qualified. While there was also evidence that there were genuine problems with the performance and conduct problems of PCSOs (for example one PCSO in Johnston's study could not speak English, which meant he was unable to interact with members of the public), no action was taken by managers and officers merely continued to under-perform (Johnston, 2007). This was partly due to the fact that managers had low expectations of PCSOs' performance anyway and viewed them as having only having a marginal role to perform in the organisation (Johnston, 2007).

The notion that Safer Neighbourhoods was low status and marginal to core crime-fighting work also influenced the way it was monitored and managed across the borough. Officer 25 acknowledged that the extent to which they were able to monitor the activities of different ward teams was limited as senior officers required them to undertake a range of other crime-reduction focussed work in addition to managing Safer

Neighbourhoods. This included leading emergency response teams and undertaking crime reduction projects such as Operation Blunt, an initiative intended to combat knife crime. As Officer 26, another officer with responsibility for overseeing Safer Neighbourhoods, explained:

> *'My particular role should be overseeing the ward teams and making sure that I go and meet the community through panel meetings and that the sergeants in charge of the ward teams are identifying and prioritising problems and doing something about it…but invariably I can't because I'm a duty Officer in a response team or I've got a meeting about the project I'm overseeing somewhere else…and I can't go'.*

Both Officers 25 and 26 tended to prioritise their crime-fighting work and where they did devote time to Safer Neighbourhoods they were mainly focussed on the practical tasks of establishing teams in every ward rather than monitoring the quality of engagement. Officer 25 explained: 'We have 23 wards to implement which is slightly more than the average borough, the average borough is 15…we've got to find accommodation, we've got to find the officers, we've got to find the PCSOs we've got to implement the strategy'.

The tensions that I observed in Ebury echoed patterns from wider research. Skogan (2008) in his review of why community policing initiatives fail, argued that officers are often under pressure to meet demands from politicians and the wider public to deal with crime problems, which are inevitably prioritised over community policing work. These findings were supported by Foster and Jones' (2010) research, which found that police officers frequently had to manage competing demands of both reducing crime whilst also implementing Safer Neighbourhoods. This was particularly true in Ebury, for during my research there was

considerable focus on meeting top-level crime reduction' targets set by the Government.

Even when Officers 25 and 26 did monitor the activities of ward teams, this was minimal and included no assessment of public satisfaction or the extent to which teams had engaged with local people. This was perhaps reflective of the fact in community policing there is a widespread 'inability to measure what matters', (Skogan, 2008: 29). Instead, the limited monitoring that Officers 25 and 26 undertook focussed on the crime-fighting activities of the teams and provided very little measure of their performance. For example, Officer 25 asked teams to quantify the amount of crime incident and intelligence forms (CRIMITs) they completed. The only other consistent monitoring of ward teams was the submission of forms documenting crime problems identified and the police actions taken in response to Territorial Police Headquarters (TPHQ).

The lack of monitoring of the ward teams was compounded by the lack of substantive direction and guidance on core issues. For example, though teams were instructed to consult 'the community' there was no direction or reflection on the inherent complexities and tensions involved in this, not least who, in a highly diverse area like Greenfield, constituted 'the community'? Officers working in ward teams were provided with a one-day introductory course, however all of those I interviewed said it was of limited use. Officer 11 remarked, 'it was really boring, such a waste of time, they just went on 'this is what a PCSO's powers are, this is what a PC's powers are', I know all this anyway…there was nothing practical'. Again these

themes were not unique to Greenfield; other research has found that the lack of clarity around community policing objectives and practice often creates problems during implementation (Miller, 1999; Fielding, 2009; Jones and Foster, 2010).

Leadership

The ambiguous, often marginal status of community policing and the fact that it constituted such a change in the traditional police role from that of crime-fighter to social worker (Savage, 2007; Skogan, 2008; Herbert, 2010) meant that leadership at all levels in the organisation played a critical role in how Safer Neighbourhoods shaped policing in Ebury. At the most senior level, the failure of the Borough Commander to scrutinise and challenge Officer 23's approach to consultation reinforced rather than challenged existing understandings of different ethnic communities within the organisation. By contrast the arrival of a new Commander and her demands for a new approach to engagement resulted in Officer 24 completely reforming consultation in the Borough to ensure it was more representative of the communities being served. Again these themes were not unique to Ebury; as Skogan (2008) described, support for the long-established community policing programme in Chicago withered rapidly, following the arrival of a new police chief who re-organised the department to focus on guns, gangs and homicide. Similarly Huey and Quirouette (2010) found that despite its multiple benefits, a community policing programme aimed at homeless people floundered, due to the lack of police leadership for the initiative.

Echoing findings from Skogan's (2008) review, which found that middle managers play a crucial role in influencing reform in policing, I found that Inspectors in Ebury played a critical role in shaping community policing. Officers 23 and 24, as PCLOs, had a key role in deciding which people and communities were consulted and, at a more fundamental level, whether consultation challenged or merely endorsed police thinking and practice.

At a more localised level, the lack of monitoring by Officers 25 and 26 resulted in the sergeants leading the ward teams, Officers 17 and 20, being primarily responsible for the way Safer Neighbourhoods was delivered. As a sergeant leading another team, Officer 21, said: 'When I was on the core team I was one sergeant amongst about four or five sergeants…now I've got ownership of the team, they're my little team I'm at the top of the triangle if you like anything to do with the team from management comes through me'. Overall these patterns echoed Skogan's (2008) and HMIC's (2008) findings that sergeants play a critical role in shaping policing as they directly influence frontline officers. However, as illustrated by the preceding sections, there were considerable variations in their abilities, skills, training and performance (HMIC, 2008).

Conclusion

As described in this chapter, Ebury Police appeared, at least superficially, to embrace community policing reforms intended to improve the policing of minority ethnic communities and build effective relationships with local people. There were extensive community policing and consultation

structures at both borough and ward levels in the area, leading even the most cynical, critical officers to state that community consultation was one of Ebury's greatest strengths.

However, mirroring patterns from Foster and Jones' (2010) research, there was considerable variation in the way in which community policing was undertaken across Ebury and Greenfield. Consequently the extent to which community consultation was able to influence the organisation's knowledge of and approach to policing different ethnic communities was highly variable. Individual officers in critical leadership posts, such as Borough Commanders, PCLOs and ward team sergeants were primarily responsible for determining how consultation with communities shaped policing, and the extent to which it was used to scrutinise and challenge policing practice. For example, while in Team B, Officer 20 ensured local people had the opportunity to direct the policing of their area in Team A, led by Officer 17, consultation merely reinforced or endorsed existing thinking and practice. At borough level, while the PCLO Officer 23 only engaged with tractable, pro-police representatives, the young Inspector who replaced him, Officer 24, sought out the views of people who would not just, 'tell you what you want to hear'.

Ironically, where consultation was merely used to endorse existing police thinking and practice, it reflected themes in Cohen's (1985) work on social control, as officers such as Officers 1, 17 and 23, would use the supposed endorsement of the community to legitimise their actions, deflecting any challenge with phrases, such as 'it's/it's not what the community want'. The most marginalised groups in Greenfield rarely constituted 'the community'

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with whom the police consulted. Even teams who embraced the philosophy of community policing, such as Team B, rarely if ever engaged with groups who were part of the 'problem populations' of the area, such as travellers, Somali women and asylum seekers.

These divergences and difficulties in the implementation of community policing approaches in Ebury were partly due to the inherent tensions and limitations within community policing itself. For example, the lack of clarity around its aims and objectives, the lack of guidance on critical issues such as who actually constituted 'the community' and how to reach the most disengaged groups, and the resulting difficulties this caused in implementation all reflected patterns from the wider community policing literature, (Eade, 1989; Keith, 1993; McLaughlin, 1994; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Fielding, 2009; Foster and Jones, 2010). Furthermore, as Jones (2005) and Prenzler (2011), argued, though external scrutiny through consultation could have potentially improved policing in Greenfield, it lacked the disciplinary 'teeth', or the support of strong internal controls to make a real difference to practice.

The limitations of the approach were also exacerbated by the fact that community policing was being implemented in a particularly challenging context where the population had become steadily more diverse over the years and defined communities with whom the police could consult did not exist (Eade, 1989; Keith, 1993; McLaughlin, 1994; Baumann, 1996).

Although the limitations of community policing created some ambiguity, the way community policing was implemented in Greenfield was determined primarily by internal cultural dynamics in the organisation. As discussed in chapter eight, while there was some organisational emphasis on eradicating racism in Greenfield, there did not appear to be an equal emphasis on embedding community policing approaches, or delivering a community-focussed service and instead the organisation remained focussed on crime-fighting. This focus stemmed from the fact that police organisational culture defines the police role as being primarily to fight crime (Miller, 1999; Reiner, 2000a; Savage, 2007; Skogan 2008; Herbert, 2010), a focus which was reinforced by the top-level crime targets the police in Greenfield had to meet during my fieldwork (Barnes and Eagle, 2007; Foster and Jones, 2010).

Consequently, community policing with its' focus on building relationships with local people and social work orientated activities was generally regarded as low-status, marginal work in the organisation with little relevance to the organisation's main business of crime fighting. Indeed the Inspector responsible for implementing Safer Neighbourhoods attempted to justify the worth of community policing to senior officers not in terms of its value in building links with local people or increasing knowledge of different communities, but in terms of its ability to detect and reduce crime (as evidenced by the monitoring he undertook collating CRIMIT forms).

The next chapter illustrates the potential consequences of the failure of reforms such as community policing to increase organisational

understandings of ethnically diverse communities, using domestic violence

as a case study.

Chapter Seven: Domestic violence - the perils of ignorance

Introduction

This thesis is based on the implicit, somewhat subjective assumption that officers should have a basic understanding of the specific needs and circumstances of the different ethnic communities they are responsible for policing. Using domestic violence as a case study, in this chapter I attempt to illustrate how a lack of this knowledge prevented officers from policing effectively. I begin by discussing officers' perspectives on domestic violence and its cultural variations in different communities, before describing three domestic violence calls I observed to illustrate how even competent, conscientious officers were hampered by their lack of knowledge when handling such incidents. I conclude with a description of how the high profile murder of a young woman in the area exposed the gaps in the organisation's knowledge of domestic violence within Asian communities.

It should be noted that domestic violence was not the focus of my research and consequently I only observed three domestic violence calls during my fieldwork, all of which involved Asian families. Furthermore my research only included officers from emergency response and neighbourhood policing teams, not specialist domestic violence units where evidence suggests that there have been considerable improvements in practice (Walker and McNichol,1994; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). Consequently this chapter does not provide a representative picture of policing domestic violence in Greenfield, nor is it intended to.

Rather, by examining the policing of a complex crime, (Edwards, 1989; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000; Steel, Blakeborough and Nicholas, 2011) which has distinct, culturally specific dynamics (Mama, 1989; Gill, 2004; Belur, 2008), I aim to illustrate the consequences of officers failing to sufficiently understand the diverse perspectives, needs and experiences of the people they were policing. I describe how even capable officers, who were keen to handle incidents effectively were hampered by their lack of knowledge and often failed to grasp the dynamics involved in domestic violence situations. Consequently, even though officers attempted to take action to resolve issues, their solutions provided little if any help to the victims. Before presenting my substantive findings I open with a short descriptive piece about my encounter with a woman in a temple to contextualise the discussion.

The Woman in the Temple

After my fieldwork I would often visit the Hindu temple near Greenfield police station, to sit quietly and calm my nerves before the long drive home. The temple, though crowded at weekends, was usually a peaceful place on weekdays; apart from a few elderly people and the odd priest, the premises were largely deserted. People shuffled quietly around, making offerings to the Hindu Gods at the front of the hall or sitting in silence on the floor. One day as I sat in quiet contemplation I became aware of a middle-aged to elderly Indian woman watching me intently. She was small and neat in her appearance, her grey, thinning hair pulled back in a bun and her somewhat faded, cheap sari carefully pressed and folded about her person. She had an air of vulnerability and her diminutive stature was compounded by the diffidence of her manner.

Perhaps attracted by the fact that I was clearly a stranger, she drew near and began to converse with me. Our conversation was awkward and stilted, conducted in a mixture of broken English and Punjabi. She asked whether I came to pray, where I came from and where I worked. I tried to explain, 'The Home Office - you know crime, policing', she immediately grasped at the word 'Police - you police?' Before I could explain I was not a police officer she broke into Punjabi, speaking rapidly and pointing at different parts of her body. As her meaning gradually dawned upon me I felt a rising sense of horror. She was trying to explain that her husband beat her and detailing the injuries on different parts of her body. She pulled up her sari to reveal large, ugly bruises on her sad, skinny leg.

> 'You must go to the police, you must report it' I stammered, 'You police' she responded. 'No, no I am not, but I work with them', I tried to explain, 'the police station is just here, you must go and report what he's doing – they will help – the police station is just here, near the temple', I said rather desperately, unequipped to deal with the situation. The woman simply stared back at me, uncomprehending. I tried again to explain, 'The police station is here, you must report it', she continued to look at me blankly. 'Or tell someone at the temple here', I suggested, 'They can help, come with you to the station and act as translator perhaps'. She continued to stare at me in silence. We sat there dumbly, helplessly looking at each other, myself overwhelmed by my inability to help this vulnerable individual who mistakenly thought that in confiding in me she had a chance of help. After a while I got up and left saying, 'Sorry I have to go - tell the police', she made an attempt to stop me, 'sorry', I said and turned away.

Domestic violence: serious crime, insincere victims

As in the case of racist violence, there is extensive research evidence that police responses to domestic violence have often been ineffective and provided little support or protection for victims (Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Sherman, 1992; Walker and McNichol, 1994; Bowling, 1998; Reiner, 2000a; Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003; Walklate, 2008). The inadequacies in police responses have been partly attributable to the fact that domestic violence is a highly complex crime, often requiring the intervention of a range of agencies[4] beyond the police over extended periods of time (Edwards, 1989; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000; Steel, Blakeborough and Nicholas, 2011).

Rank and file officers who are responsible for providing the initial, immediate response to domestic violence calls can lack the knowledge and capacity to respond effectively (Edwards, 1989; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000; Steel, Blakeborough and Nicholas, 2011) and difficulties are often compounded by the fact that victims can be reluctant to press charges against their attackers, thus limiting the courses of action open to officers

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[4] Such as housing, health and children's services.

handling calls (Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). Furthermore, as in the case of racist violence, domestic violence calls often involve incidents that superficially appear to be minor, obscuring the fact that they are frequently part of a wider pattern of more serious abuse (Bowling, 1998; Westmarland, 2001). Consequently officers responding to calls may not realise the full severity of the incidents they are attending, particularly if they are inexperienced.

However feminist criminologists have argued that the inadequacies in police responses to domestic violence are primarily attributable to officers' dismissive attitudes towards domestic abuse and its victims, not the complexities of the crime (Mama, 1989; Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003). Research has documented how historically rank and file officers have tended to regard domestic violence as a 'private matter' that does not warrant police attention (Walker and McNichol, 1994; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000; Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003; Rowe, 2007; Loftus, 2012). Furthermore there is extensive evidence that officers tend to view domestic violence crimes as low-status, 'rubbish', work as these crimes often lack the potential for immediate danger or excitement and offer limited opportunities for arrests (Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Reiner, 2000a; Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; Westmarland, 2001; Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003; Loftus, 2012).

In addition to regarding domestic violence crimes as 'rubbish' (Reiner, 2000a; Brown and Heidensohn, 2000), research has described how police officers can often have little empathy with victims, believing women to be

either responsible for their own victimisation by staying with violent men or wasting officers time with trivial incidents that do not merit police intervention (Edwards, 1989; Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000; Westmarland, 2001; Belur, 2008). Academics have argued that officers' attitudes towards domestic violence and its victims stem from the male-dominated nature of the policing profession, in which sexism is rife and machismo continues to be a core element of occupational culture (Fielding, 1994; Reiner, 2000a; Westmarland, 2001; Foster, 2003; Loftus, 2010). Research suggests that despite the increased numbers of women entering the profession, dominant attitudes to crimes against women (such as domestic violence) remain unchanged, as female officers are often socialised or pressured into conforming to existing attitudes and thinking within the organisation (Heidensohn, 1992; Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; Westmarland, 2001; Silvestri, 2003; Silvestri, 2007).

During my fieldwork the Metropolitan Police attempted to challenge officers' perceptions that domestic violence crimes were minor or unimportant by providing mandatory domestic violence training for rank and file officers. A young white female PC who attended the training, Officer 11, said it was, 'Really good', and that she had learned a lot about domestic violence. From officers' remarks it also appeared that the training had some success in impressing upon officers the severity of domestic violence crimes and the fact that the seemingly trivial domestic incidents they might be called on to attend could be part of a far more serious pattern of abuse.

A number of male and female officers in my study quoted a figure from the training, that by the time a woman calls for police assistance she will have experienced an average of 33 assaults. A young white female PC, Officer 11, also explained that the training had attempted to convey a sense of the serious psychological distress caused to children growing up in violent households. Officer 11 said, 'They showed us pictures done by kids [from homes in which violence occurred] and it was really disturbing'. Officer 11 explained that the training had helped her understand the behaviour of victims of domestic violence. She said: 'It's [domestic violence] learned behaviour…the abused and abuser learn patterns…[and] women in abusive relationships often end up with another [abuser]'.

Although officers had been provided with training, some male officers confessed that in line with findings from other research, they did not like attending domestic incidents, as they were often complicated and had no clear outcome (Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Loftus, 2012). A young white PC, Officer 8, echoed the views of many of his colleagues when he said, 'I'd rather nick a drug dealer than deal with a domestic dispute - it's black and white - you broke the law mate, you're nicked'. Similarly, although most male and female officers I spoke to recognised the severity of domestic abuse, they continued to believe that, in line with findings from wider research, the majority of domestic incidents the police were called to attend were not genuinely serious crimes (Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Reiner, 2000a; Brown and Heidensohn, 2000; Westmarland, 2001; Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003; Loftus, 2012). A young white male PC, Officer 5, summarised the view of many of his colleagues, when he said: 'As a

police officer…you're not paid to be… a marriage counsellor…'I'm not talking about someone actually hitting someone…but all households have arguments, the neighbours hear an argument and call us out…we have to waste time responding'. Another young white male PC, Officer 12, said, 'Obviously I don't condone someone actually hitting someone, but let's face it, we've all been in relationships where it's gone tits up – it doesn't need police attention'.

Echoing themes from Westmarland's (2001) research, the types of domestic incidents that officers considered to be 'genuine' or meriting police intervention were those which offered the potential for immediate danger or excitement. For example, a middle-aged white sergeant, Officer 19 told me how he, 'Was patrolling and heard this woman shouting for help from this house…the bloke was going to rape her and I came to help and arrested him…a knight in shining armour'.

In addition to viewing most domestic calls as not 'genuine', many male and female officers continued to view most victims who contacted the police as 'undeserving' (Reiner, 2000a; Westmarland, 2001; Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003). This was best illustrated by the remarks of a young white female PC, Officer 11, who regularly undertook voluntary work at a refuge for victims of domestic violence, purely in her own time and at her own initiative. She said:

> *'I'd like to work in CSU [Community Safety Unit dealing with domestic violence] but the trouble is you don't get genuine people, it would be really good but most of them aren't genuine…we get bail conditions that these blokes can't go near these women and then they let him back in and then when it all goes wrong call us'.*

Her remarks almost directly mirrored a quote from a male officer in an earlier study by Edwards (1989: 107): 'From my experience a lot of women have actually spoiled it for the rest. They get an injunction and when the injunction is granted, they invite the man back in…a lot of them actually use this and when they have had enough of them the say 'out' and invoke the injunction'.

Many officers appeared to have little understanding or appreciation that women in abusive relationships are often managing highly complex situations and often bound to violent partners by financial commitments or children, and consequently are rarely able to simply leave their abuser, (Edwards, 1989; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). Instead officers continued to express attitudes about domestic violence echoing patterns from research twenty years ago (Edwards, 1989).

Furthermore, the mandatory domestic violence training, while providing an overview of domestic violence crimes in general, did not address culturally specific features of these crimes in minority ethnic communities, despite research indicating that it is essential for officers to understand the wider cultural factors involved in domestic violence in different ethnic communities, if they are to police these crimes effectively (Mama, 1989; Gill, 2004; Belur, 2008). In the absence of any formal training or information, officers were left to develop their own understandings of domestic violence in different ethnic communities. The following sections describe officers' perspectives on domestic violence in the newly arrived Somali community and established Asian communities in Greenfield.

Somali women - unrecognised problems

As I described in chapter three, the majority of Somalis in Greenfield arrived in the area during the 1990s following the civil war in their homeland (Griffiths, 2002; Harris, 2004). While research on domestic violence within Somali diaspora communities is limited, the information that is available suggests that women in these communities can be subject to culturally specific forms of violence including female genital mutilation. There are indications that some Somali women in Greenfield have been subject to this practice (Johal, 2003; Harris, 2004; Affi, 2004).

Somali society is also traditionally patriarchal, but there is also evidence that the upheavals of civil war are changing gender relations, often resulting in conflict and potential increases in domestic violence (Griffiths, 2002; Ibrahim, 2004; Affi, 2004; Harris, 2004). The limited research available suggests that the conflicts between men and women in Somali families are linked to the strains and problems associated with migration and the fact that Somalis have high levels of unemployment or are concentrated in low-paid work and consequently experience high levels of socio-economic disadvantage (Affi, 2004; Harris, 2004). Furthermore, the civil war in Somalia centred on different clans fighting one another and if spouses were from different clans this can cause considerable tension, given the atrocities committed on all sides (Affi, 2004). There is also anecdotal evidence that Somali women resent the lack of protection from their male relatives during the conflict, and the atrocities they had to suffer as a result (Affi, 2004; Abdi, 2006).

It should also be noted that although there are issues for all immigrant women in contacting the police for help with domestic violence, due to their lack of familiarity with UK institutions or fears about their immigration status (Mama, 1989; Choudry, 1996; Joshi, 2003), these issues can be even more pronounced in Somali communities. Many women suffered horrific experiences during the Somali civil war, (including multiple rapes), and in refugee camps in Kenya where they were temporarily resident (Arif Gassem, 1994; Musse, 2004; Harris, 2004; Abdi, 2006). Their attackers included police officers and other officials (Musse, 2004; Abdi, 2006) thus contributing to some women's fears and reluctance to engage with the police. Furthermore the traditionally patriarchal structures of Somali society have meant women, traditionally confined to the domestic sphere, may have had little experience of dealing with officials such as police officers, particularly if they are from rural areas (Arif Gassem, 1994; Griffiths, 2002; Harris, 2004).

However most officers appeared to have no awareness of Somali women's needs, perspectives and experiences, or the culturally specific features of domestic violence issues within Somali communities. Officers never referred to these issues and as I described in chapter six, appeared to have no engagement with Somali women.

Officers did make references to 'Black' women in Greenfield, often basing their views and understandings upon their experiences with West Indian women in areas of London with large West Indian populations, such as

Brixton. While there was a small West Indian population in Greenfield, these communities differed considerably from Somalis in terms of their religion, countries of origin, languages and patterns of migration to the UK. Indeed, the limited research available suggests that Somalis both young and old overtly reject Afro-Caribbean identities, emphasising their identities as Muslims and Somalis (Lewis, 2002; Valentine and Sporton, 2009).

Furthermore, where officers did refer to West Indian women in some instances their views bordered on sexist. For example, Officer 23 recounted how, when he was working as a sergeant in Brixton, 'Officers coming off the night shift used to give women coming out of the clubs lifts home in return for sex…that was alright'. He went on to describe how: 'This officer gave this bloke and his girlfriend a lift home. He dropped the bloke off first and then she said he sexually assaulted her with his truncheon'. Seeing my expression of shock and revulsion, Officer 23 said, 'I know, sounds horrible doesn't it?' While it is not possible to generalise about officers' views of Black women based upon Officer 23's account of these examples of gross misconduct, it is noteworthy that, implicit in his narrative was an underlying assumption of Black female promiscuity, and specifically a view Black women would be willing to exchange sexual favours for lifts. While a number of other characteristics in addition to their ethnicity, (such as the women's presence on the streets late at night), might have shaped Officer 23's perceptions, it is noteworthy that these behaviours were deemed to be signs of sexual availability in a way that would not be true of men. Officer 23 also made other remarks intimating

that Black women were promiscuous, often citing the number of single parent households in West Indian communities as evidence of Black women's sexual licentiousness, 'There's no responsibility with them'.

Asian women: victims of culture?

While officers never referred to issues of domestic violence in Somali communities, many officers, both male and female, made passing references to domestic violence being a problem in Asian communities in Greenfield. An Indian male PCSO, Officer 30 who lived in the area stated: 'There's a lot of domestic violence in [Greenfield], I know that for a fact'.

Officers also appeared to be aware that under-reporting of domestic violence, a problem amongst all ethnic groups (Walby and Allen, 2004), might be particularly acute in Asian communities. A white male middle-aged PC, Officer 1, said, 'With white domestic violence they say a victim experiences 33 assaults before she calls the police - double or triple that for Asians'. Similarly a white middle-aged sergeant, Officer 19, said: 'Tracey living on a council estate sees us as a way of keeping her Wayne in order - if he gives her too much trouble she'll call us…but Asian ladies are more concerned with the family and their family honour, they're more reluctant to report [domestic abuse]'. Officer 30, when discussing Asian women's experiences of domestic abuse also referred to difficulties of under-reporting. He said: 'Who are you going to tell [about domestic abuse]? You're not going to tell the people at the temple or [a police-community representative] if you have a problem because he knows you, he knows your family'.

The views expressed by these officers were confirmed in research on domestic violence in Asian communities which has found that under-reporting of domestic abuse can be an even greater problem among Asian groups than in other communities (Choudry, 1996; Gill, 2004). Women from Asian communities can often be reluctant to report abuse for fear of shaming their natal families and potentially damaging the marriage prospects of their younger siblings and children, (Dasgupta and Warrier, 1996; Gill, 2004). As a young British Indian woman included in Gill's (2004: 474) research with Asian victims of domestic violence explained, she never reported the abuse she suffered because, 'It's a question of maintaining an honourable appearance and saying that the marriage is good'. Another young woman in Gill's (2004) research said: 'You are expected to suffer in silence. You just keep it hidden behind closed doors and hope that it will go away. Getting the police involved is not really the done thing' (Gill, 2004: p479).

Belur's (2008) observational research with the police, community groups and Asian women in two police force areas uncovered similar patterns. She found that Asian women were subject to greater social pressures and censure when they complained of domestic violence. Those who did seek help from outside the community were often regarded as having shamed their family and community. As one community worker described: 'There is a tendency amongst the Asian community to try and sort out all problems within the family and community. It is considered a bit shameful to involve outsiders' (Belur, 2008: 433).

However research has also found that Asian women are deterred from reporting domestic violence not only by community and familial pressures but also a fear that they will be treated in a discriminatory way by statutory services such as the police, or that services will not be sensitive to their culturally specific needs (Mama, 1989; Johal, 2003; Belur, 2008). Yet reflecting findings from the domestic violence literature, officers in Greenfield never appeared to consider how the practices of the police organisation itself could deter victims of domestic abuse from approaching them for help, (Joshi, 2003; Belur, 2008).

Furthermore, although officers referred to community and familial pressures that could potentially deter women from reporting violence they never took any measures to address this, such as outreach work or engagement with organisations such as the Southall Black Sisters. The only officer who attempted outreach work was Officer 30, who wanted to engage with voluntary organisations and hold police surgeries to uncover problems of domestic violence in Greenfield and increase reporting. However his efforts were blocked by the officers he reported to, Officers 17 and 1 who, as I described in chapter six, refused to let junior officers in their team initiate any new projects or consultation with local people.

The literature on Asian women's experiences of domestic violence and campaign groups such as the Southall Black Sisters have sought to raise awareness of specific forms of domestic violence in Asian communities – referred to as 'honour crimes' – when young women are murdered by their

relatives who perceived them as having brought the 'honour' or status of their families into disrepute (Siddiqui, 2003; Gill, 2004; Belur, 2008). Researchers have described how the twin concepts of 'Izzat' and 'Sharam', or honour and shame are used to exert control over women in Asian communities, as their individual behaviour is seen as a reflection not only of themselves, but their families (Gill, 2004; Belur, 2008).

Women's supposed transgressions damaging the 'izzat' of the family centre on issues such as refusing to marry partners selected by their families, having sexual relationships prohibited by their families, or attempting to leave abusive marriages (Siddiqui, 2003). In addition to honour killings, researchers have also sought to expose the problem of forced marriage, where women are coerced into marrying men their natal families have selected against their will (Anitha and Gill, 2009; Gill 2009).

Some white officers appeared to have a superficial awareness of honour crimes and forced marriage, making passing references to these crimes being a problem in Asian communities. For example, two white officers, Officers 1 and 23 (the police community liaison Inspector), referred to problems of 'honour killings', however both believed that these crimes occurred mainly in Muslim communities. For example, Officer 1 said, 'Muslims are the worst [domestic violence offenders]…you even get honour killings…not here but up in the North and Midlands there have been cases, you also get some Sikhs doing that'. Contrary to the assertions of Officers 1 and 23, research indicates that honour crimes and

forced marriage are not confined to Muslim communities but occur in all Asian communities (Siddiqui, 2003; Anitha and Gill, 2009).

One of the Asian officers in my study, a middle-aged Pakistani sergeant, Officer 17, voiced views that appeared to condone honour-related violence against Asian women. For example, he informed a young Pakistani PCSO that if his daughter ever had a boyfriend he would, 'Chop her head off'. He would also frequently speak aggressively to his wife on the telephone in front of his team, using abusive language such as 'old dragon' and 'bitch'. While I never had the opportunity to witness how Officer 17 dealt with domestic violence incidents, as I discussed above he appeared reluctant to undertake any action to address these crimes, refusing to allow Officer 30 (who reported to him) to initiate outreach work to uncover and address issues of domestic violence in Asian communities.

Although many white officers in Greenfield appeared to have some superficial awareness of domestic violence in Asian communities they appeared to have little substantive knowledge on the cultural and familial dynamics shaping women's experiences. Most white officers believed that higher rates of domestic violence among 'Asians' were due to the fact that 'Asian culture' was sexist. For example, Officer 1 said, 'I feel sorry for Asian girls…it's all focussed on the men'. When I observed that some South Asian religions, most notably Hinduism and Sikhism, advocated gender equality he responded, 'That's what they say, but then culture takes over'.

The views of Officer 1 and some of his colleagues that 'Asian culture' was oppressive to women cannot entirely be dismissed as prejudice as the extent to which South Asian cultures are patriarchal has been extensively debated in the domestic violence literature. Some UK studies have stated that there is no evidence that certain cultures or family structures are more likely to give rise to violence, emphasising that violence can occur in both white British partnerships and the arranged marriages to be found in Asian communities (Hamner and Itz, 2000). However campaign groups such as the Southall Black Sisters argue that Asian communities can tolerate or even condone violence against women (Johal, 2003). This has been supported by the testimonies of some victims, such as those in Gill's (2004) research, who believed that part of the reason they were abused was because as women, they were regarded as less important than men in Asian communities. Indeed, some writers have even argued that the UK has allowed an, 'Uncritical brand of multiculturalism to flourish which operates to further oppress disadvantaged groups', quoting the examples of, 'the violence committed against Black/Asian women through some cultural practices such as forced arranged marriage, domestic violence and female genital mutilation' (Beckett and Macey, 2001: 309).

The Indian and US literatures on domestic violence provide similarly conflicting accounts. In India while some theorists argue that violence against women is caused by the inherently patriarchal nature of Indian society (Johnson and Johnson, 2001), others have stated Indian society is no more or less sexist than other societies and that violence against women occurs across all countries (Bhattacharya, 2004). In the US, some

researchers argue that the violence Asian women experience is attributable to Asian cultural practices and the emphasis on marriage as a core part of women's role (Abraham, 1999; Derne, 1999; Dasgupta and Warrier, 1996), whereas others have argued that this is not necessarily the case, rather culture becomes conflated with oppression, and that such abuse should be seen as a crime not the result of culture (Almeida and Dolan-Devecchio, 1999).

While the literature provides conflicting accounts of the extent to which Asian cultures condone violence against women, there is widespread agreement that to police these crimes effectively officers need to appreciate the culturally specific features of violence in Asian families (Mama, 1989; Belur, 2008). Most notably UK research has emphasised that professionals need to understand that in Asian families husbands are often not the sole or even primary abusers of women, with wider members of the extended family such as in-laws, often acting as perpetrators or instigators of abuse (Gill, 2004; Belur, 2008). For example, Choudry's (1996: 2) research with Pakistani victims of domestic violence found that most women had lived with their in-laws during their marriages and that:

> *'Many women interviewed…felt that the violence they suffered had, at best, been ignored and, at worst, instigated or encouraged by their mother-in-law or sisters-in-law, in order that they might retain their power in the household…one woman recalled how her mother-in-law had watched her being beaten on a number of occasions, but had said and done nothing; another claimed to that her husband had started to beat her at the explicit suggestion of his mother. Several of the women…also reported being subject to threats of violence directly from their mothers-in-law or sisters-in-law'* (Choudry, 1996: 2).

Gill's (2004) research with Asian women victims of domestic violence also found that in-laws played a role in the domestic abuse women suffered. Gill (2004: 471) described how:

'In cases where in-laws were abusers, the violence was likely to be compounded further by the male relatives, namely the fathers-in-law and uncles. However, it was the mothers-in-law who usually provoked the violence...mothers-in-law were named as perpetrators more frequently than any other member of the family apart from the male partner' (Gill, 2004: 471).

US research such as Abraham's (1999) study on marital rape in Indian communities also highlighted the involvement of in-laws in domestic abuse. Abraham (1999) described how some of the some women in her study were sexually abused not only by their husbands but also by men in the wider extended family such as brother or father in laws.

In India the role of in-laws in perpetrating or encouraging domestic abuse has been widely recognised and legislation put in place to address the problem (Johnson and Johnson, 2001). While the UK Home Office definition of domestic violence does not include abuse by in-laws, in India legislation also covers financial, psychological and physical abuse by in-laws as well as spouses (Belur, 2008). However as Johnson and Johnson (2001) note, despite being comprehensive, legislation is rarely implemented effectively as criminal justice agencies such as the courts and police still do not recognise the severity of domestic violence.

White officers in Greenfield never referred to the potential role in-laws could play in instigating or perpetrating domestic abuse in Asian families. The only time officers referred to the ways in which Asian familial structures could influence domestic violence (beyond expressing a general view that Asian families were sexist), was when two young female PCs, Officers 9 and 10, attempted to explain to me why domestic abuse was pervasive in Asian communities. Officer 9 said, 'Parents, grandparents

and kids are all under one roof, so it's understandable you get some tension'. Officer 10 echoed these sentiments, saying that over-crowded accommodation, Asian families living too closely together and, 'Getting on each others nerves' was the main cause of violence. However neither officer appeared to be aware of the wider familial dynamics described above.

Furthermore, some officers believed that domestic violence was a particularly pervasive problem in Muslim communities. In addition to officers such as Officers 1 and 23 who believed that honour-crimes occurred primarily in Muslim communities, a handful of officers, white and Asian referred to the fact that 'Muslims' were 'sexist', and that this gave rise to increased rates of domestic violence in these communities. It was unclear whether officers' perceptions were based on their actual experiences of attending domestic violence incidents, however their views appeared to echo themes from wider media and political discourses portraying Muslim communities as sexist and Muslim women as oppressed (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Khiabany and Williamson, 2008).

Yet the available research did not support officers' views that domestic violence was primarily a problem in Muslim communities. Though research suggests that domestic violence can occur in Muslim communities and that Muslim women can sometimes tolerate violence because marriage is considered a key part of their religious and social duty (Hassoureh-Phillips, 2001), there are similar patterns within all South Asian

communities (Abraham, 1999; Dasgupta and Warrier, 1996; Siddiqui, 2003; Gill, 2004; Anitha and Gill, 2009). Hassoureh-Phillips' (2001) study of seventeen Muslim women in the US who had suffered domestic violence found that marriage was considered by Muslim women to be a key part of their religious and social duty and led them to try and make their abusive relationships work. Yet these patterns were not unique to Muslim communities, as wider research has found that the emphasis on marriage as a core element of women's status is present across all South Asian communities including Hindus, Christians, and Sikhs (Dasgupta and Warrier, 1996; Mehrota, 1999; Gill, 2004).

In addition to these limited understandings and indeed misperceptions about domestic violence in Asian communities, a minority of male officers also expressed overtly sexist views about Asian women in Greenfield. For example, Officer 1 described Asian women in Greenfield as having: 'No aspirations, no education, they just do what their husband tells them…All they want is a bit of material comfort, they've no expectations…they're not like you, educated…your expectations are way up there…that's what you don't understand, they're different from you'.

Officer 1 was particularly critical of Asian women who were immigrants, stating that Greenfield would always be 'a ghetto' and have a, 'first generation immigrant problem', because men in the area married girls from India or Pakistan. Officer 1 said: 'They [Asian female immigrants] don't speak English...they don't move out of [Greenfield]…maybe just a

day trip to Birmingham to visit relatives…In [Greenfield] all the services are geared for them so they can live like that'.

Officer 1's views, while not as extreme as those expressed by officers in early studies of domestic violence, reflected similar themes, namely that Asian women have lower expectations of their relationships and lives and consequently a greater tolerance of domestic abuse (Hanmer, 1989; Johal 2003). For example, an officer from Hanmer's (1989: 103) study of policing in West Yorkshire Police said: 'The women being mainly Muslim are subservient to men…The Muslim families don't mind if a husband hits his wife, but if he goes womanising then it can turn into a feud'.

The limited ethnographies available on Greenfield present a very different picture of Asian women from the views of Officer 1. Bachu's (1985) early study of East African Sikhs living in the Greenfield area found that women in these communities, far from having low expectations and deferring to male authority, were in the main educated professionals who had authoritative roles in their families, arranging their own marriages and taking decisions jointly with their male relatives (Bachu, 1985). All of the women included in Bachu's (1985) study worked to earn their own dowries, (money given to the bride upon her marriage), and, rather than giving any of this money to their in-laws, the women used this money to furnish their marital homes. As young women mainly lived at home until their marriage even those in lower paid jobs were able to save considerable amounts of money, which they used to buy luxury goods for their marital homes.

Baumann's (1996) ethnography undertaken ten years later described how Asian women in Greenfield, whether from Indian or Pakistani backgrounds, have far higher rates of labour market participation. Baumann (1996: 52), described how: 'The intense participation of women in earning a family income is fully congruent…with the widely shared desire to move out and up'. Furthermore as Baumann (1996) notes, there is a significant Asian women's feminist movement in Greenfield and, as I mentioned in chapter three, one of Britain's foremost minority ethnic women's organisations, the Southall Black Sisters, originated in Greenfield in 1979. The organisation continues to be active today, suggesting that not all women in Greenfield are content to adopt a subservient role in their families and communities.

Yet Officer 1 failed to acknowledge these dynamics in Greenfield and viewed Asian women in the area as being defined primarily in terms of their sexual character. He said, '[Asian] Men from round here marry women from India or Pakistan who are pure…untainted', adding that such men would not be interested in marrying me as I was, 'Westernised'.

Officer 1 also tended to make crude appraisals of the sexual attractiveness of Asian women in Greenfield. For example Officer 1 told me how he, 'Always had a thing about Asian women – you can keep your blondes', describing how, 'salwars [a type of Asian female dress] are meant to be modest but I think they're actually quite sexy, they can be quite revealing…saris are really sexy too'. Officer 1 also made remarks

about Muslim women's attire saying, 'apparently they compensate for it [wearing hijab] by wearing really frilly underwear underneath'. He also boasted to young white female officers on his team that, 'Asian women find me very attractive', mirroring patterns from the wider policing literature research which has found male officers emphasise their masculinity by boasting of their sexual prowess (Westmarland, 2001).

Where Asian women were assertive and challenged stereotypes about their passivity and sexual purity, they attracted censure from Officers 1 and 23. Officer 1 criticised Asian families, 'where the wife definitely wears the trousers' and Asian women, specifically middle-aged women, who were 'Old Battleaxes'. Officer 1 also said he was shocked to see, 'Groups of girls walking down the street [in Greenfield] swearing, you'd never see that a few years ago', and that Asian girls had been seen, 'in pubs in [Ebury] drinking'. Similarly the PCLO, Officer 23, who encountered an assertive, outspoken member of the Southall Black Sisters mocked her lack of sexual attractiveness, 'You should have seen her – no stranger to the samosas'. His remarks reflected themes from the wider literature, which has found that women are defined primarily in terms of their value as sexual objects and that where they behave independently or assertively they are subjected to censure undermining their sexual appeal (Heidensohn, 1992; Brown and Heidensohn, 2000).

However it should be noted that other white male officers expressed very different views of Asian women that contradicted the opinions of Officers 1 and 23 described above. While Officer 1 tended to view Asian women in

Greenfield as having low expectations, a young white Inspector who was married to a professional Pakistani Christian, Officer 24, had very different views and was irritated by conceptions that Asian women such as his wife were subservient or confined to the domestic sphere. He said, 'You get a lot of idiots in this job…even [Officer 29] when he found out my wife was Pakistani he said to me, 'you must have some good curries at home''. Officer 24 was annoyed by Officer 29's assumption that his wife was a housewife when she was in fact the main wage earner in the household. Similarly, Officer 12 who was married to an Indian lawyer, who unlike himself was university educated, had very different views of Indian women, tending to assume they were educated professionals.

While only a minority of male officers voiced overtly sexist attitudes about Asian women, my findings illustrate that there were significant gaps in most officers' understandings of domestic violence in Asian communities. The following sections describe how this lack of knowledge hampered officers when attempting to deal with domestic incidents.

Policing domestic violence

This section describes in detail the three domestic violence incidents I attended with officers working in emergency response policing in Greenfield to illustrate how gaps in officers' knowledge of domestic violence in different ethnic communities influenced their handling of incidents. Clearly it is not possible to generalise about the policing of domestic violence in Greenfield based on such a small number of incidents. However these incidents are worth examining, for they

demonstrate how even conscientious officers who wanted to address

domestic incidents effectively were hampered by their lack of knowledge

about the wider complexities and cultural factors involved in domestic

violence cases.

To help ensure consistency in the handling of domestic violence incidents

and to ensure that all officers took some action, during my fieldwork the

Metropolitan Police required officers to issue a warning during domestic

violence calls to the effect that if they were called to the address again,

they would make an arrest. (Since my fieldwork Metropolitan Police policy

has changed slightly and officers are now required to arrest perpetrators

when called to domestic violence incidents, or justify why they have not

done so). Similar policies have often been used in the US in an attempt to

curtail discretion and ensure officers take action in domestic disputes

(Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003). Yet, as extensively documented in the

literature, police officers often subvert regulations and exercise discretion

(Buzawa and Buzawa, 2003).

Furthermore, researchers have questioned whether imposing

standardised solutions on complex crimes such as domestic violence is

effective (Sherman, 1992; Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). For example,

Sherman's (1992) controlled experiment in Minnesota examining whether

mandatory arrest policies reduced the risk of violence against victims by

the same perpetrator found that though it increased recording and

reporting rates, its impacts on violence were highly variable. While

mandatory arrest policies reduced domestic violence in some cities, it

actually increased it in others and though arrest decreased the risk of violence amongst employed people it increased it amongst the unemployed. Overall Sherman's (1992) analysis indicated that while arrest reduced violence in the short term, it potentially increased it in the long-term.

Building upon this, Hoyle and Sanders' (2000) study of policing domestic violence in Thames Valley found that women who called the police to deal with violent partners did not necessarily want them arrested. Many women were often attempting to manage complex, dangerous situations with their partners, the solution to which was not necessarily arrest. In fact arresting violent partners sometimes not only failed to protect women but also risked exposing them to further, even more serious violence (Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). Most notably, many women feared that if their abusive partners were arrested they would retaliate with further violence; as a woman interviewed in Hoyle and Sanders (2000: 23), aptly summarised: 'I thought he'd kill me if I got him arrested'. Similarly another victim of domestic abuse, Monica, explained that she did not want her partner arrested, 'Because he would have been even more violent afterwards', (Hoyle and Sanders, 2000: 23).

Instead of mandatory solutions, Hoyle and Sanders (2000) recommended that approaches to handling domestic violence incidents should be victim led and focus on empowering women who are victims of abuse, and supporting them to make choices that are most likely to end the violence they suffer. Most notably Hoyle and Sanders (2000) recommended that

specialist Domestic Violence Officers should be assigned to work with women victims to provide them with ongoing support and counter their feelings of isolation.

The three cases I observed in Greenfield also suggested that mandatory policies, specifically the requirement that officers issue a warning when attending calls, did not necessarily result in more effective handling of incidents, as illustrated below.

Battling for resolution

A call I attended with two conscientious young white sergeants, Officers 15 and 16, at the home of a large extended Sri Lankan family where an assault had allegedly taken place illustrated the difficulties and confusion officers faced when dealing with domestic violence calls. When we arrived at the family's home, a run-down semi, the confusion of the environment, the plethora of relatives present, the family's inability to speak English and their general reticence meant that establishing who had called the police, what had occurred and who had been assaulted was extremely difficult.

After the officers questioned various adults in the household separately, it emerged that the father of the house had assaulted his young married son when drunk. Officer 15, though clearly taking the assault seriously, displayed considerable frustration towards both the victim and perpetrator. His attitude towards the young man who had been assaulted bordered on intimidating as he attempted to force the victim to make a formal complaint, despite his reticence. Taking the young man to a quiet corner

Officer 15 questioned him in an increasingly irate manner, making remarks in a low, angry tone that were almost threatening such as, 'I'm not leaving here without a resolution'.

The young man's reluctance to make a formal complaint could have been due to a range of factors, not least that in South Asian families both men and women sometimes have to submit to authority of their elder, primarily male, relatives. Yet Officer 15 appeared to have no sympathy with the man's circumstances and while the situation was complex and emotive for the family, Officer 15 appeared to view the situation in far more straightforward terms, believing that a crime had been committed and needed to be resolved immediately. As we left the address Officer 15 said: 'I don't really care about any of the adults here or if any of them gets hurt, it's the young kids that bother me. One of them's sensibly called the police to come and stop this rubbish but they [the adults] won't press charges'.

The children at the address varied in age from approximately five to twelve years, and the young man himself appeared to be aged between eighteen and twenty-one years. The incident concluded with Officer 15 stating, as per standard protocols, that if the police were called to the address again arrests would be made, delivering it in such a way that both victims and perpetrators were effectively warned. Yet despite Officer 15's hostile behaviour, I saw the young man and his wife in the police station's reception later, perhaps attempting to make a formal complaint about the assault.

Communication barriers

A domestic violence incident I attended with two conscientious young female officers, Officers 9 and 10, involving a Muslim family, illustrated the difficulties officers had when dealing with victims who could not speak English fluently. Arriving at the property, we were met by an elderly Pakistani woman who attempted to explain to officers in broken English that her thirty-five year old son had made threats of violence against her on numerous occasions, and had slapped her. Assuming that I was a translator she broke into Punjabi, explaining that her son refused to work or contribute to the housekeeping and that whenever she confronted him about this, he became aggressive.

The elderly woman's reaction to me almost directly mirrored an incident from Belur's (2008) research on policing domestic violence in minority ethnic communities. Belur (2008: 430-431), an Indian national, described how, when accompanying white officers to a call about a 'domestic disturbance' in an Asian family, the husband and wife involved in the dispute sidelined officers and began speaking with her in Hindi though they could both speak English. Belur (2008: 431) described how, 'Neither of the disputants asked for any explanation for what I was doing with officers in their house and without establishing my role immediately involved me in the matter', assuming simply from her appearance that Belur would be able to speak Hindi, and by extension understand their difficulties. Similarly during the incident I attended, the elderly lady, although able to speak a little English clearly felt more comfortable

communicating with me in her own language rather than attempting to convey in English what had happened to the white officers attending the incident.

While the officers were struggling to understand the details of the elderly woman's allegations, the woman's daughter, a young woman in her thirties who spoke fluent English, arrived on the scene and, after exchanging a few words in Punjabi with her brother, the alleged assailant who was sitting in silence on the sofa, took Officer 9 into the kitchen to explain her brother's version of events. When Officer 9 returned, she took Officer 10 and myself into a quiet corner and said: 'Right, I've got what's happened - basically the old woman has this Indian lodger who's really dodgy and borrows money from her and when her son and daughter try and tell her she won't have it'.

Officer 10 accepted this version of events, which was completely different from the elderly woman's. It is possible that the daughter's calm, pleasant demeanour and her ability to communicate fluently with officers, offering a plausible alternative explanation, was more likely to be believed than the broken explanations of an elderly woman who spoke limited English. Yet it is noteworthy that neither officer, though both conscientious, thought to question the elderly woman about her allegations further, and simply appeared to uncritically accept her daughter's version of events. Furthermore it did not occur to officers to call an interpreter to help them communicate with the elderly woman, or at the very least ask her daughter to act as translator.

Instead both officers returned to the living room where the elderly woman was sitting and started to question her about the lodger and give her well-meant advice, 'You need to be careful about people you know, not too trusting'. The elderly woman appeared somewhat confused, partly due to the language barrier but also because the officers were discussing a different set of issues that bore no relation to her original complaint of assault. She said very little in response, beyond making some bemused remarks in broken English that the lodger was not a problem. The daughter and son both remained largely silent throughout the conversation, making no attempt to intervene or translate.

The incident concluded with the officers leaving the house on amicable terms with the son and daughter and not even issuing the standard warning that an arrest would be made if officers were called to the property a second time. The elderly woman watched them depart, appearing somewhat bewildered that her complaints had not even been acknowledged. The officers' behaviour mirrored patterns from wider studies that have found that those who cannot speak English often have their complaints dismissed by officers because they are unable to communicate effectively, (Foster *et al,* 2005; Belur, 2008). Most notably, language barriers and confusion about when and how to draw upon translators were one of the key issues identified in Foster *et al's* (2005) evaluation of policing post the recommendations of the Macpherson Report (1999).

The 'rubbish' call

While the officers described in the two preceding incidents were conscientious and keen to handle domestic complaints properly, Officers 13 and 14 regarded a domestic violence call they attended as a 'Waste of time'. The officers received a call to a domestic incident during a quiet morning as they were patrolling Greenfield in their car - bored and searching for something to do. Having arrived at the address, a non-descript terraced house in Greenfield, they were met at the door by an Indian Christian woman in her forties, speaking perfect, though slightly accented English. On opening the door and seeing the officers, she attempted to dismiss them, saying, 'It's fine, I don't need the police. It's all been sorted out now'. However Officer 13, a middle-aged Indian Sikh, said brusquely, 'Well we have to come in, we've come all the way out now' and practically pushed past her to enter the house.

The woman showed us into a living room where a small boy, his au pair (a young Eastern European girl) and her husband, the alleged assailant, were all present. It was apparent from the décor of the house that the family, like many Indian Christians, were attempting to adopt English habits and practices, from keeping a dog (a huge Rottweiler who sat peacefully on the floor), to decorating her house in the English style. The woman's perfect English and the fact that she employed an au pair also suggested that she was middle-class and educated. I noted that like many of my relatives in India she had a dismissive, even rude attitude to people who were servants – so when officers asked who the au pair was she

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responded curtly, 'She's just an au pair', without even bothering to give the girl's name, and ordering her to the kitchen unceremoniously.

Despite having called the police, I had the impression that the woman was uncomfortable, embarrassed and reluctant to explain to officers what had occurred. Her somewhat contradictory behaviour could be partly explained by the fact that women from Asian communities can feel ashamed at finding themselves in abusive, failing relationships and be reluctant to involve outside agencies in their familial problems (Gill, 2004; Belur, 2008) Overall the woman's discomfort echoed themes in an account of an Asian woman in Gill's (2004) study who was a victim of domestic violence who said she, 'Did not want anyone to know it was happening to me. I was ashamed to be called a battered Asian woman', (Gill, 2004: 474).

Neither officer in the incident above displayed any awareness of the Indian Christian woman's feelings. Without making any attempt to separate the couple (as per standard practice) the officers began questioning them brusquely about the incident and why they had called the police. The husband remained grimly silent throughout, staring at the blaring television set. The woman reluctantly explained that her husband had kicked the family dog and then kicked her when she intervened to protect the animal, giving brief, reticent answers. The officers gave her little empathy or encouragement, asking brusque, factual questions such as, 'What time did the incident occur? What happened? Why did he kick you?' and recording the details with an air of boredom without probing, or even seeming to hear what she was saying. Officer 13 even mocked her son's name at

one point, 'What's his name? How do you spell that? Israel? Israel – that's a country'.

Research suggests that domestic violence victims often try to minimise their experiences out of shame, a psychological reluctance to confront painful experiences and also because they are simply terrified of their abusers who come to assume an all-powerful status (Hanmer *et al*, 1989; Gill 2004). Given these potential multiple pressures on the woman, it was perhaps unsurprising she was reluctant to speak to officers, particularly given that her husband was in the same room when she was being questioned. However neither officer appeared aware of these potential issues.

The encounter concluded with the officers issuing the mandatory warning required in domestic incidents. Yet the warning, delivered by Officer 13, was given in such a way that both the woman and her assailant were both effectively warned. Officer 13 told the couple: 'If we have to come back again we will make an arrest. And not just if someone in the household calls us. If the neighbours hear rows and call us to the address we'll make an arrest.' As we left the house Officer 13 said to me, 'You see this is the type of rubbish we have to deal with – there'll be two hours of paperwork to do for that'.

Officer 13's behaviour mirrored themes from Mama's (1989) research twenty years ago on policing domestic violence in minority ethnic communities. She described a case involving an Asian woman who

recounted how when she called the police for help an Asian community policeman arrived who told her off severely in her own language for 'misbehaving', and instructed her to be a 'good obedient wife'. As in this incident described by Mama (1989), there appeared to be an assumption on the part of Officer 14 who was white, that Officer 13's handling of the incident was effective, perhaps because he was an 'Asian' officer dealing with a domestic violence incident in an 'Asian' household. At no point did Officer 14 question Officer 13's approach or his assessment that the incident was a 'Waste of time'.

However Officer 14's apparent acceptance that as an 'Asian' officer, Officer 13 would be best placed to handle a domestic incident in an 'Asian' family obscured the fact the underlying religious differences, perhaps even tensions, between Officer 13 and the Christian victim, may have influenced his approach. Indians with indigenous faiths (Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism) can have contemptuous views of Christians, the majority of who were poor or low-caste peoples who converted to Christianity during British Rule in an attempt to improve their prospects and status. Whilst Christians can pride themselves on their cultured European lifestyles, other Indians sometimes mock them as 'bread Christians', or those who converted religion for food to sustain them in their poverty. Officer 13's dismissive, mocking attitude towards the woman may have been reflective of these wider tensions, yet at no point did his white colleague, Officer 14, display any awareness of this, or challenge his behaviour despite the fact that the whole encounter was conducted in English. Overall the incident reflected and reinforced the themes I

discussed in chapter five, where Asian officers were treated as 'experts' on Asian communities and deferred to by white officers, irrespective of their individual prejudices.

Knowledge gaps exposed

The policing of a high profile 'honour killing' in the borough exposed the gaps in the police organisation's knowledge of domestic violence in Greenfield's Asian communities. As described in the preceding sections, honour crimes are generally defined as violence directed at predominantly young female victims by male relatives to punish transgressions that are seen to damage the honour or 'izzat' of the wider family (Gill, 2004). Soon after a new Borough Commander and new police community liaison Inspector, Officer 24, took up their posts in Greenfield, a young British Pakistani girl was murdered. The victim, a Muslim, was planning to elope with her Sikh boyfriend but before she could do so was stabbed to death at her family home by a cousin her parents had brought over from Pakistan. Officers suspected the murder was an honour crime instigated by her parents, but had limited evidence.

Officer 24 was contacted by one of the Muslim male members of the Independent Advisory Group, (IAG) who informed him that the killing was indeed an honour crime and various prominent Muslims, including mosque leaders and a councillor were implicated in the incident. Officer 24 immediately briefed the Borough Commander who was due to attend an unrelated meeting that evening at which these individuals would all be present. It subsequently emerged that the information was false and the

allegations baseless, luckily before the Commander's attendance at the meeting. Yet the incident served to expose the lack of substantive knowledge on honour crimes in Ebury, and the poor quality of advice provided by Muslim members on the borough's IAG.

As I described in chapter six, Officer 24 had already begun to review consultation structures in Ebury including membership of the IAG. The above incident gave his efforts greater impetus and led to Officer 24 acting immediately to ensure that women's groups were represented on the IAG. As a first step Officer 24 had swift, informal discussions with two existing female members of the IAG, a community worker and Chair of Ebury Race Equality Council, who confirmed that Asian male members of the group did not represent women and were also actively hostile to discussions about women's issues. Both women urged Officer 24 to invite the Southall Black Sisters to join the IAG so that the police could learn more about domestic violence.

Officer 24 acted immediately on their suggestions, attending the Sisters' open day so that he could make contacts in the organisation. He invited them to attend both the IAG and a new domestic violence forum he established. As I described in chapter six, Officer 24's predecessor, Officer 23, had been hostile towards the Sisters and blocked them from participating in the IAG. Having encountered a representative from the Southall Black Sisters at a conference Officer 23 said, 'She's the type of woman who could make a lot of trouble for us'. Officer 23 appeared to find the woman's robust, outspoken contributions challenging and he also felt

that the members of his male-dominated IAG would not welcome her presence saying, 'My members wouldn't tolerate her'. However Officer 24 had a completely different view, saying, '[Officer 23] told me to keep well away from them [the Southall Black Sisters], he said they're anti-police, they're troublemakers - but I found them completely different, they were really helpful - they're already linked into the Community Safety Unit'.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to illustrate the importance of officers' developing understandings of the culturally specific needs, experiences and perspectives of the diverse communities they were responsible for policing. Using the example of domestic violence I have described how the lack of this knowledge could hamper even capable, conscientious officers attending incidents, resulting in their interventions being ill-informed and of limited help to victims. While domestic abuse is a complex crime in general, additional cultural variations, differing assailants and differing pressures upon victims meant that policing domestic violence incidents involving Black and 'Asian' communities in Greenfield was perhaps even more challenging - not least of all because it required an understanding of *differences* in victims' experiences and needs across *different* communities.

Although the Metropolitan Police had provided general domestic violence training to officers, it did not appear to have provided any information on how patterns and features of violence might differ within different ethnic communities and the issues officers needed to be aware of. Consequently

officers attempted to develop ad hoc understandings, which often bore little relation to the crimes and people they were policing. For example officers appeared to have little if any awareness of gender dynamics and domestic abuse in Somali communities and, though aware that domestic violence might be an issue in Asian communities, they displayed little understanding of the differing forms violence might take in these communities, differences in perpetrators or variations in victims' needs. As a result, in the three domestic incidents I have described in this chapter, officers often appeared to have little awareness of what was happening, often imposing simplistic solutions that provided little resolution for victims.

However, mirroring patterns from Chan's (1996; 1997) study of policing in New South Wales I found that a crisis, specifically a high-profile honour killing and the subsequent exposure of gaps in police understandings of these crimes, might have begun to lay the foundations for change. The 'crisis' incident resulted in rapid engagement with a prominent local women's group, the Southall Black Sisters, who had been previously excluded from borough-wide consultation structures. Furthermore it also resulted in a forum being established to look at the issue of domestic violence.

Having illustrated the impact of officers' lack of knowledge on policing practice, in next chapter I examine the reasons *why* officers continued to lack sufficient understandings of the ethnically diverse peoples they responsible for policing, despite successive waves of reform.

Chapter Eight: Interpreting the picture of policing in Greenfield

Introduction

I have argued in the preceding chapters that policing in Greenfield was complex, encompassing both continuity and change. In this chapter I explore why this was the case, beginning with a short summary of the key features of policing in Greenfield and describing how my findings resonate with other contemporary studies of race and policing. I then discuss the major reforms surrounding policing minority ethnic communities in Britain, examining why these extensive reforms have not produced a more consistent picture of progress in relation to the policing of ethnic minorities, and why, despite pockets of good practice, policing Greenfield still appeared ill-equipped to respond to a globalised, complex world. To fully unravel the multiple influences shaping modern policing, in the latter part of the chapter I use Phillips' (2011) work in which she draws on Giddens' (1984) concepts to articulate and examine social change at the macro, meso and micro levels. I begin with an examination of the macro structural context of policing, before examining how this chimed with meso-level cultural dynamics within the organisation and individual officers' actions and practice at the micro-level. I conclude with a brief discussion of the potential wider ramifications of the policing practices I observed in Greenfield.

Contemporary Greenfield: complexities, contradictions and continuities

The picture of policing in Greenfield that emerges from my study is as complex, contradictory and diverse as the social world being policed. In line with Asian officers' testimonies and my own empirical observations, it appeared that overt racism had been largely excised from Greenfield - a major achievement given the historically pervasive, seemingly intransient presence of racism within the British police service (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005). However there remained continuities and tensions in police thinking and practice, despite successive waves of race-related reforms nationally and, at a more local level, Greenfield's history of accommodating large numbers of migrants from across the world.

Most notably, although South Asian, mainly Indian, communities in the area were, as some officers themselves acknowledged, 'the indigenous population', having arrived in the area in the 1950s and 1960s, the majority of officers had little understanding of these groups and the organisation provided them little, if any, information about them. Consequently, as I described in chapter four, Greenfield's South Asian communities remained foreign to many white officers, who tended to classify them as 'Asians' in a way that obscured rather than illuminated their diversity. Although some white officers did attempt to draw upon their Asian colleagues for information and help, this was done in a somewhat sporadic, simplistic way that assumed that as 'Asians' these officers would

be experts on 'Asian' communities, irrespective of their individual levels of knowledge or personal prejudices.

Similarly, many officers regarded Somalis, the most recently arrived immigrant communities in the area, as a 'problem' population who disrupted the established order. Echoing patterns from Van Maanen's (2006: 280) early US study, Somalis tended to be classified as 'assholes', that is to say disreputable, distasteful populations, who threatened established patterns of authority in the area and needed to be controlled. Muslim communities in Greenfield were also viewed with suspicion by many white officers, who focussed on the potential terrorist threat within these communities in ways which mirrored findings from early seminal studies on the criminalization of Black communities, (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988). The early work of Hall *et al* (1978) described how media, political and social discourses problematising 'Black youth' as threatening the stability of British society with their criminal behaviour, most notably 'mugging', resulted in dramatic increases in the arrest and conviction rates of 'Black youth' for robbery and 'mugging' offences. Similarly, wider political and media discourses focussing on the terrorist threat within Muslim communities (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Mythen *et al*, 2009; Dornhof, 2009; Brittain, 2009; Pickering and McCulloch, 2010; Murray, 2010; Schierup and Alund, 2011; Zemni, 2011) appeared to have shaped officers' perspectives on these communities in Greenfield, resulting in officers tending to view Muslims with suspicion and as potential 'terrorists'.

However beneath this somewhat depressing overarching picture a far more complex, confused and contradictory network of practice and attitudes emerged, with examples of inspirational, committed officers working to increase organisational understandings of different communities contrasting with others who were overtly hostile to people from the 'ghetto' that was Greenfield. This was perhaps best illustrated by neighbourhood teams A and B; while Team A was led by officers with hostile, overtly prejudiced views of local people (Officers 1 and 17), Team B officers worked collaboratively with local people and attempted to establish links with the most marginalised, such as Somalis.

Yet officers' perspectives on race and minority ethnic communities could not be simply classified as 'racist' or 'non-racist'. Rather, mirroring findings from studies of race and ethnicity, a more complex, shifting set of patterns emerged amongst the officers participating in my study (Cashmore, 1987; Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Bloch and Solomos, 2010). Overall officers' perspectives on ethnically diverse communities in Greenfield could be classified into three broad categories of r*acist, reformer* and *passively prejudiced*. It should be noted that these categories were Weberian 'ideal types', that is to say that while they captured elements of officers' behaviour and perspectives found in reality, officers rarely completely conformed to these specific types (Giddens, 1971: 141; Weber, 1964).

At one extreme, only two officers in my study could be classified as *racist* according to Blum's (2002: 8) definition of racism being a full-blown belief

system or ideology that is based on either antipathy or inferiorization of different ethnic groups. As discussed in chapter one, inferiorization is linked to historical doctrines or social systems and involves constructing certain groups (such as African Americans) as inferior, while antipathy involves hatred or hostility towards the object of racism (Blum, 2002: 8).

At the other extreme, a larger minority of officers could be classified as *reformers*, that is to say officers who were committed to policing Greenfield in a way that was sensitive and met the needs of different ethnic communities in the area.

However the majority of officers could be described as *passively prejudiced*, that is to say while they did not profess antipathy towards any particular ethnic groups, they unconsciously, almost unquestioningly accepted 'facts' that certain groups were predisposed to commit certain types of crime (for example 'Asians' committed fraud, Muslims terrorism), and that certain communities caused policing problems (for example Somalis disrupted the 'order' of Greenfield). In line with the definition of institutional discrimination, (Reiner, 2010) these officers lacked sufficient understandings of the different peoples and situations they were policing and, as a consequence, handled situations in a way that *reinforced* the disadvantaged position of marginalised groups.

While the police service should strive to ensure that none of its officers are racist or passively prejudiced, particularly in an ethnically diverse area such as Greenfield, in practical terms eradicating all racism and prejudice

from any organisation is almost impossible. Therefore the fact that I identified only two genuinely racist officers during my research was perhaps a testimony to the progress the Greenfield police had made in eradicating racism. However the large numbers of passively prejudiced officers in my study illustrated how much more needed to be done to improve the policing of Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities. Although it might be unrealistic to expect that all unwitting or passive prejudice had been removed from the organisation, the fact that a *majority* rather than a *minority* of officers were passively prejudiced was problematic, as it meant that most officers lacked sufficient understandings of the peoples and communities they were policing.

However officers did not fit neatly into the three broad categories, of *racist, reformer* or *passively prejudiced*; rather individuals' perspectives were often more complex, shifting and contradictory. Neither were they stratified simply by factors such as ethnicity, age, rank or length of service. For example, the two officers who could be classified as racist included a white and an Asian officer, the latter being hostile to Asian communities other than his own. Similarly, reformers included middle-aged, uneducated, white male officers with long lengths of service, Asian officers and younger white male officers of different ranks.

Furthermore, individual officers did not necessarily slot easily into one of these three broad categories; rather in some instances they could act as reformers and in others as passively prejudiced or even racist. For example two young white officers who were in almost all aspects

reformers, Officers 24 and 26, perhaps best illustrated this. For example, Officer 24 worked hard to engage diverse ethnic communities in Greenfield including the most marginalised sections of the community such as young people and women. However, though superficially professional in his dealings with Muslim communities, he viewed them with suspicion and hostility. Similarly Officer 26, a conscientious young white Inspector who worked hard to increase his understandings of different ethnic communities in Greenfield, nonetheless behaved in an aggressive and hostile way towards travellers. The complexities and contradictions in officers' behaviour in Greenfield mirrors themes from the race and ethnicity literature in which it is argued that racism can operate selectively and that individuals can be prejudiced against some groups not others, (Blum, 2002), and that furthermore, racism is not monolithic, rather there are plural forms of racism, or 'racisms', operating in relation to different groups (Back and Solomos, 1996; Bloch and Solomos, 2010).

This divergence among individual officers meant that while limited understandings of different ethnic communities and hostile attitudes to those who were the most marginalised, (such as Somalis and travellers), were pervasive in Greenfield, individual reforming officers created pockets of good practice. Reforming officers were spread across all ranks and roles within the organisation and sought with varying degrees of success to improve the policing of diverse ethnic communities in Greenfield within their sphere.

The complex patchwork of practice in Greenfield echoed themes from other recent studies exploring how UK policing has changed following successive waves of reform (Foster *et al*, 2005; Loftus, 2012). Like my research these studies provide evidence of both continuity and change, indicating that while policing appears to be shifting, underlying attitudes towards ethnic minorities and pockets of resistance to reform persist in the organisation (Foster *et al,* 2005; Loftus, 2012).

Foster *et al's* (2005) study of the impact of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry conducted between 2002 and 2004 found that the Inquiry was an important moment in British policing, resulting in major changes in the policing of minority ethnic groups. As in Greenfield, Foster *et al* (2005) found overtly racist language had been almost excised from the service and that officers had a heightened awareness, and indeed anxiety, about their conduct when dealing with minority ethnic people as they felt under greater, more intense scrutiny. As the researchers noted, these developments constituted a major advancement, given the pervasiveness of racist language and attitudes in the service as late as the 1990s (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005).

However Foster *et al* (2005) also found that the extent of progress varied significantly between different forces and sites and that advancements particularly those in relation to the excision of racism, were largely superficial. In line with the testimonies of some Asian officers in my study, there were indications that despite the excision of overtly racist language,

problematic attitudes to ethnic minorities persisted within the organisation, and racism had shifted from overt to more covert forms (Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007).

These themes of superficial progress combined with underlying continuity were mirrored in Loftus' (2012) subsequent research in two English police forces. Like Foster *et al* (2005), Loftus (2012) found that while overtly racist language had been largely excised, hostile, negative attitudes towards minority ethnic communities persisted. Furthermore, she found resistance and considerable resentment amongst white officers towards the police organisation's drive to improve race equality and diversity, and the perceived erosion of white officers' dominance in the organisation.

Loftus' (2008; 2012) findings also support the findings of the Morris Inquiry (2004) which suggested that despite the efforts of the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) to improve and embed practice on diversity, there was little understanding of diversity within the organisation and that the MPS was experiencing the beginnings of a backlash among white officers against its attempts to eradicate discrimination. For example, some white male heterosexual officers in Loftus (2008) research expressed recalcitrant, resentful views towards the organisation's tough disciplinary line on prejudicial language and drive to improve diversity, arguing that such policies were excessive, unwarranted and even responsible for, 'The demise of the job', (Loftus, 2008: 762). Yet in contrast to these officers', 'Narratives of Decline and Discontent', (Loftus, 2008: 762), officers from minorities (women, ethnic minorities, lesbian and gay communities), and

some white officers supported diversity policies and the strong disciplinary line on racist behaviour (Loftus, 2008).

Therefore the picture that emerges of policing in both Greenfield and other studies is of an organisation which has made considerable progress and continues to change, but that has strong underlying elements of continuity and resistance to reform (Foster *et al*, 2005; Loftus, 2008; Loftus, 2012). As McLaughlin (2007: 18) aptly describes, the process of change in the organisation is painful and full of contests, conflicts and challenges, as illustrated by the picture in Greenfield, in which officers' perspectives ranged from those who were reformers who embraced the ethnic diversity of the area, to racists who viewed it with outright hostility. The following section examines the drivers of these changes in the police, describing the successive waves of reform that have produced the current picture.

Drivers of change: simplistic solutions to complex problems?

Sharp (2005: 449) notes that: 'Policing, or to be more precise, the activities and policies of the 43 territorial police forces in England and Wales, has been the subject of extensive review and reform over the past 40 years'. Many of the major, watershed reforms have been in response to crises in the policing of minority ethnic communities, focussing on ways to improve the policing of these communities (McLaughlin, 2007).

While the police are not the only organisation that has discriminated against ethnic minorities or failed to meet their needs (Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Phillips, 2011), such failings within the police service have

perhaps attracted more attention given the extensive powers and influence of the police in democratic societies such as Britain (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002). The police, are not the only organisation with a mandate to use coercive force in democratic societies (prisons and mental institutions also use force for example), nor are they the only organisation exercising policing type functions with the rise of private security providers (Jones and Newburn, 1998; Loader, 2000; Reiner, 2000a; Fleming and Grabosky, 2009). However the police are the only organisation in democratic societies with the mandate to use force pervasively, across a range of contexts (Bittner, 1967; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Reiner, 2000a; Sharp, 2005). The police organisation's mandate to use coercive force in range of forms is based upon the consent of the people being policed; therefore where crises have arisen in the way police exercise these powers in relation to minority ethnic communities these have had more far-reaching implications than in other organisations (Jones *et al*, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). As Jones *et al* (1996: 187) note:

> *'The police are arguably the most central public service in a modern state. Indeed, having a public 'policing' service is one of the fundamental reasons for having a state…Furthermore the police have a unique relationship with the institution of democracy and their legitimacy. They are there to protect the fundamental freedoms of citizens'* (Jones *et al,* 1996: 187)

In addition to being one of the most fundamental organisations of democratic states, the police are also the most visible agents of government authority, therefore they need to be seen to exercise their powers equitably (Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Lum, 2009). As Fleming and McLaughlin (2010: 199) aptly summarise:

> *'The police are the most visible domestic agents of coercive government authority. What the public thinks, feels and says about the police and the stance of citizens*

toward the police can, in many respects, stand as a key indicator of confidence in the state's ability to fulfil its side of the social contract' (Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010: 199).

McLaughlin (2007: 38) provides a helpful overview of the major reforms in race and policing, charting how policing reforms have progressed from attempting to adopt a colour-blind approach, to eradicating institutional racism, and most recently to eradicating what he terms 'stealth racism'. The first major reforms of policing minority ethnic communities were set out in the Scarman (1981) Report following the riots in areas with large minority ethnic populations in Brixton, Toxeth and Greenfield. The Scarman (1981) Report formed part of what McLaughlin (2007: 18) terms the 'pre-institutional racism era', attributing problems in policing minority ethnic communities to insensitive policing and a lack of understanding of different communities rather than pervasive racism.

While Scarman (1981) acknowledged the presence of racism in the service, he conceived the problem to be the preserve of a minority of 'bad apples' or deviant officers within the police force (Scarman, 1981; Bowling and Phillips, 2002). Nonetheless, the Scarman Report (1981) introduced major reforms to policing, identifying insensitive, over-policing of minority ethnic communities as the primary cause of the riots and introducing reforms that laid the foundation for the changes in policing evident today (Scarman, 1981). These included two strands of reform I studied in Greenfield – internal reform through the increased recruitment of minority ethnic officers to the force and external reform through community consultation.

As discussed in chapter five, Scarman (1981) recommended the recruitment of increased numbers of minority ethnic officers partly to improve understandings of minority ethnic communities within the organisation, but more pressingly to fulfil the important democratic function of ensuring that the demographics of the police matched those of the communities the organisation was policing (Scarman, 1981; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; McLaughlin, 2007). Secondly Scarman (1981) attempted to enforce professional standards of conduct and a 'force to service' change in the police organisation, with the primary aim of ensuring that the organisation could provide a quality of service that met the different needs, priorities and expectations of the public (McLaughlin, 2007: 19). This 'force to service' change was also embodied in the Scarman Report's (1981) recommendations regarding consultation with local communities, which changed community consultation from being an optional, marginal activity to a formal requirement for police forces (McLaughlin, 2007: 19). Finally the reforms included U.S. imported race relations training to ensure that officers treated the public equitably which, in line with the dominant thinking of the time, was perceived to be 'colour blind' (McLaughlin, 2007).

However, policing academics have argued that Scarman's (1981) conception of the problem of racism as being a one of a minority of 'bad apples' did not accurately reflect the reality that far from being an isolated problem, racist language and attitudes were pervasive within the police service, and continued to be a core component of police culture throughout the1980s and 1990s (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996;

Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rowe, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007).

The Macpherson Inquiry (1999) into the racist murder of Stephen Lawrence, some twenty years later marked a watershed in British policing, yet many of its reforms, most notably those surrounding the recruitment of minority ethnic officers and requirements for community consultation, echoed those of the previous Scarman Report (1981). However where the Macpherson Report (1999) differed radically was in its conceptualisation of the problem of policing minority ethnic communities. Whereas the Scarman Report (1981) dismissed the problem of racism in the police service as one of a minority of 'bad apples', the Macpherson Report (1999) labelled the MPS as 'institutionally racist', concluding that decades of over-policing and under-protection had resulted in an acute lack of confidence amongst minority ethnic people in the MPS (McLaughlin, 2007). Indeed as Rowe (2004) noted, the finding that the police were institutionally racist was the most significant, most publicised finding of the Report. The report also had particular resonance as it focussed on the police mishandling of the investigation into the racist murder of a seventeen-year-old student named Stephen Lawrence, who, as Rock (2004: 413) described was an, 'An ideal approximation to the blameless victim', murdered by, 'quintessentially evil racist perpetrators' with criminal records.

The indictment of the police service as institutionally racist was undoubtedly a powerful catalyst for major, sweeping changes, as was

evident from Foster *et al*'s (2005) evaluation of the impact of the report,

the testimonies of those inside the organisation such as Deputy Assistant

Commissioner Bill Griffiths (2009) and members of Black Police

Associations (BPAs) participating in Holdaway and O'Neill's (2007)

research on BPAs' perspectives post Macpherson. However the

Macpherson Report's definition of the term institutional racism was vague

(Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007) and widely misunderstood and

resented by many white rank and file officers (Foster *et al*, 2005; Foster,

2008). Though the MPS Commissioner accepted the Lawrence Inquiry's

indictment that the police service was institutionally racist, rank and file

officers continued to deny or minimise the presence of racism (Foster *et al*,

2005; Griffiths, 2009), perceiving the Commissioner's admission to be an,

'Utter betrayal', (Foster, 2008: 94). This sense of betrayal stemmed partly

from the fact that many officers did not understand what was meant by

'institutional racism' and mistakenly assumed that officers were being

accused of being personally racist (Foster *et al*, 2005; Foster, 2008).

The final, third phase of reform, described by McLaughlin (2007: 23) as

'post-institutional racism', followed the high profile mishandling of

disciplinary cases involving minority ethnic officers such as Ali Dizaei and

the BBC's Secret Policeman documentary (2003), which exposed racist

attitudes amongst probationary police officers. Though as McLaughlin

(2007) notes the racist probationary officers numbered only eight, the

documentary caused shock waves due to the extreme nature of the

recruit's views and their contrast with the official commitment of the police

service to excise racist language, attitudes and behaviour from the

service. As McLaughlin (2007: 27) aptly summarised, the documentary uncovered, 'Racist attitudes and behaviour amongst probationary police officers that matched anything seen in the covert video footage of the five racially paranoid white men accused of murdering Stephen Lawrence'.

Following the documentary the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) committed to introducing a 'race and diversity proof' recruitment process (McLaughlin, 2007: 32). Measures included tests to screen out applicants suspected of racism and encouraging officers to identify colleagues displaying unacceptable attitudes and behaviour. This was reinforced by a ban on police officers from holding membership to the British National Party or other extremist organisations (McLaughlin, 2007).

Yet despite these extensive reforms during the past thirty years, some of which have been coupled with intense political pressure and media scrutiny (as in the case of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry) as described in my research and wider studies, policing, though changing, has quite simply not changed enough (Foster *et al*, 2005; Loftus, 2012). While reforms have delivered significant changes they have still not produced an organisation that is sufficiently responsive to the world it is policing. How can this be the case?

Some of the reasons centre on the limitations of the reforms themselves and the complexity of the issues they are attempting to address. Understanding and responding effectively to the diverse needs of different ethnic communities is fraught with underlying tensions and challenges, as

identified by early research following the Scarman (1981) reforms; challenges that have intensified, not lessened, with the passage of time. Firstly, distinct 'communities' to be understood, engaged and policed do not exist, as people have multiple, continually shifting identities and at most form temporary allegiances around issues of common interest (Eade, 1989; Keith, 1993; Baumann, 1996; McLaughlin, 1994). Secondly the diversity of the British population has only increased over time, as perhaps exemplified by the increasing plurality of communities in Greenfield. Successive waves of people have arrived in the area since the industrial revolution from different parts of the world including Europe, the Indian subcontinent and Somalia.

Furthermore, as described in chapter three, divisions in the identities, perspectives, experiences and needs have emerged in the area's most established communities from the Indian subcontinent, mainly centring on generation, gender and socio-economic advantage. Consequently the police, particularly in areas such as Greenfield, are faced with the continual challenge of understanding new, complex and shifting peoples and communities. In addition, the most disengaged or disadvantaged in society, most notably new migrants such as Somalis, remain hidden from view, often unwilling or unable to engage with the police, sometimes because of poor experiences with the police in the UK or in their countries of origin (Keith, 1993; McLaughlin, 1994; Skogan, 2008).

While the challenges associated with policing diversity remain complex, the reforms undertaken in response have often provided solutions that do

not sufficiently take into account these intricacies and difficulties. Part of

this is due to the fact that many reforms have been, as McLaughlin (2007:

37) notes:

> *'Drafted in a crisis management environment that invariably disconnects them from the 'lived experience' of the crisis. The 'something must be done' rush to recommendations and action plans means that little real analytical attention is paid to the broader social and cultural policing conditions'.* (McLaughlin, 2007: 37).

Furthermore, as Canter (2004) notes, the police are an action-orientated

profession focussed on tackling problems swiftly and resolutely, unlike

academics whose focus is on analysing and understanding issues or

problems. In policing, as Canter (2004) observes, it is the actions that

matter, whereas in academia the emphasis is on the generation of ideas.

Consequently, it is perhaps predictable that when the organisation is faced

with problems it employs swift, immediate solutions rather than

considering the associated complexities and wider issues.

In Greenfield this was perhaps best illustrated by the way the two main

measures intended to improve diversity and community relations were

implemented – the recruitment of Asian officers and community policing.

As illustrated in chapters five and six both measures, aimed at reforming

the organisation through both internal and external challenge respectively,

were implemented with little consideration of wider issues and

complexities. For example, white officers assumed that 'Asian' officers

would be, by virtue of their ethnicity, experts on 'Asian' communities in

Greenfield, without considering potential divergences amongst Asian

officers including variations in their levels of knowledge, allegiances to

their own communities, or prejudices against Asian communities other

than their own. Similarly, though community consultation was embraced in Greenfield, officers were directed to consult with 'the community' with no reflection or guidance on whom, in a diverse, continually evolving area like Greenfield, actually constituted the 'community' or how to reach the most marginalised.

Furthermore it should be noted that the most recent, influential reforms seeking to improve the policing of minority communities - the Macpherson Report (1999) and actions in response to the 'Secret Policeman' documentary (2003) - have focussed on eradicating racism, rather than increasing officers' understandings of different communities. In some ways the focus of the reforms was understandable given the persisting, pervasive presence of racism even after the Scarman reforms (Scarman, 1981; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Rowe, 2004). However, given the focus of the reforms on racism, it is perhaps to be expected that while they have helped remove overt racism, they have had a limited influence in increasing organisational knowledge of or reflection upon ethnically diverse communities. As Rowe (2004:3) puts it: 'The Macpherson Report has had an important effect in sensitising mainstream white society to the realities of racism and has helped to create an agenda for reform. However…this agenda has established a relatively narrow - even if extensive - programme of activity'.

Given the lack of accompanying emphasis on understanding different communities it is perhaps unsurprising that the reforms have created confusion, fear, and even resentment, in Greenfield and British policing

more widely (Morris, 2004; Loftus, 2008; Loftus, 2012). While white officers know they must avoid being racist, they have not necessarily been equipped with the knowledge of how to deliver an effective service to minority communities and how existing practice and thinking might need to be adjusted to take into account the culturally-specific needs of different groups. As McLaughlin (2007) notes, though education on race equality has been delivered in the MPS, it has given limited help or information to officers and as the Morris Inquiry (2004) noted, there remains considerable confusion on what 'diversity' actually means. Furthermore, attempts to eradicate racism have adopted a 'one-size fits all', stringently punitive approach when in Greenfield it was clear that officers' perspectives on diverse ethnic communities varied considerably and different interventions were required for different officers.

In Greenfield these contradictions were exemplified by the fact that despite front-line officers being under pressure to behave in a non-racist way, they were given little education or information about the area's ethnically diverse communities. Beyond the standard diversity awareness training the only other substantive information given to new arrivals in Greenfield was, as described in chapter four, a tour of the main Hindu, Sikh and Muslim places of worship in the area, led by Officer 1 who had overtly hostile views of Asian communities.

However the reasons that reforms have not produced an organisation sufficiently responsive to the contemporary world it is policing is not simply due to the complexity of the problem or the inherent weaknesses in the

reforms themselves. As I describe in the following sections, wider

contextual factors in society and the police service have shaped the extent

to which the police organisation has, or has not, changed.

Context of reform: opportunities and constraints

To fully understand the multiple contextual factors determining change and

reform in the police service, it is helpful to draw upon Phillips (2011) multi-

level framework for understanding institutional racism. As Phillips (2011)

notes, the concept of institutional racism is somewhat overused and

lacking in analytical rigour, and its blanket application cannot fully explain

patterns in society. Instead, Phillips (2011: 174) recommends that,

'Institutional racism needs to be situated within a conceptual framework

which acknowledges the role of racialisation at the micro, meso and macro

levels'.

Phillips (2011) approach is based on Giddens' (1984) conceptual

framework that fuses different theoretical approaches in sociology

focussing on micro (individual) level and macro (wider societal) level

interactions. Giddens (1984) argued that to fully explore how the social

world is produced, we need to analyse interactions at the macro, meso

and micro level and the ways in which these are inter-connected. Giddens

(1984) defines the macro-level as the societal level, though cautioning that

societies rarely have specifiable boundaries. The meso-level is the context

of day-to-day social activity - in this study the police organisation in

Greenfield (Giddens, 1984). Finally, Giddens (1984) argues while day-to-

day social activity produces routine patterns, we need to analyse the

behaviour of individual actors at the micro-level - in Greenfield individual police officers. The following sections examine the macro, meso and micro level interactions that created the picture of policing in Greenfield.

Macro-level: societal demands of policing

As Manning (2010) notes, policing does not occur in a vacuum, rather it's aims and focus are determined by the structural context in which it operates. Manning (2010: viii) aptly summarises: 'The police mandate is affected by global political and economic dynamics'. In Greenfield, as in all other societies, policing was shaped by the demands and dynamics of the wider society in which it was conducted.

In Britain, there had been considerable public, political and media pressure to eradicate racism from the police service. Rock (2004) documents how the Macpherson Report (1999) attracted much attention from the media, politicians and campaign groups and describes how racism became the single defining feature of the reforms (though the Inquiry identified a range of far wider issues and recommendations, including those on operational practice). Foster's (2008: 92) research on murder investigation in the aftermath of the Lawrence Inquiry provides an insight into how the intense public condemnation, or a, 'Very public pillory', was experienced by police officers. Foster (2008) describes how officers sought to undermine the racial elements of the murder and the possibility of institutional racism, attempting to define the mishandling of the investigation as incompetence or bungling rather than due to the more condemnatory, emotionally charged reason of racism. Foster's (2008)

narrative in some ways chimes with that of Bill Griffiths, Deputy Assistant Commissioner in the MPS (Griffiths, 2009), whose description of the MPS response to the Macpherson Inquiry focussed primarily on operational issues, rather than addressing wider issues of police attitudes.

Social pressure to eradicate racism re-intensified following the Secret Policeman documentary in 2003. McLaughlin (2007) aptly describes how the widespread political and media condemnation following the documentary transformed the racist probationary constables depicted into, 'Hyper-racist folk devils', who became the, 'personification of unreconstructed police racism', (Rowe, 2004 quoted in McLaughlin, 2007:31).

The pressure to eradicate racism was also coupled with pressure to improve public satisfaction with policing, echoing Scarman's (1981) early attempts to create a, 'force to service', transition in British policing (McLaughlin, 2007: 19). As discussed above, the legitimacy of British policing depends upon the extent to which it is exercised with the consent and satisfaction of the people being policed (Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Reiner, 2000a; Lloyd and Foster, 2009; Neyroud, 2009; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). During my fieldwork the pressure for the police to increase public satisfaction with policing intensified. The then Labour Government frustrated that despite falling crime rates public confidence in the police remained low, placed an increasing emphasis on the British police delivering a more localised service, responsive to the needs of local people (McLaughlin, 2005; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010).

To achieve this, the government placed a renewed emphasis on neighbourhood policing, rolling out neighbourhood initiatives including, as described in chapter six, Safer Neighbourhoods, (McLaughlin, 2005; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). As Fleming and Grabosky (2009: 281) aptly summarised, the emphasis on the public or 'customer' satisfaction with policing was coupled with an increasingly 'insatiable appetite' for police services.

This 'appetite' for police services centres on a demand that the police reduce crime and maintain order (Fleming and Grabosky, 2009: 281; Manning, 2010). During my fieldwork there was a tacit, almost universal consensus from politicians and the public that while the police must eradicate racism and provide a public-focussed service, the two primary functions they were responsible delivering remained, in line with Bittner's (1967) seminal definition, to enforce the law and maintain order (Manning, 2010). Indeed as Bowling and Foster (2002) argue these demands have intensified as we have become a 'risk society', with fears about risks, most notably those relating to crime and disorder, dominating much modern thinking and debate. Political and public demands that the police enforce the law were perhaps most obviously reflected in the crime-focussed targets that the police were expected to deliver during my fieldwork (Barnes and Eagle, 2007; Foster and Jones, 2010).

Therefore, while the organisation had sought to eradicate racism in response to widespread condemnation and provide a public focussed service, it remained focussed upon and responsible for delivering two core functions: fighting crime and maintaining order. Yet in fulfilling this

apparently commonsense, obvious mandate the organisation was potentially reinforcing, rather than mitigating structural inequalities experienced by minority ethnic groups (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Manning, 2010). For example, demanding that the police deal with crimes associated with minority ethnic communities, such as Islamic terrorism, without any wider consideration of the ways in which policing could reinforce structural inequalities, had the potential to increase the punitive targeting of ethnic minorities, and reinforce their marginal status.

During my fieldwork the global political dynamics of the September 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and in London in July 2005 inevitably influenced the police mandate (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Manning, 2010). Discourses highlighting the threat of Islamic terrorism and problematising Muslim communities as sources of disorder and a threat to European values of tolerance, freedom and equality, were pervasive both before and during my fieldwork (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Mythen *et al*, 2009; Dornhof, 2009; Brittain, 2009; Pickering and McCulloch, 2010; Murray, 2010; Schierup and Alund, 2011; Zemni, 2011). Consequently the police were under pressure to address the threats to law and indeed the very social order of Europe posed by Islamic terrorism, a pressure that was reflected in both political discourses and the raft of anti-terrorist legislation framing the activities of the police and wider criminal justice agencies (Brittain, 2009; Pantazis and Pemberton, 2009; Parmar, 2011).

This apparently commonsense demand that one of the primary functions of the police was to fight crimes such as terrorism did not take into account

the fact that only a proportion of police time is actually spent in crime-fighting (Manning, 2010; Brodeur, 2010). Indeed as Waddington (1999a: 299) has commented: 'The occupational self-image of the police of is that of 'crime-fighters' and this is not just a distortion of what they do, it is virtually a collective *delusion*'. While undoubtedly the police, specifically the frontline officers I was observing, had some role to play in preventing and addressing terrorism, their role actually encompassed a far wider range of activities.

In addition to pressures to reduce crime, particularly Islamic terrorism, both before and during my fieldwork discourses problematising Asians communities for not wanting to 'integrate', and threatening the character of British society, were pervasive in British society (Cantle, 2001; Phillips, 2006; Alexander, 2007). Indeed as illustrated in chapter four, some of these discourses were reflected directly in officers' views about Asian communities and their perception that these communities were traditionalist and reluctant to integrate into wider British society.

Wider societal demands that the police address crime, most notably terrorism, were also accompanied by lesser, more localised pressures for the police to maintain order in Greenfield (Bittner, 1967; Manning, 2010). This was most obviously manifested in the fact that a significant number of calls I attended with officers involved dealing with situations where no actual crime had been committed, but where individuals, often those from the most marginalised sections of society such as Somalis and travellers, were perceived to be behaving in disordered, anti-social ways that

threatened the peace and stability of the area. For example, officers received complaints from members of the public, (mainly from the established Asian communities), about: 'gangs of Somali men' hanging around outside a Somali café; drunks, drug addicts and tramps 'lurking on public benches'; 'groups of youths hanging around'; and 'noisy traveller families arguing' with other residents on their street. Though the societal pressure to deal with these non-crime incidents was not as strong as the pressure to prevent terrorism, there was still considerable public demand in Greenfield for the police to maintain order and deal with people perceived to be disrupting the stability of the area.

Therefore the wider social and structural context of policing was one in which the police were required to deliver the dual and in some ways contradictory demands of eradicating racism and providing a public-focussed service, while at the same time enforcing law and upholding order. Manning (2010) has argued that given the powerful role the police play in democratic societies their role should be defined and assessed by the extent to which they support democratic values and whether policing increases or decreases structural inequalities. Yet in Greenfield, and indeed British policing more widely, the police were not assessed in this way and instead the organisation was primarily judged and defined by its ability to address crime despite the fact that a limited amount of officers' time was spent in crime-fighting activity (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Manning, 2010). Furthermore, at a more localised level, the public who were 'customers' of police services demanded that in addition

to fighting crime the police also deal with a variety of non-criminal activities perceived to be threatening the order of the area.

Chan (1996), in her study of policing in New South Wales, noted that for change to occur in policing there needed to be an interaction between Bourdieu's twin concepts of field and habitus. Chan (1996: 115) defined the field of policing as, 'A social space of conflict and competition, where participants struggle to gain control over specific power and authority', whereas habitus was, 'A system of 'dispositions', which integrate past experience and enable individuals to cope with a diversity of unforeseen situations'. Using examples from her study of policing in New South Wales, Chan (1996; 1997) describes how the alignment between field and habitus influenced the implementation of two reforms introduced in New South Wales police following the *'Cop it Sweet'* documentary exposing police racism and malpractice.

The newly appointed Commissioner John Avery introduced two main strands of reform, a drive to eradicate corruption and a comprehensive community policing strategy, both of which produced very different outcomes. In the case of his drive on corruption, the external pressure in the 'field' for reform aligned with internal pressure within the 'habitus' of the police organisation, as John Avery undertook stringent, punitive action to eradicate police corruption. This alignment between field and habitus resulted in significant change in police malpractice (Chan, 1996; 1997).

Though Avery's community policing approach was in many ways more radical than his corruption drive, the same alignment between field and habitus was not apparent. While in the field there remained considerable pressure for the police to deliver a more sensitive, community-focussed service, internally community policing was regarded as essentially a public relations exercise and, lacking the same internal drive and threat of punitive action from the Commissioner, it became a marginal activity, having little impact on policing (Chan, 1996; 1997).

In Greenfield the field in which policing was conducted was one in which racism was condemned and there was some political pressure for a community-focussed policing service. However, against this there was a far greater drive for the police, as primary upholders of law and order, to deal with the threats to security posed by Islamic terrorism – a crime associated with minority ethnic, specifically Muslim, communities. There was also a more localised pressure, mainly from Greenfield's established South Asian communities that the police deal with behaviours and activities perceived to be threatening the area's general stability. The following section describes how these demands of the field interacted with the meso context of the internal police organisation.

Meso-level: organisational conflicts and continuities

Like all organisation's the police service has internal occupational cultures, (Bowling and Foster, 2002; Foster, 2003) which, as Schien (1985) notes, constitute the: 'Basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously and define in a basic taken-

for-granted fashion an organisation's view of itself and its environment' (Schien, 1985, quoted in Foster, 2003: 197).

In the field of policing research, police culture has been criticised as the source of many problems in the police service including racism (Waddington, 1999a; Foster, 2003). However occupational cultures play a critical part in helping officers understand and make sense of their role and the often confusing, conflicting, difficult world they are policing (Waddington, 1999a; Foster, 2003). As Manning (2010) notes, like all professions the police need to define their role and why they do it and police organisational cultures play a critical role in this process of definition (Waddington, 1999a; Foster, 2003).

Yet police organisational cultures are far from monolithic and their plurality has been extensively documented in policing research (Fielding, 1994; Reiner, 2000a; Foster 2003). Various policing studies have described how organisational cultures can differ greatly between stations, teams, ranks and specialisms within the police (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Foster, 2003). Despite the plurality of police cultures, research indicates that these cultures have common characteristics threading through them including a focus on crime-fighting, machismo, strong solidarity with colleagues, conservatism, and a desire to maintain the current order (Waddington, 1999a; Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002).

In Greenfield the elements of organisational culture cited above were all apparent to varying degrees across different teams during my observation. As described in chapters four and six, officers were primarily focussed on crime-fighting and upholding order, which led many officers to take a hostile view of groups they perceived to be threatening the stability of the area including Somalis, travellers, and young men. Within this, there was a certain amount of conservatism, as officers wanted to preserve the existing order established by Greenfield's 'indigenous' Asian communities from being threatened by new incomers such as Somalis. The solidarity among officers was perhaps best illustrated by the accounts of Asian officers who described how, despite suffering horrific, sustained bullying, they never complained about their treatment as they had to be seen to conform to the culture of solidarity and the 'unwritten rule that you don't grass'.

Current debates in the UK, US and Australia centre on the extent to which police culture is changing (Chan, 1996; Foster, 2003; Sklansky 2007) or whether its key features are enduring (Skolnick, 2008; Loftus, 2010). In their early research in New York police departments in the 1970s Reuss-Ianni and Ianni (2006) already noted that US police culture was changing from being relatively homogenous to one where a gulf opened up between traditional rank and file officers or 'street cops' and incoming, college-educated 'management cops'. The management cops, moving between different roles and teams within the organisation, had less solidarity to their immediate colleagues and teams, were more focussed on their long-term career goals and were open to changing and improving the

organisation. The street cops, on the other hand, had strong solidarity with colleagues, and resisted change, particularly that which was seen to be punitive to rank and file colleagues such as crackdowns on corruption and malpractice.

More recently Sklansky (2007) has argued persuasively that police culture, far from being monolithic and fixed, is changing with police officers themselves (including rank and file officers) acting not simply as passive recipients of culture, but as agents of reform. Sklansky (2007) argues that the changing demographic of the police service, most notably the increased numbers of women, minority ethnic and lesbian and gay officers, is helping change the organisation's culture, for these officers bring different perspectives to the organisation, diversifying its thinking and practice. Furthermore, by building links with external communities - such as minority ethnic or gay and lesbian communities - these officers can change the organisation's approach to its business, as illustrated in Miller's (1999) research on community policing in the US.

Within the context of British policing McLaughlin (2007: 24) has argued that the Macpherson Report's (1999) labelling of the MPS as institutionally racist unleashed what he terms 'cultural wars', within policing with minority ethnic officers, most notably the Black Police Association, agreeing the force was institutionally racist, in the face of denial, and even backlash, from some white officers. Such was the polarisation that McLaughlin (2007: 18) argued that we could be witnessing the 'balkanisation' of police culture. However it is worth noting that McLaughlin's (2007) analysis, while

providing a valuable contribution to the debate, is based upon analysis of the discourses surrounding policing, not empirical research with the police.

Furthermore, as discussed above Chan (1996) has argued that increased external pressure for change in the field, when coupled with internal pressure in the habitus, is also able to affect cultural change within the organisation. In the UK there is some evidence that this is occurring in relation to race, as while racism was once one of the defining elements of police cultures (Reiner, 2000a), its defining influence appears to be eroded (Foster *et al*, 2005). As I have argued, the main catalyst for change was the Macpherson Report (1999), which in many ways was a unique moment in British policing when the field of policing and internal culture aligned to effect major change (Rock, 2004; Rowe, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007; Foster, 2008; Griffiths, 2009).

However other US and UK theorists (Skolnick, 2008; Loftus, 2012) have argued that certain elements of police culture remain enduring. Skolnick (2008) argues that policing is an identity, not just an occupation, therefore increased numbers of minority ethnic and female officers do not necessarily create cultural change as: 'Over time and in the main, cops tend to think like other cops' (Skolnick, 2008: 42). He argues that elements of the occupation, such as its political conservatism, code of silence and crime-focus mean that its culture largely endures, irrespective of its changing demographics. Similarly Loftus (2010:1) has argued that while policing has changed in some respects during the reforms of recent years, 'Classic characteristics of police culture have survived the period of

transition'. These characteristics include a focus on crime-fighting, machismo, a desire for excitement, and a sense of isolation and solidarity.

Within the context of Greenfield, there was both continuity and change in the organisation's occupational cultures, which accounted for the mixed and complicated picture of policing in the area. Like Loftus (2010) and Manning (2010), I found that the macro-level emphasis on the police as law enforcers and maintainers of order chimed with the dominant cultural focus within the organisation (Fielding, 1994; Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Loftus, 2010; Brodeur, 2010; Manning, 2010). During my research I only witnessed officers dealing with a small number of crimes, the majority of which involved petty offences such as minor thefts, selling stolen goods or burglaries. Yet officers would recount tales of incidents where they had foiled drug deals, been involved in large-scale fights with youths or dealt with murders. Their narratives echoed Waddington's (1999a) argument that the very fact that majority of police work is mundane heightens the crime-focussed nature of the profession because to make sense of their routine, often dull working lives, officers focus on internal cultural narratives about high profile, dangerous incidents, to mitigate the everyday boredom of their work.

Officer 5 summarised the views of many of his colleagues when he said that police officers were: 'There to help people and answer calls that are robberies, burglaries, deaths and assaults…you're not paid to sort someone's life out'. The tough, crime-fighting focus of the profession meant that many officers perceived physical strength and courage as

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being the core requirements of the role. This was perhaps best illustrated by the remarks of a young white male Inspector, Officer 26, who confided to me that: 'I'm not really the type to be a policeman – for example at school if there was a fight I'd be the one trying to talk my way out of it…I'm not as tough, you know hands-on tough, as some of my colleagues'.

Yet somewhat ironically, Muir (1977) identified in his early study of US policing that those officers who were not, as Officer 26 put it, 'hands-on tough', and avoided physical confrontation, were the most effective. Muir (1977) classified these officers as, 'professional policemen', describing how their attempts to avoid or mitigate violence led to them resolving incidents more successfully, maintaining good relations with the public and preventing situations from becoming unnecessarily dangerous.

The idea that crime fighting was the primary focus of the police role was perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the value of the main neighbourhood policing initiative in Greenfield, Safer Neighbourhoods, was assessed and justified primarily in terms of the extent to which it addressed serious crime (mugging, prostitution, drug dealing), when its main objective was to build relationships with local people. While tackling local crimes can play an important role in increasing public confidence (Lloyd and Foster, 2009; Fleming and Grabosky, 2009), community policing approaches emphasise that the public, not officers, should determine the crimes to be tackled. However in Greenfield Officer 25, the Inspector overseeing Safer Neighbourhoods, regarded the purpose of

community policing as securing public agreement for ongoing police led crime-fighting.

The focus on crime-fighting contributed to the organisation's lack of emphasis on building its knowledge of the diverse communities it was policing, as this was perceived to be marginal, even irrelevant to its core function of reducing crime. Furthermore it helps to explain why officers focussed on the potential terrorist threat within Muslim communities during their interactions with them, despite the fact that only a minority of Muslims have been involved with terrorism (Thiel, 2009). As a greater emphasis was placed in society and the police organisation on dealing with Islamic terrorism, rather than on ensuring that Muslim communities were treated equitably, officers rarely acknowledged how their perspectives and behaviour could discriminate against Muslims.

The demands from the public that the police maintain order and deal with disruptive populations in Greenfield described in the preceding sections, also chimed with the organisation's internal cultural focus (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Van Maanen, 2006). Echoing themes from Van Maanen's (2006) seminal essay, officers appeared to uncritically accept and act upon complaints from Greenfield's South Asian communities about supposedly problematic behaviours by certain groups, such as travellers and Somalis. Like Van Maanen's (2006) officers they came to regard these marginalised groups as 'assholes' that is to say problematic, distasteful populations threatening the order of the Greenfield, (Reiner, 2000a) in contrast to the established Asian communities, who officers

perceived to be structured and, despite their culturally related problems, supportive of the police. Consequently Somalis and travellers, rather than being regarded as 'new communities' to be understood and responded to, were viewed primarily in terms of their threat to the order of Greenfield.

Despite these enduring features, policing in Greenfield had changed significantly, as was most apparent from the 'insider' testimonies of Asian officers. Following macro-level pressures to eradicate racism, overtly racist language appeared to have been largely eradicated from the force, even though certain populations tended to be classified as problematic. Indeed there was evidence of an anxiety amongst officers, particularly at rank and file level, to avoid being termed racist, for fear of provoking disciplinary action.

It is noteworthy that the two officers who could be classified as racist, Officers 1 and 17, were not subjected to the same levels of scrutiny as other officers. For example, senior officers and colleagues of Officer 17 assumed that by virtue of his ethnicity he was not racist, though in fact he had overtly prejudiced about Indian communities and Asian women. Similarly, prior to the disciplinary investigation, Officer 1, though white, was protected by his status as an unofficial expert on Greenfield communities. Senior officers assumed that having worked in the area for years Officer 1 had an extensive knowledge of different communities and never seemed to consider whether he could harbour prejudices. Furthermore he worked to an Asian officer, Officer 17, who stated his conduct was exemplary.

It is worth noting that the policing I observed in Greenfield was what Brodeur (2010) termed 'low policing', that is to say policing that focuses on traditional forms of delinquency and is overt, visible and conducted in the public gaze. Unlike 'high policing', which concentrates on intelligence gathering and counter-terrorism, low policing is by its visible exposed nature, more vulnerable to macro-social pressures and the influence of public opinion (Brodeur, 2010). In Greenfield, an area in which the majority of the population was drawn from diverse, minority ethnic communities, it was imperative that the police were seen to exercise their powers without the suspicion of overt racism. If not, the police risked losing the support and consent of the majority of the population and their legitimacy.

Therefore it was perhaps to be expected that in my study punitive, stringent action appeared to have been taken to eradicate overt racism from the police organisation in Greenfield, and that I encountered only two officers who appeared to fit the definition of 'racist'. Yet this pressure to eradicate racism did not appear to have been combined with an accompanying pressure to challenge officers' passive prejudices, specifically their assumptions that certain ethnic groups were problematic, distasteful or disproportionately involved in offending. Consequently, although officers were wary of being accused of racism and never used overtly racist language in my presence, their underlying perspectives on the world did not change, and many remained passively prejudiced, viewing the world they were policing as a series of racialised crime problems, (terrorism by Muslim communities, drug-taking by Somalis). Furthermore, the culture of solidarity and silence (Skolnick, 2008; Punch,

2009) meant that even the views and behaviour of racist Officers 17 and 1 were not reported to senior officers.

Though notionally there were extensive accountability structures in Greenfield with consultative committees established at borough and ward level, these groups were very much determined by the officers convening them. Whilst in the case of Team B and Officer 24 consultative committees were used to hold the police to account, with Team A and Officer 23, a 'front-stage', was merely presented to the committees for their endorsement (Punch, 2009). Following on from this, while strong disciplinary action against officers expressing inappropriate views was a key part of the reforms of the Macpherson Report (1999) and following the Secret Policeman (2003) documentary, as Punch (2009) notes lines of accountability remain upwards in the police organisation. That is to say the command structures (Gold, Silver, Bronze) highlight which senior officers are most accountable during critical incidents, and in the event of failings senior officers are consequently held accountable, not junior rank and file officers. While as Foster *et al* (2005) note, the Macpherson Inquiry's (1999) reforms have increased individual officers' sense of accountability, particularly in stop and search encounters, the fact remains that responsibility for the conduct of the organisation rests primarily with senior officers who often do not see what happens on the ground (Reiner, 2000a; Reiner 2000b).

While some officers used their autonomy to subvert or bypass race-related reforms other officers not only supported reforms but went beyond them

seeking to increase both their personal and collective organisational understandings of ethnically diverse communities. As described in the following section, this diversity amongst individual officers created the divergence in police culture and perspectives on Greenfield's diverse communities.

Micro-level: agents of reform

Police officers are not simply passive recipients of their organisational culture, but are themselves producers - and in some cases reformers - of culture (Chan, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Sklansky, 2007). As Shearing and Ericson (1991) note, police officers do not simply act according to reified, static, cultural rules, rather they interpret and determine their actions collectively, drawing upon previous experiences and knowledge, and producing new cultural interpretations of their worlds. Chan (1996) argues that for change to occur the field of policing needs to align with the habitus of officers, yet habitus, or the dispositions through which they understand and interpret their world, is not simply drawn from the culture of the organisation. Rather their own life experiences and perspectives form part of officers' habitus (Chan, 1996).

In Greenfield there were numerous examples of officers at all ranks who were reformers, dedicated to making policing more responsive to the ethnically diverse peoples being policed. Examples included: Officer 12, a white male PC married to an Indian woman who was highly sensitive to the views of local people; Officer 22, a white male sergeant who had spent years learning Hindi and Punjabi so that he could communicate with local

people; and Officer 24, the Police-Community Liaison Inspector for Greenfield who ensured that critical community perspectives were used to shape practice. Similarly, Officer 20, the Indian officer leading team B, created a culture in the team he led, which placed understanding and responding to the needs of local people at its heart, including populations generally considered problematic such as Somalis.

Furthermore the majority of passively prejudiced officers were not hostile to ethnically diverse communities and were often conscientious. However as illustrated in chapter seven these officers lacked substantive knowledge of the different ethnic communities in Greenfield, which limited the extent to which they were able to police the area effectively. Where officers received sufficient direction and leadership they applied their knowledge, as perhaps best illustrated by Officers 4 and 5 who worked for Officer 20. As described in chapter six, while both focussed on their traditional role of crime-fighting both these officers under the direction and education of Officer 20 increased their understandings of and engagement with local people, improving and adjusting their practice accordingly.

However, innovative, committed officers were only able to create pockets of change within the police service in Greenfield. This was because the macro context of policing continued to demand that the police fulfil a law enforcement and order maintenance role - themes that chimed with core elements of the police culture. Consequently building understandings of different ethnic communities was considered marginal in the organisation to the main business of crime-fighting and order-maintenance. As a result

attempts at reform were not adopted wholesale, as conscientious officers though not hostile to diversity, did not perceive understanding different communities to be a core part of their role.

Furthermore, it should be noted that the focus of successive race-related reforms has been on rooting out bad practice, or the 'rotten apples', who are racists amongst the rank and file (Scarman, 1981; Macpherson, 1999). The overall drive for reform has been what Marks (2000b) would describe as 'top-down' rather than supported and led from the rank and file. Consequently, within this climate officers of the lower ranks, no matter how inspirational or committed, have often had inevitably limited agency to shape practice beyond their specific remits or teams.

Wider ramifications

The advances that the police service in Greenfield has made in excising overt racism should not be underestimated, as this constitutes major progress given the historically persistent, pervasive presence of racism in British policing (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005). However, having eradicated overt racism I would argue that it is essential that the police now focus on removing passive prejudices among officers, otherwise they risk losing the confidence of some of the most marginalised groups in society (Tyler, 1990; Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Fleming and Grabosky, 2009).

As discussed above, it is critical that the police as the most obvious arm of the state exercise their powers democratically (Jones *et al*, 1996; Reiner, 2000a; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). Furthermore, the public's compliance with police authority, and indeed the laws of the state, is shaped not necessarily by the strictures of punishments, but by the extent to which they perceive the exercise of law, through policing, to be fair and legitimate (Tyler, 1990; Jones *et al*,1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010). Indeed the way the police handle encounters is critical to securing not only the compliance of the public, but also their acceptance of policing and the legitimacy of the wider state (Tyler, 1990; Bradford *et al*, 2009; Lloyd and Foster, 2009; Rix *et al*, 2009).

My study in Greenfield focussed on officers' perceptions of the social world they were policing, not the reactions of different communities to the ways in which they were policed. Consequently little can be inferred about the extent to which people from different communities perceived policing to be legitimate. However wider research suggests that if the police do not focus on exercising their powers in a democratic way, they may lose the support of some of the most marginalised sections of the public in the area (Manning, 2010).

Policing research has suggested that there are multiple influences upon confidence in the police, such as different communities' historical experiences of policing, the media and perceptions about levels of crime (Bradford *et al*, 2009). However more recently Bradford *et al's* (2009) study of public confidence in the MPS over the past twenty years suggests

that the pattern is more complex and that positive contacts between the police and public are more likely to make the public believe the police are fair, and give them positive views of police engagement with communities. Equally negative contacts have a greater influence on people's perceptions of the police than positive contacts (Skogan, 2006; Bradford *et al*, 2009). Consequently in Greenfield there was a risk that the excellent work of some officers (such as those in Team B) risked being undermined by the insensitive behaviours of a minority of officers such as Officers 1 and 17.

Overall policing research suggests that the way the police treat the public during their interactions is critical and if they are to secure their confidence and support (Sherman, 1998 Mastrofski, 1999; Rix *et al*, 2009; Lloyd and Foster, 2009). Therefore police treatment of the 'problem populations' in Greenfield - Somalis, travellers, Muslims, Black and Asian young men – risked alienating these groups in the long-term and destroying their legitimacy amongst these sections of the population. Wake *et al's* (2007) survey of public perceptions of the police suggests that this loss of confidence might already be occurring, as it found that those who were the most likely to be 'highly disengaged', that is to say hostile towards the police comprised those who were the problem populations of Greenfield – young Asian and Black men, Somalis, Muslims and travellers.

Conclusion

To understand why policing in Greenfield was unable to respond to the complex communities it policed we need to look beyond the organisation

itself to the wider society upon whose consent its legitimacy was based (Manning, 2010). The policing mandate in democracies is determined by the society it serves, and in Britain, to put it quite simply the police had not developed deep understandings of ethnically diverse communities or eradicated passive prejudice in the organisation because this had not been demanded of them. While macro-social pressures had resulted in the police almost eradicating the overt racism historically pervasive in the police service, the core functions demanded of the police remained law enforcement and maintaining order, with an emphasis on addressing new, racialised, types of crime, most notably Islamic terrorism.

The macro emphasis on the police role as crime-fighters at the forefront of addressing terrorism chimed with the organisation's dominant internal perceptions of its own role and consequently officers gave little consideration as to whether their practices reinforced or mitigated the inequalities of wider society, or whether they were sensitive to the needs of the people they were policing. Indeed many officers, though not hostile to ethnic diversity, and conscientious about performing their role effectively simply did not recognise that part of this involved developing culturally specific understandings of the people they were policing. This was most graphically illustrated by the case study of policing domestic violence as officers, though conscientious, lacked the knowledge or awareness of the complex dynamics involved in domestic violence to police these incidents effectively.

Yet some reforming officers recognised the importance of developing culturally specific understandings of different communities and were, despite the lack of external and organisational emphasis on this, of their own volition working to increase understandings of diverse communities in the organisation. It should also be noted that these officers were not necessarily from minority ethnic communities, indeed many including Officers 12, 22 and 24 were white, heterosexual men. Yet these individuals were able to only create pockets of good practice rather than change the overall organisational approach as the dominant cultural emphasis and requirements of the 'field', as Chan (1996) puts it, remained on crime fighting and order maintenance, not increasing knowledge of diversity.

While I do not argue that the police should have no role in crime fighting, or indeed in maintaining order, I agree with Manning's (2010) theory that there needs to be an equal, if not greater emphasis on the extent to which the organisation either mitigates or reinforces inequalities in democratic society. Much of the police role does not involve crime-fighting, but a whole range of more mundane activities (Waddington, 1999a; Reiner, 2000a), and furthermore a multiplicity of factors beyond policing influence crime levels (Bowling and Foster, 2002). Therefore rather than holding the police accountable for crime levels, I argue that instead they should be assessed by the extent to which they support the equitable principles of democracy. Otherwise the police in Greenfield and other areas will continue to fail those who most need their services – those who are

dispossessed, marginalised and vulnerable such as the 'problem

populations' of Greenfield (Bowling and Foster, 2002).

Chapter Nine: Conclusion

Introduction

In this concluding chapter I summarise the main findings of my thesis and its contributions to the existing literature on policing ethnically diverse communities. I discuss the changes, continuities and complexities in policing in Greenfield, summarise why successive reforms failed to have more of a consistent influence on practice, the ramifications of this and lessons for the future.

Policing in Greenfield: complexities, contradictions and continuities

In many ways my study describes a unique moment in British policing which encompassed both the aftermath of the Macpherson Reforms (1999) and also the July 2005 Islamic terrorist attacks on London transport. Had I conducted my research at a different time when concern with Islamic terrorism was not so heightened, suspect populations other than Muslim communities might have emerged. Similarly, had my study not been conducted post Macpherson (1999) there might not have been such a heightened awareness or anxiety about not wanting to appear overtly racist among rank and file officers. However, irrespective of the uniqueness of the moment during which my study was conducted, it still contributes to debates on policing minority ethnic communities.

Perhaps the most significant contribution of my thesis is that it describes a world of policing ethnically diverse communities that is far more complex, variable and contradictory than has been documented in the empirical

policing literature to date. While many of the pluralities and contradictions documented in my research have long been recognised in the race and ethnicity literature, which has increasingly focussed on examining how plural 'racisms' and multiple processes of 'racialisation' shape contemporary society, (Hall, 1990; Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos, 2004; Banton, 2004; Hall, 2009), the policing literature had left these complexities largely unexplored, focussing instead on the extent to which the monolithic entity of 'racism' persists in the organisation (Rowe, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007; Loftus, 2012).

Yet the narrower focus of the policing literature was not reflective of a lack of sophistication, but rather the nature of the phenomena being studied. As Park (2009: 166) noted, 'One speaks of race relations when there is a race problem', that is to say the analysis and discourse around race relations is shaped by the nature of the phenomenon being studied. While as Bloch and Solomos (2010: 3) note, the study of ethnic and race relations has seen many transformations since the 1960s and has had to respond accordingly with new conceptual language and frameworks (Solomos and Back, 1996; Alexander, 2002; Hall, 2009) this has not necessarily been the case in policing. Rather research suggested that race relations in the police organisation were seemingly intransient, with racist language, attitudes and behaviours persisting in the service into the 1990s, (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway, 1996; Bowling and Phillips, 2002; Foster *et al*, 2005) and leading some theorists to conclude that racism was a core element of police organisational culture (Reiner, 2000a; Bowling and Phillips, 2002). Policing researchers have therefore focussed

on the factors shaping this pervasive racism and whether waves of reform have been successful in eroding its presence (Rowe, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007). This narrower focus mirrored that of the early race and ethnicity studies which, when confronted by the pervasive racism of British society, sought to analyse how racism shaped the experiences of all minority ethnic, or 'Black', people (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1988).

Yet as I argued in chapters one and eight, successive waves of reform, most notably those in the wake of the Macpherson Report (1999), had radically changed the British Police Service, almost eradicating the overt racism that had been historically prevalent (Rowe, 2004; Foster *et al*, 2005; McLaughlin, 2007; Loftus, 2012). Consequently, in Greenfield, a more complex patchwork of practice had begun to emerge than had yet been described in the policing literature, encompassing change and continuity. As Bloch and Solomos (2010: 211) observed in their analysis of race and ethnicity in the twenty-first century, 'Responses to migrants have changed in some ways, but have remained worryingly consistent in other ways'.

A changing police service

As I described in chapter eight, the most significant achievement of the police service in Greenfield and more widely in Britain was eradicating the overt racism dominant in the organisation (Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). During my research in Greenfield I never heard officers use overtly racist language, and only two of the thirty-four

officers in my study could be classified as racist, that is to say regarding other ethnic communities either with antipathy or viewing them as inferior due to their inherent characteristics (Blum, 2002).

Although, as discussed in chapter two, as an outsider in the police service I was only able to gain an external, partial view of progress, the Asian officers in my study, as insiders in the organisation, were able to confirm the extent to which my observations were accurate. As I described in chapter five, they were unanimous in agreeing that the policing of minority ethnic communities had improved considerably in recent years and that, in line with findings from other research, overt racism had largely been excised from policing (Foster *et al,* 2005; Loftus, 2012). Confirming findings from wider research, longer-serving Asian officers cited the Macpherson Report (1999) as a major catalyst for change, describing how its reforms had radically improved their experiences within the force (Foster *et al*, 2005; Rowe, 2004; McLaughlin, 2007). Most notably, the overtly racist, corrosive bullying that Officer 20 had endured throughout the 1980s and 1990s appeared to have been largely eradicated from the service.

As described in chapter five, senior leadership in relation to racism, and specifically the racist bullying of Asian officers, also appeared to have changed considerably. This was best illustrated by the contrasts between Officer 20's accounts of senior management responses to his experiences of victimisation and the Borough Commander's action at the time of my fieldwork to discipline one of the two racist officers in my study. While

Officer 20 described how, some years ago, his Superintendent dismissed his appeal for help after racist bullying by his Inspector became intolerable, in contemporary Greenfield the Borough Commander proactively held confidential meetings for minority ethnic staff following the terrorist attacks in London in July 2005 to uncover any instances of inappropriate behaviour. When the meetings brought to light the racist views of Officer 1, the Borough Commander acted swiftly, instigating a high profile disciplinary investigation that sent shock waves through the organisation.

The progress in relation to policing minority ethnic communities was also apparent in the status of Asian officers in Greenfield. In contrast to the isolated, marginal position of minority ethnic officers in the British police force described in studies from the 1980s and 1990s (Smith and Gray, 1985; Holdaway and Barron, 1997; Bowling and Phillips, 2002) Asian officers in Greenfield were valued for their 'expertise' on Asian communities in Greenfield, and their supposed linguistic and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, there were indications that the events held by minority ethnic officers' associations such as the Sikh Association, having been initially intended to help counter the isolation of minority ethnic officers, were now being attended by some white officers (such as Officers 26 and 24) illustrating how traditional ethnic divisions within the police service were potentially being eroded.

New era, old thinking

Yet while policing in Greenfield had progressed considerably it was also apparent that, in line with findings from wider research, underlying tensions and problems in the policing of ethnic minorities remained (Foster *et al*, 2005; Holdaway and O'Neill, 2007; Loftus, 2012). Though only two officers in my study could be classified as racist, as I described in chapter eight the majority of officers were 'passively prejudiced', that is to say although they were not overtly hostile to any particular ethnic groups they interpreted the social world they were policing as a series of racially specific crime problems. Furthermore these officers lacked sufficient knowledge of different ethnic communities to police the diverse peoples and situations they encountered effectively.

This was perhaps best illustrated by the fact that though Asian communities had been resident in the area since the late 1950s and 1960s, Greenfield was still very much a 'foreign land', to many white officers, who found negotiating its diversity challenging and perplexing. While white officers' unfamiliarity with ethnically diverse peoples of Greenfield was to be expected, particularly if officers originated from areas with few ethnic minorities, it was striking that there were few established sources of information within the organisation for officers to draw upon.

As described in chapter four, despite the long-standing diversity of Greenfield, the only information or training that new recruits to the borough were provided, beyond the standard race and diversity training, was a tour of the main places of worship led by Officer 1 (who was eventually

disciplined for his overtly racist views). Similarly, despite the plethora of communities and languages spoken in Greenfield, there appeared to be no established translation services for officers to draw upon when attending incidents. Consequently, members of the public who could not speak English were often sidelined by officers during interactions and, as illustrated by the example of the elderly Pakistani woman who claimed to have been assaulted by her son in chapter seven, their complaints could be ignored. Lacking sufficient knowledge of different communities, officers were left to try and build their own understandings, sometimes sporadically drawing upon their Asian colleagues for advice and help. Consequently their interpretations sometimes bore little relation to the people they were policing, as they classified all South Asian communities in the area as 'Asians', in a way that obscured rather than illuminated the considerable diversity within these communities.

Yet while they lacked sufficient understandings of Asian communities in Greenfield, officers generally acknowledged these communities to be the established, 'indigenous', communities of the area. Incoming groups, most notably the relatively newly arrived Somalis were perceived as threatening the established order of the area with their problematic, criminal behaviours. Echoing patterns from Van Maanen's (2006), early US research, Somalis were the 'assholes' of Greenfield, who along with certain other groups such as Black and Asian young men, travellers and Muslims were regarded as the 'problem' populations in the area (Reiner, 2000a). Officers' notions appeared to reflect and be reinforced by complaints from Asian communities about the problematic behaviours of

Somalis. Yet what is noteworthy is not that officers received such complaints, but that they appeared to accept uncritically the notion that Somalis were problematic, rather than considering that the already resident population might be unfairly prejudiced or hostile towards the incomers (Solomos and Back, 1996; Van Maanen, 2006).

Similarly, echoing patterns from the early work of Hall *et al* (1978), Solomos (1988) and Gilroy (1987), officers' perceptions of Muslims in Greenfield appeared to reflect wider political and media discourses portraying Muslim communities as sources of terrorism (Kundnani, 2007; Kundnani, 2008; Mythen *et al*, 2009; Dornhof, 2009; Brittain, 2009; Pickering and McCulloch, 2010; Murray, 2010; Schierup and Alund, 2011; Zemni, 2011). Hall *et al's* (1978) work illustrated how a moral panic surrounding 'muggings' by Black youths, resulted in arrest rates dramatically increasing. In Greenfield wider discourses on the unwillingness of Muslims to 'integrate', and the terrorist threat within these communities appeared to shape officers perceptions. While it was to be expected that officers would be alert to issues of terrorism following the terrorist attacks in the U.S in 2001 and London in 2005, it is noteworthy that the majority of officers failed to appreciate that only a minority of Muslims were involved in terrorism (Thiel, 2009), or that these communities themselves had become increasingly vulnerable to racist attacks in the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attack in the U.S. (Allen and Nielsen, 2002; Mythen *et al*, 2009).

While Muslims emerged in Greenfield as a new suspect population, Black communities, particularly young Black men, were viewed as being disproportionately involved in violent offences and robbery, echoing patterns from earlier studies (Hall *et al*, 1978; Gilroy, 1987; Solomos, 1998). As described in chapter four, even officers such as Officer 4, who never expressed overtly racist views and who built close, productive working relationships with local Black community representatives, tended to assume that young Black men were involved in criminal activity. This was perhaps best illustrated by Officer 4's automatic assumption that a Black student observing a magistrates' trial on prostitution charges, was either a 'punter' or 'dealer' of the defendant, when in fact he was the son of the Black magistrate officiating.

Simple solutions, complex problems

As described in chapters five, six and eight, though the police in Greenfield and Britain more widely have introduced a range of reforms to improve the policing of ethnic minorities, these were often as McLaughlin (2007: 37) puts it, 'Drafted in a crisis management environment', that took little account of the wider social and structural conditions of policing. Consequently, as illustrated by the two main strands of reform I described in Greenfield - the recruitment of Asian officers and community policing - reforms failed to have a consistent impact upon thinking and practice in the organisation.

For example, the main strand of internal reform, the recruitment of Asian officers to the service, was predicated on the somewhat simplistic

assumption that as 'Asians', these officers would be experts and be able to advise upon 'Asian' communities. While Asian officers relished this expert status, their levels of knowledge were, as described in chapter five, hugely variable and in some cases they even expressed overtly prejudiced views of Asian communities other than their own. Consequently, the inclusion of increased numbers of Asian officers within the service, while important for representative reasons, did not necessarily result in increased levels of knowledge or improved understandings of Asian communities within the organisation.

Similarly, as described in chapter six, the extensive community policing structures in Greenfield did not necessarily result in robust external scrutiny and challenge to police thinking and practice. The lack of critical reflection on the wider democratic purpose of consultation or who in a diverse area like Greenfield actually constituted 'the community', and the accompanying lack of emphasis on engaging the most dispossessed (Newburn and Jones, 2007; Foster and Jones, 2010), resulted in the highly variable implementation of community policing approaches across Greenfield. As illustrated by the examples of the community liaison officers, Officers 23 and 24, and neighbourhood Teams A and B, officers either regarded consultation as merely 'business as usual', or alternatively regarded it as an opportunity to deliver a more community-focussed service. However even in teams committed to consulting and serving local people, consultation structures tended to be dominated by middle-class, middle-aged professionals (McLaughlin, 1994; Bowling and Foster, 2002; Myhill, 2006; Newburn and Jones, 2007). The most marginalised

communities, including those who constituted the so-called 'problem' populations, such as young people and travellers were rarely engaged and consequently officers' perspectives on these communities remained largely unchallenged.

Poor understandings, poor practice

The consequences of the persistence of passive prejudice in the organisation, and officers' lack of knowledge of different ethnic communities, were perhaps most starkly illustrated by the policing of domestic violence in Greenfield. As discussed in chapter seven, domestic violence is a complex crime, which takes varying forms within different ethnic communities. Consequently to police these crimes effectively, frontline officers need to understand the culturally specific features of these crimes in different communities and have sufficient discretion to respond accordingly.

However in Greenfield, while officers in neighbourhood and emergency response teams had some appreciation of the severity of domestic violence and the fact that such crimes were potentially an issue in Asian communities, their understandings were superficial and showed little appreciation of the complexities involved in these types of crime. Consequently, even conscientious, committed officers who were keen to ensure they handled domestic incidents effectively often intervened in these incidents inappropriately, hampered by their lack of knowledge. For example, Officer 15, though keen to take action against a father in a Sri Lankan family who assaulted his son, behaved in a domineering, almost

intimidating way to the victim of the assault, frustrated at his reluctance to make a complaint and apparently unaware of the wider potential pressures upon him.

Attempts by the Metropolitan Police Service to ensure officers dealt effectively with domestic incidents, most notably the requirement that all officers issue a mandatory warning to suspected assailants when attending domestic incidents had little impact. In a scene echoing Mama's (1989) early research on minority ethnic women's experiences of domestic violence, an Asian officer, Officer 14 who dismissed a domestic violence call from an Indian Christian woman as 'rubbish', issued the mandatory warning in such a way that both the woman and her husband, (the alleged assailant), were both effectively warned.

Pockets of reform

Yet beneath this overarching picture of the police organisation failing to respond effectively to the social world it was responsible for policing, pockets of good practice and reform were beginning to emerge. These were created by a minority of individual officers who were reformers, committed to increasing the organisation's understandings of Greenfield's ethnically diverse communities.

There is some acknowledgement of the role of reforming officers in creating change in the existing policing literature, (Marks, 2000a; Sklansky, 2007; McLaughlin, 2007; Loftus, 2012) and some recognition that these officers are not necessarily always drawn from minority

communities (Loftus, 2012). However my research in Greenfield described a more complex picture, illustrating officers' perspectives on policing minority ethnic communities and whether they were reformers were not necessarily determined by factors such as their ethnicity, age, length of service, or rank and role in the organisation. Most notably the racist, passively prejudiced and reforming groups of officers all included a mix of Asian and white officers. Similarly officers working in community roles did not necessarily have less prejudiced views of minority ethnic communities; instead as illustrated in chapters four and six they simply applied their prejudices more selectively.

Furthermore, while the policing literature has described a dichotomy between reforming officers and those resisting change, (Marks, 2000a; McLaughlin, 2007; Loftus, 2008), I found that in Greenfield distinctions were not necessarily so clear-cut. For example, there were numerous examples of reforming officers who while committed to improving the policing of ethnic minorities in general, expressed prejudiced views about specific groups. For example, Officer 30, an Indian PCSO who was committed to delivering an improved policing service to Asian communities, expressed overtly prejudiced views about Eastern Europeans and asylum seekers. Similarly, Officer 24, who again sought to reform the policing of diverse ethnic communities in his capacity as Police Community Liaison Inspector, engaging with those who were the most marginalised and critical of the police including women's groups, young people and Black communities, expressed prejudiced views about Muslims.

While my findings presented a more complex picture than has been yet documented in the policing literature, they chimed with themes in contemporary race and ethnicity research. Race researchers have long acknowledged that people's attitudes to race are inconsistent, and that people can express prejudices against certain groups and not others (Cashmore, 1987; Solomos and Back, 1996; Blum, 2002). To help understand these inconsistencies, and the increasing fragmentation and diversification of race relations in a globalised world, the race literature has sought to examine how 'racisms', rather than a single monolithic racism influence the contemporary social world (Solomos and Back, 1996; Murji and Solomos,2004; Hall, 2009).

Eradicating racism: one size fits all

Yet as the policing literature had largely failed to acknowledge the diversity, complexities and inconsistencies in officers' perspectives on race, so too had the police organisation, which appeared to adopt the same punitive interventions for eradicating racism irrespective of officers' views. While a punitive, disciplinary approach had undoubtedly played a role in eradicating the racist attitudes and language pervasive in the organisation prior to the Macpherson reforms (Macpherson, 1999; Foster *et al*, 2005), it is clear that different interventions, with an emphasis on education are required to address the passive prejudices of officers.

As described in chapter four, the organisation's continuing approach of punitive action without attempting to increase officers' understandings

appeared to create a fear of engaging with minority ethnic communities in some instances. For example, as described in chapter four, officers recounted how two young white officers, when called to an incident involving kidnapping, intimidation and theft, withdrew taking little action as they were fearful of behaving in a way that exposed them to accusations of racism. Furthermore, there appeared to be a lack of recognition within the police organisation that racist or passively prejudiced officers were not exclusively white, and that minority ethnic officers themselves could express problematic views. The most extreme example was Officer 17 who expressed views that condoned honour-based violence against Asian women, and vitriolic prejudice against Indian communities.

Building upon this, the considerable variation in officers' practice and performance when policing the diverse communities of Greenfield was largely unacknowledged in the organisation, resulting in malpractice going unpunished and good performance unacknowledged. This was perhaps most starkly illustrated by the way community policing was implemented in Greenfield and Ebury as a whole. For example, the two sergeants leading Teams A and B differed greatly in terms of their performance - while the conduct of Officer 17 who led Team A constituted professional misconduct, Officer 20 who led Team B was an inspirational individual, working hard to improve the policing of his ward. Similarly at Inspector level, while Officer 23 took little trouble to ensure that his IAG was active, and allowed them to produce no tangible outputs in two years, Officer 24 worked swiftly to radically reform the group, ensuring that he engaged with individuals who could provide critical, robust advice. Yet these striking

variations in performance were unrecognised in the organisation, attracting neither praise nor censure.

Overall my findings chimed with classic themes from the policing literature which describes how the discretion exercised by rank and file officers primarily determines how policing is delivered on the ground rather than legal rules, reforms or the scrutiny of senior officers (Wilson, 1968; Reiner, 2010). As Wilson (1968: 7) aptly observed in his early study of US policing, 'The police department has the special property…that within it discretion increases as one moves down in the hierarchy', largely because as Reiner (2000b: 219) observed, the main modes of police work take place away from the oversight of senior managers as officers work alone or in pairs. These themes were strongly reflected in Greenfield where rank and file officers were the primary agents shaping policing in the area and were in many ways what Muir (1977) described as 'Street Corner Politicians', acting as the microcosmic mediators of power relations in society (Reiner, 2010). As in the early work of Skolnick (1966) it was the 'working personality' or occupational culture of police officers that continued to determine the way they policed Greenfield, rather than the direction of senior officers or policing reforms (Reiner, 2010). Therefore what is needed to create genuine reform in the policing of minority ethnic communities is not punitive, top-down disciplinary action by senior officers but education and support to front-line officers to enable them to exercise their discretion effectively.

Wider ramifications

As I argued in chapter eight, as the most visible agent of government authority, it is critical that the police build upon their progress in eradicating overt racism, and remove both passive prejudice from the organisation and practices that reinforce the structural inequalities in wider society (Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Lum, 2009; Fleming and McLaughlin, 2010; Manning, 2010). Rather than focussing solely on their role as crime fighters I have argued that the police organisation needs to place equal, if not greater emphasis on the extent to which the organisation supports democratic values otherwise they risk undermining not only their legitimacy but that of civil society as a whole (Tyler, 1990; Jones *et al*, 1996; Jones and Newburn, 1998; Manning, 2010).

My research focussed upon internal dynamics within the police organisation, and officers' perspectives of the ethnically diverse communities they were responsible for policing. Consequently there is a limited amount that can be inferred about whether local people had confidence in the police, and the extent to which they perceived policing to be legitimate. However the policing research has suggested that the way that people are treated by officers plays a key role in determining their confidence in the police, and whether they perceive the exercise of law to be legitimate (Tyler, 1990; Sherman, 1998 Mastrofski, 1999; Bradford *et al*, 2009; Lloyd and Foster, 2009; Rix *et al*, 2009). While good contacts can improve the public's perceptions of the fairness of the police and the quality of community engagement, bad contacts can have an even greater

negative effect, eroding public confidence (Skogan, 2006; Bradford *et al*, 2009). Consequently, officers' perspectives and behaviour, particularly in relation to the perceived 'problem populations' of Greenfield - Somalis, Muslims, young Black and Asian men, travellers - risked alienating these groups and reinforcing their marginal status in society.

It is also worth noting that some of the most under-performing, hostile officers were placed in community-focussed, outward facing roles. For example, the two most problematic officers, Officers 1 and 17, jointly led a team in a central area of Greenfield, which drew Asian people from across England seeking to access its shops, services and places of worship. Consequently the ramifications of their actions upon Asian communities' confidence in the police were potentially far-reaching. Similarly, Officer 23 who expressed prejudicial views about a range of diverse communities including Muslims, was Police Community Liaison Inspector for Ebury borough and, as described in chapter six, he failed to challenge the prejudicial views of some of his IAG members and on occasion himself engaged in Islamaphobic jokes and banter with IAG members.

Looking to the future

Despite being small-scale, unrepresentative and unique to its time, my thesis has highlighted issues not documented in existing policing research and areas for further investigation and action. Foremost my research has exposed that despite the progress on eradicating racism described in the existing literature (Foster *et al*, 2005; Loftus, 2012), there remains a critical problem of *passive prejudice* amongst officers. As I argued in chapter

eight, while no organisation can be expected to be completely free of passive prejudice, the fact that a *majority* not *minority* of officers in Greenfield lacked sufficient knowledge of the ethnically diverse peoples they were policing, and were consequently liable to act in ways that reinforced the marginalised position of minority ethnic groups in society, needed to be addressed.

Building upon this, my thesis has shown that officers' perspectives on ethnic diversity are far complex and contradictory than has been described in the literature to date and that a more nuanced set of interventions is needed to educate officers and counter their passive prejudices. Further analysis of the dynamics shaping passive prejudice and evaluations and action-based research on the types of interventions that would be effective in removing or at least limiting passively prejudicial thinking and practice in the organisation would now be instrumental in improving the policing of Britain's ethnically diverse communities.

Yet while internal reform of the police is important, perhaps one of the main contributions of this thesis has been to illuminate the critical role of macro-social pressures in influencing policing practice. As I discussed in chapter eight, the police mandate is determined by the society it serves (Manning, 2010). To put it quite simply, the reason that the police have not developed nuaunced understandings of ethnically diverse communities, or considered how their practices reinforce structural inequalities is that wider society has not demanded this. While there has been some pressure to increase community focussed policing and public satisfaction with

services, the primary role demanded of the police has continued to be to maintain order and fight crime. Until there is an equal, if not greater emphasis on the extent to which the police organisation supports the equitable principles of democracy and delivers a service that secures the support of all communities, policing practice will continue to encompass the continuities described in this thesis and the efforts of individual reforming officers will have limited effect.

Annex A: Participating officers

Officer	Personal characteristics	Views of different ethnic groups	Interview/ observation
Officer 1	White British, male PC, middle-aged, thirty years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Hostile views of ethnically diverse communities in Greenfield, particularly Somalis and Muslims.	Both
Officer 2	White British, male PC, mid-thirties, approximately seven years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	While not hostile to different ethnic groups, resented any criticism that the police service was racist.	Observation
Officer 3	British Indian, Sikh, male PC, mid-twenties, five years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Positive views of all ethnic groups and ethnic diversity	Observation
Officer 4	White British, male PC, mid-twenties, four years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups in Greenfield, though hostile towards travellers.	Both
Officer 5	White British, male PC, mid-twenties, four years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Largely indifferent to issues of race and ethnicity.	Both
Officer 6	White British, male PC, middle-aged, thirty years experience, Ebury borough's School Liaison Officer.	Positive views of children and young people from all ethnic groups.	Interview
Officer 7	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PC, early thirties, seven years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups in Greenfield.	Observation
Officer 8	White male PC, mid-thirties, approximately six years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Believed the cultural practices of Asian groups caused crime issues, viewed	Observation

		Somalis and travellers as problem groups.	
Officer 9	White British, female PC, mid-twenties, two years service, worked in an emergency response team.	Felt Asian groups were pro-police, though viewed Muslim communities as sexist.	Observation
Officer 10	White British, female PC, mid-twenties, two years service, worked in an emergency response team.	Expressed no views about different ethnic groups though felt Asian people were pro-police.	Observation
Officer 11	White British, female PC, early twenties, three years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Viewed Somalis, travellers and asylum seekers as problem groups.	Both
Officer 12	White British, male PC, thirties, approximately five years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Positive views of all ethnic groups in Greenfield, particularly Indians (married to an Indian woman).	Observation
Officer 13	British Indian, Sikh, male PC, late thirties, approximately fifteen years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Did not express antipathy to any ethnic groups but believed certain groups were predisposed to commit certain types of crime	Observation
Officer 14	White British, male PC, middle-aged, on probation, worked in an emergency response team.	Expressed no views about different ethnic groups.	Observation
Officer 15	White British, male sergeant, mid-twenties, five years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Expressed no views about different ethnic groups.	Observation
Officer 16	White British, female sergeant, mid-twenties, five years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Expressed no views about different ethnic groups.	Observation

Officer 17	British Pakistani, Muslim, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Expressed overtly racist, hostile views towards Indian groups and Asian women.	Observation
Officer 18	British Indian, Sikh, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, worked in Ebury borough headquarters.	Believed Pakistani groups were disproportionately involved in crime.	Observation
Officer 19	White British, male sergeant, middle-aged, thirty years experience, head of a neighbourhood policing (beat) team.	While not hostile to ethnic minorities groups, resented any criticism that the police service was racist.	Both
Officer 20	British Indian, Sikh, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, head of a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of all ethnic groups in Greenfield.	Both
Officer 21	White British, male sergeant, late thirties, fifteen years experience, head of a neighbourhood policing team.	Believed that certain ethnic groups were disposed to commit certain types of crime, e.g. terrorism was a problem in Muslim communities.	Both
Officer 22	White British, male sergeant, middle-aged, shortly to retire, worked in various policing teams in Greenfield.	Positive views of different ethnic groups; learned Punjabi and Hindi to a high standard so he could communicate with people in Greenfield.	Observation
Officer 23	White British, male Inspector, middle-aged, twenty years experience, Ebury Police-Community Liaison Officer.	Though not overtly racist expressed critical views of ethnic minority groups, particularly Muslims.	Both
Officer 24	White British, male Inspector, mid-thirties, ten years experience, Ebury Police-Community Liaison Officer.	Had positive views of different ethnic groups, with the exception of Muslims.	Observation

		Married to a Pakistani Christian.	
Officer 25	White British, male Inspector, middle-aged, twenty years experience, joint lead for Safer Neighbourhoods and emergency response team Inspector.	Not hostile to any ethnic groups, but believed 'political correctness', prevented effective policing of minority ethnic communities.	Both
Officer 26	White British, male Inspector, mid-thirties, joint lead for Safer Neighbourhoods and emergency response team Inspector.	Positive views of different ethnic groups, though viewed travellers as a problem group.	Both
Officer 27	White British, female Inspector, mid-forties, approximately twenty years service, worked in Ebury borough headquarters.	Expressed no views on different ethnic groups, though keen to ensure sensitive policing.	Observation
Officer 28	White British, female Superintendent, mid-forties, twenty years service, led on crime and detection across the borough in Ebury.	Positive views of different ethnic groups, believed Asian communities were integrating successfully into British society.	Observation
Officer 29	White British, male Superintendent, middle-aged, shortly to retire, twenty years service, led on community and partnership working in Ebury.	Expressed no views on race or policing minority ethnic communities.	Observation
Officer 30	British Indian, Christian, male PCSO, middle-aged, approximately five years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive about Asian groups, viewed Eastern Europeans and asylum seekers as problem groups.	Both
Officer 31	White British, female PCSO, early thirties, two years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both

Officer 32	British Caribbean, female PCSO, early thirties, two years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both
Officer 33	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PCSO, mid-twenties, three years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both
Officer 34	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PCSO, early twenties, two years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both

Annex B: Participating Asian officers

Officer	Personal characteristics	Views of different ethnic groups	Interview/ observation
Officer 3	British Indian, Sikh, male PC, mid-twenties, five years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Positive views of all ethnic groups and ethnic diversity	Observation
Officer 7	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PC, early thirties, seven years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups in Greenfield.	Observation
Officer 13	British Indian, Sikh, male PC, late thirties, approximately fifteen years experience, worked in an emergency response team.	Did not express antipathy to any ethnic groups but believed certain groups were predisposed to commit certain types of crime.	Observation
Officer 17	British Pakistani, Muslim, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Expressed overtly racist, hostile views towards Indian groups and Asian women.	Observation
Officer 18	British Indian, Sikh, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, worked in Ebury borough headquarters.	Believed Pakistani groups were disproportionately involved in crime.	Observation
Officer 20	British Indian, Sikh, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, head of a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of all ethnic groups in Greenfield.	Both
Officer 30	British Indian, Christian, male PCSO, middle-aged, approximately five years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive about Asian groups, viewed Eastern Europeans and asylum seekers as problem groups.	Both
Officer 33	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PCSO, mid-twenties, three years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both

Officer 34	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PCSO, early twenties, two years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both

Annex C: Participating officers - Neighbourhood policing teams

Team A

Officer	Personal characteristics	Views of different ethnic groups	Interview/ observation
Officer 1	White British, male PC, middle-aged, thirty years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Hostile views of ethnically diverse communities in Greenfield, particularly Somalis and Muslims.	Both
Officer 11	White British, female PC, early twenties, three years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Viewed Somalis, travellers and asylum seekers as problem groups.	Both
Officer 17	British Pakistani, Muslim, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Expressed overtly racist, hostile views towards Indian groups and Asian women.	Observation
Officer 30	British Indian, Christian, male PCSO, middle-aged, approximately five years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive about Asian groups, viewed Eastern Europeans and asylum seekers as problem groups.	Both
Officer 31	White British, female PCSO, early thirties, two years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both
Officer 33	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PCSO, mid-twenties, three years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both

Team B

Officer	Personal characteristics	Views of different ethnic groups	Interview/ observation
Officer 4	White British, male PC, mid-twenties, four years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups in Greenfield, though hostile towards travellers.	Both
Officer 5	White British, male PC, mid-twenties, four years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Largely indifferent to issues of race and ethnicity.	Both
Officer 20	British Indian, Sikh, male sergeant, middle-aged, twenty years experience, head of a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of all ethnic groups in Greenfield.	Both
Officer 32	British Caribbean, female PCSO, early thirties, two years experience, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both
Officer 34	British Pakistani, Muslim, male PCSO, early twenties, two years service, worked in a neighbourhood policing team.	Positive views of different ethnic groups.	Both

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