

RSRR 123 Road User Safety and Disadvantage – Appendix 3: Case Study Report

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1 Introduction

1.1 Road User Safety and Disadvantage – case studies

This appendix presents the detailed findings from five case studies undertaken as part of the investigation into road safety in disadvantaged communities. It supplements the overall research findings as reported in *Road User Safety and Disadvantage* (Road Safety Research Report No. 123; Lowe *et al.*, 2011).

Five case study areas were identified where there were high rates of pedestrian casualties among children and young people, as well as being in the 10% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOAs) measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores. The following wards were selected to cover different regions and areas that both had and had not been involved in national initiatives such as Kerbcraft and the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI):

- Stratford and New Town, Newham;
- Thornholme and Central, Sunderland;
- Swinley and Ince, Wigan;
- St Peter's, Wolverhampton; and
- University, Bradford.

A review of local data and policy was undertaken in each of the case study areas. This involved compilation and analysis of demographic and socio-economic data for the case study wards to provide a profile of the local area.¹ In addition, the local policy context for each area was explored through desktop research of local agency policy documents and data that may impact on road safety, transport and the community.

The case studies also involved interviews with representatives of local agencies to provide a 'top-down' perspective of road safety risks in disadvantaged areas and to establish services and interventions in place and how these operate in practice 'on the ground'. Interviews were undertaken, where possible, with officials from road safety engineering; road safety education, publicity and training; school travel; police services; fire and rescue services; children's services; health agencies; regeneration agencies; leisure services; housing and youth offending teams.

A key element of the study involved research within communities using a semi-ethnographic approach to explore attitudes and behaviour, including lifestyles and culture, travel needs and behaviour and the street context. This involved group discussions with key actors and local residents including young people and children as well as on-street observations of children, drivers and traffic in each case study area.

At a later stage a further case study investigation was undertaken in a relatively affluent area, but with a similarly high rate of pedestrian casualties among children and young people. This was intended to provide evidence to support or refute the emerging hypothesis that the local built and traffic environment are key contributory factors to understanding differences in the risks of accidents between more and less affluent areas. Bridge ward in Maidstone was chosen to explore the extent to which the local environment and lifestyles and behaviour in this ward differed from, or were similar to, the more disadvantaged areas.

The detailed findings for each case study area including Bridge, Maidstone are reported in the following chapters.

¹ All data sourced from the Office for National Statistics.

2 Bradford case study

2.1 Area profile

University ward in Bradford was selected as a case study on the basis of its high level of deprivation and high level of pedestrian casualties (21,670 1–17-year-olds per 100,000 population). It provides an example of a local authority that has participated in the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI) and Kerbcraft.

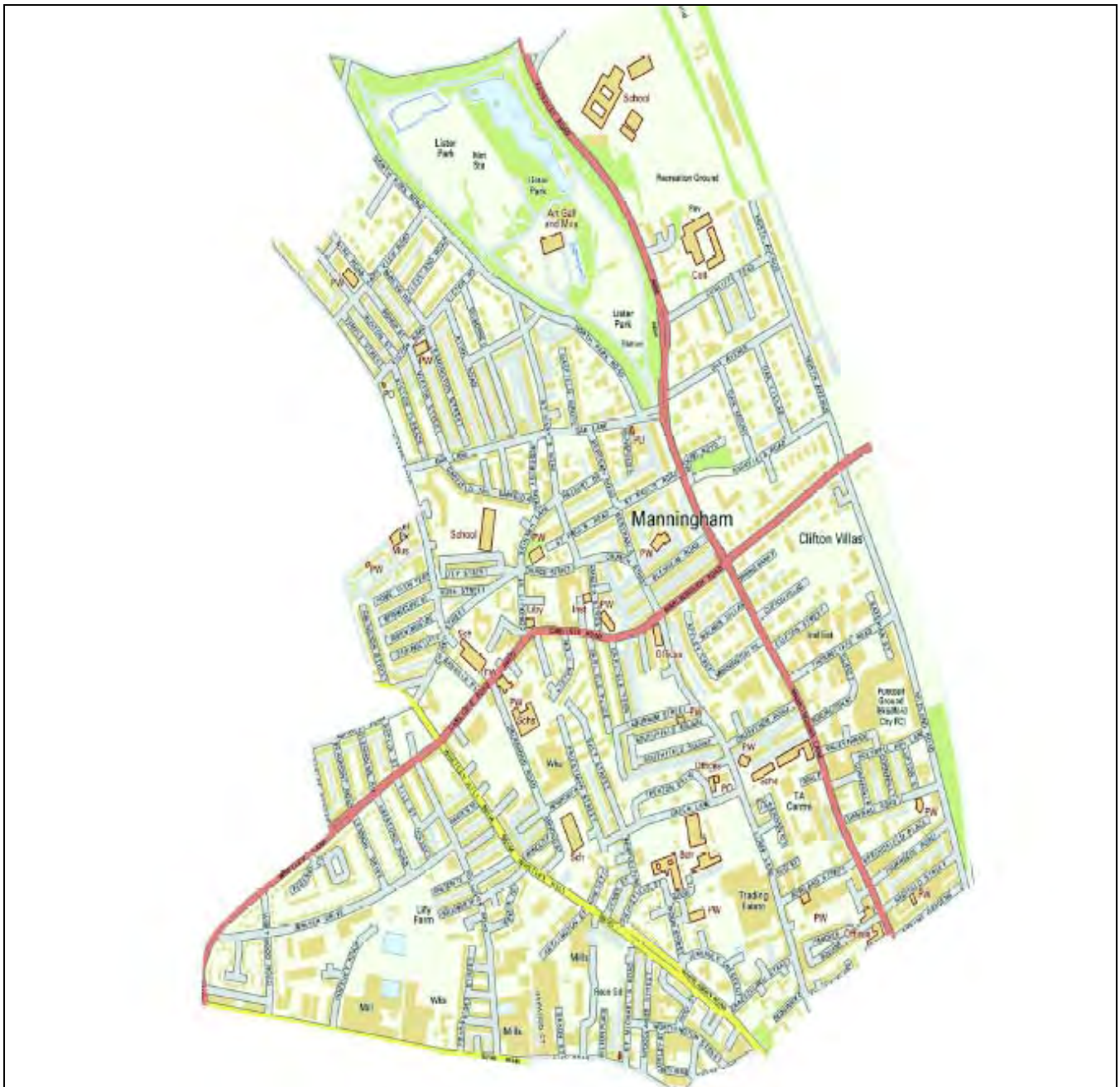
The area was subject to ward boundary changes in 2004 and now covers parts of both City and Manningham wards (Figures 2.1 and 2.2).²

Figure 2.1: City ward, Bradford



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² The 2001 Census data used in this report are based on University Ward.

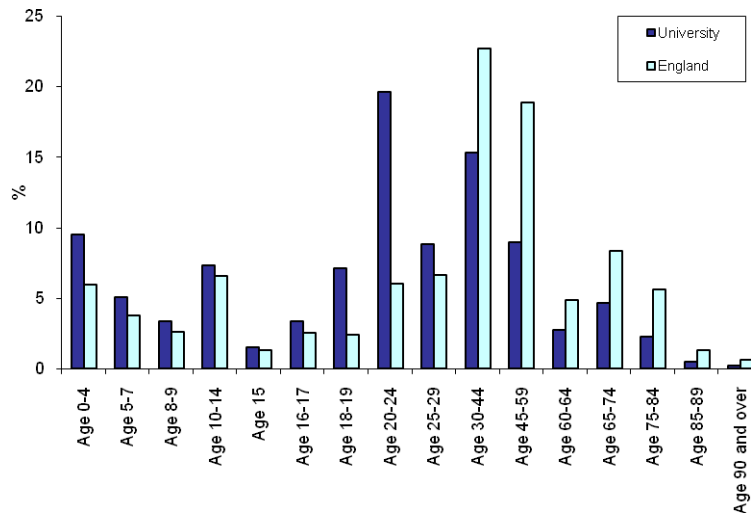
Figure 2.2: Manningham ward, Bradford

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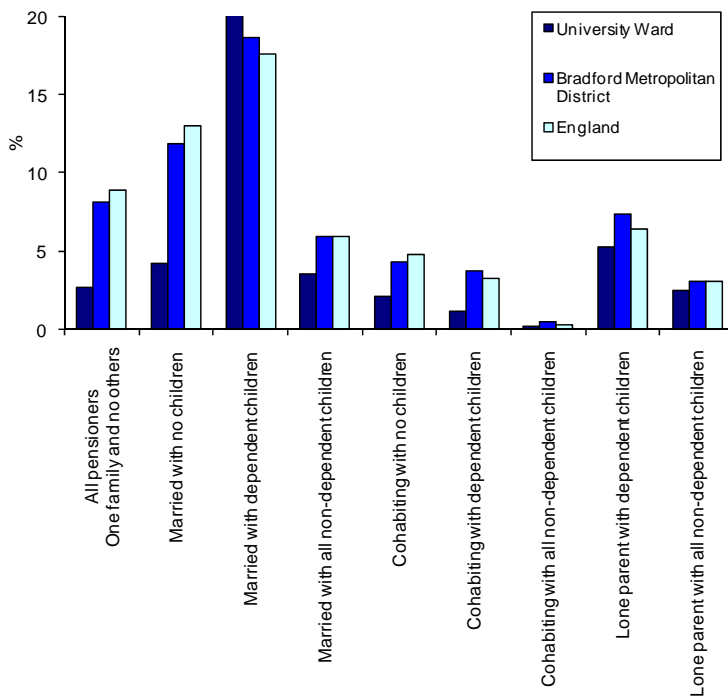
The area borders the northern side of the central commercial district of Bradford. The area largely consists of terraced housing developed to house mill workers during the nineteenth century, but also has some areas of more recent housing. The textile industry has left a considerable legacy in the area of housing and industrial buildings.

The area has a number of major arterial and connecting roads running through these residential areas which carry high volumes of traffic into the city centre, particularly the A650 (Manningham Lane) and A6177 (Carlisle Road).

The City and Manningham area has a young population with considerably higher proportions of children and young people when compared with the country as a whole. The difference is particularly marked in the young adult age groups (18–19 and 20–24; Figure 2.3).

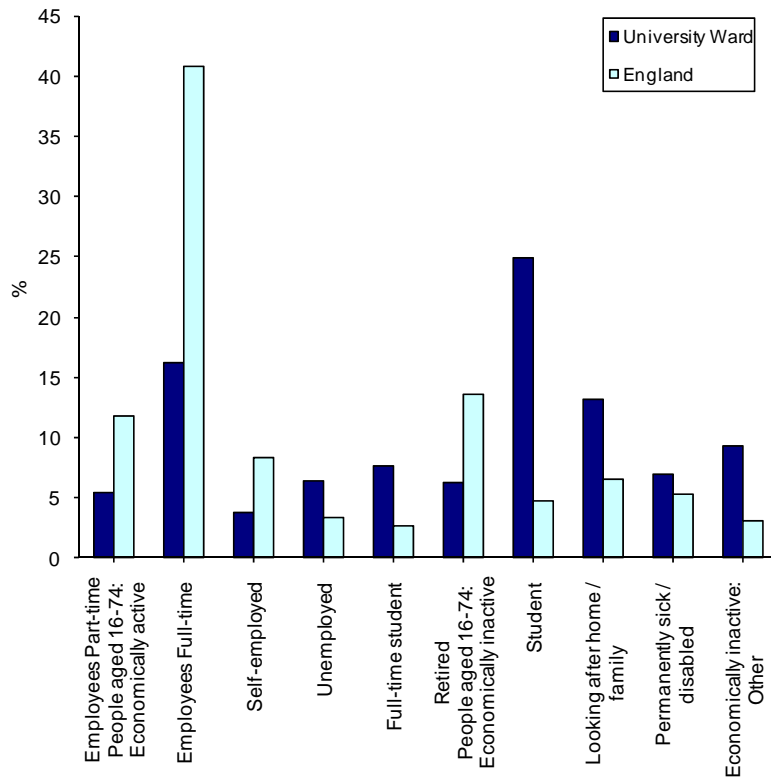
Figure 2.3: Age structure

When compared with the national average, this area has a significantly lower than average rate of residents married and cohabiting without children and lone parents with children. This area has a higher proportion of married couples with children (Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4: Household composition

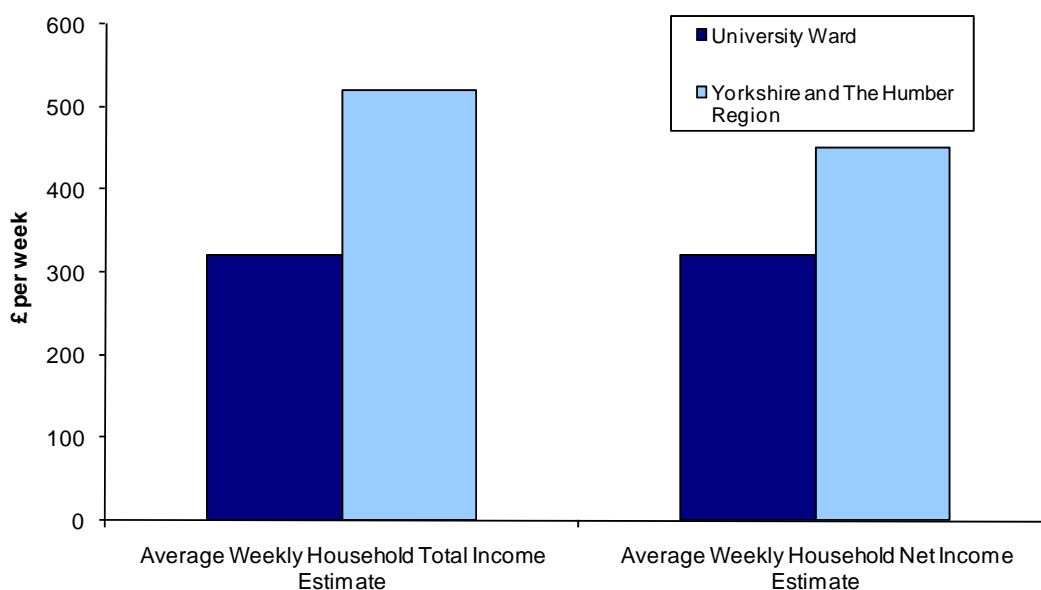
There is a much lower rate of employment in the area and higher proportions of unemployed, carers and the economically inactive. It also has a high student population as Bradford University is in this area (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5: Economic activity



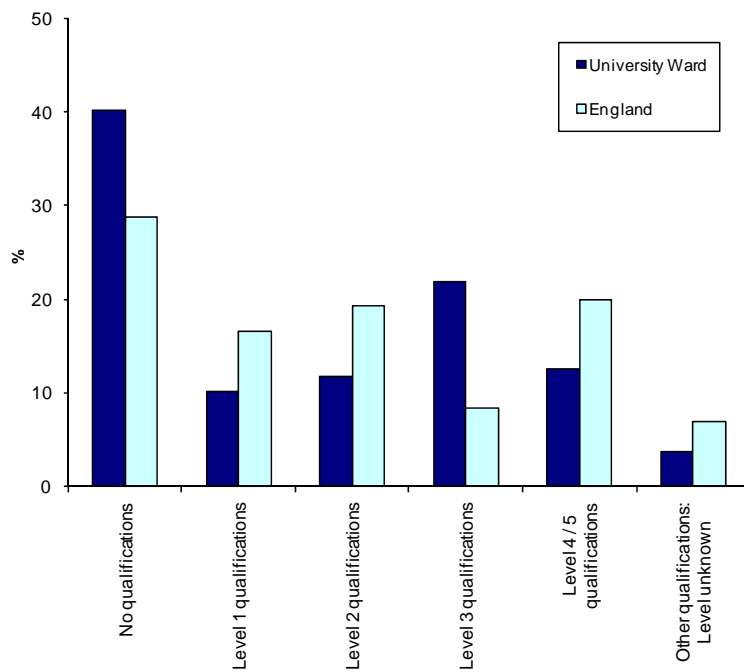
Residents in this area have a significantly lower than average weekly income when compared with the region as a whole. The total weekly household income is just over £300, some £200 less than the regional average (Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.6: Household income



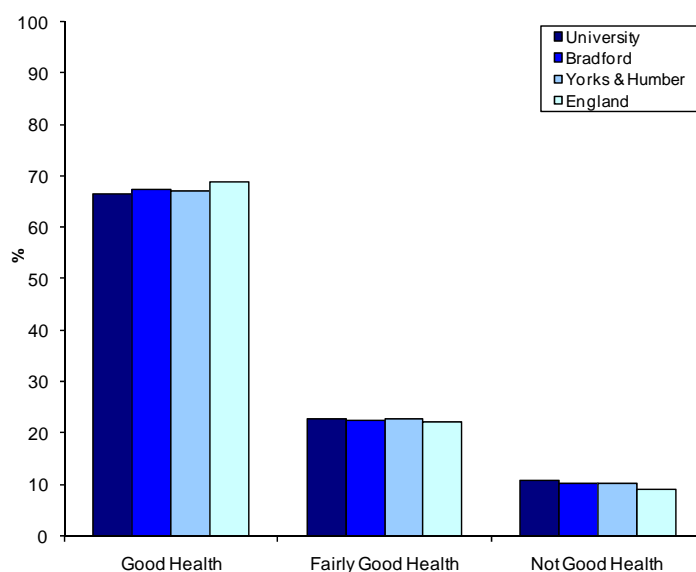
Residents have fewer qualifications in this area than the national average and for those that do have qualifications they tend to be to a lower level. Just under 40% of the population of the case study area have no qualifications compared with under 30% for England as a whole (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7: Qualifications



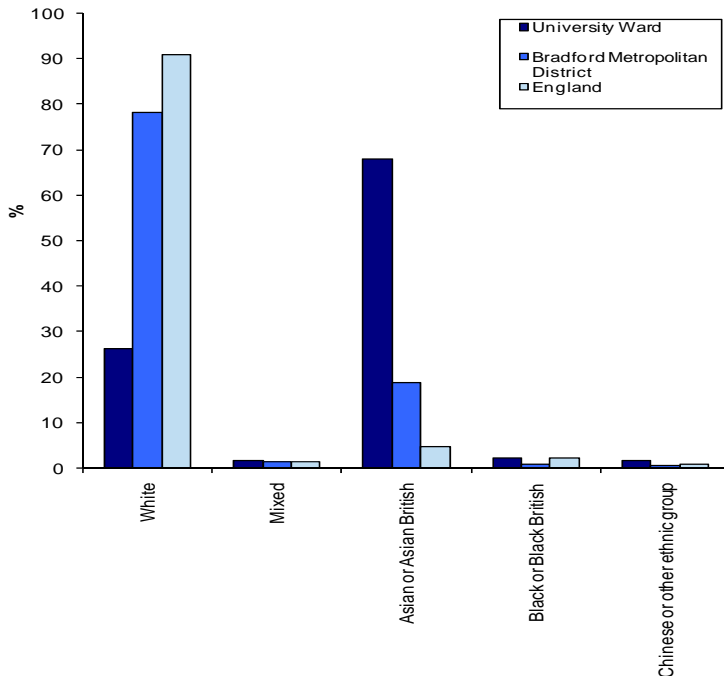
City and Manningham have a slightly lower proportion of residents with good health when compared with Bradford, the region and England as a whole. However, there do not appear to be large differences in the health status of local people (Figure 2.8).

Figure 2.8: Health



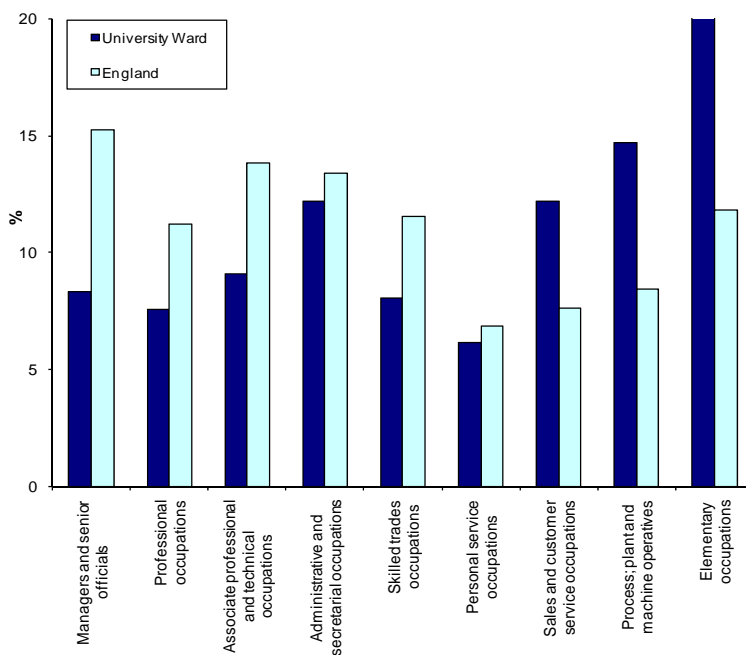
There is a large South Asian (predominantly Bangladeshi and Pakistani) community in Manningham and City, such that Asian and Asian British residents make up over two-thirds of the population. This is considerably higher than the proportion in Bradford as a whole, indicating that the Asian and Asian British population are concentrated in some parts of the city, including University ward (Figure 2.9).

Figure 2.9: Ethnic group



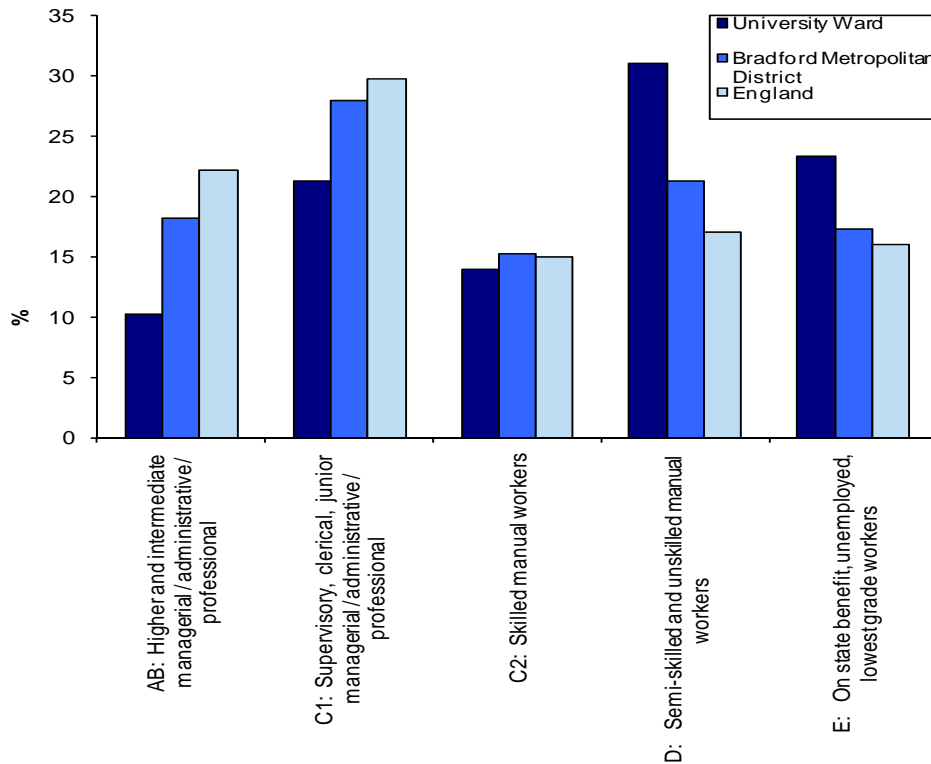
Considerably fewer residents in this area in employment have a professional, managerial or skilled trade occupation when compared with the country as a whole, and a much higher proportion have sales, process and elementary occupations (Figure 2.10).

Figure 2.10: Occupation group



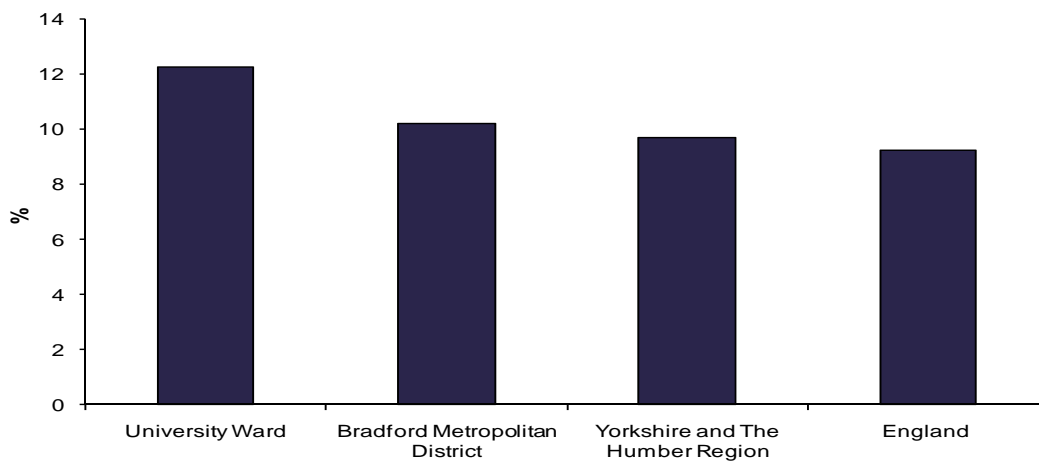
The proportion of skilled manual workers in the area is slightly less than the district and national average. Furthermore, there are a higher percentage of semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers and residents on state benefit, unemployed and low grade workers (Figure 2.11)

Figure 2.11: Social grade



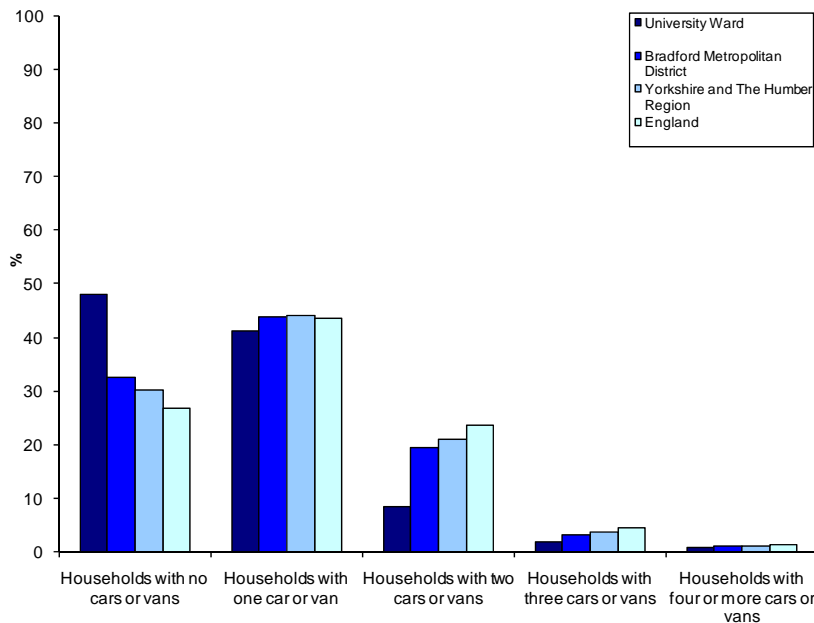
As an indicator of relative poverty, the area has a higher proportion of residents, in excess of 12%, claiming housing benefits when compared with Bradford and England as a whole (Figure 2.12)

Figure 2.12: Housing benefits



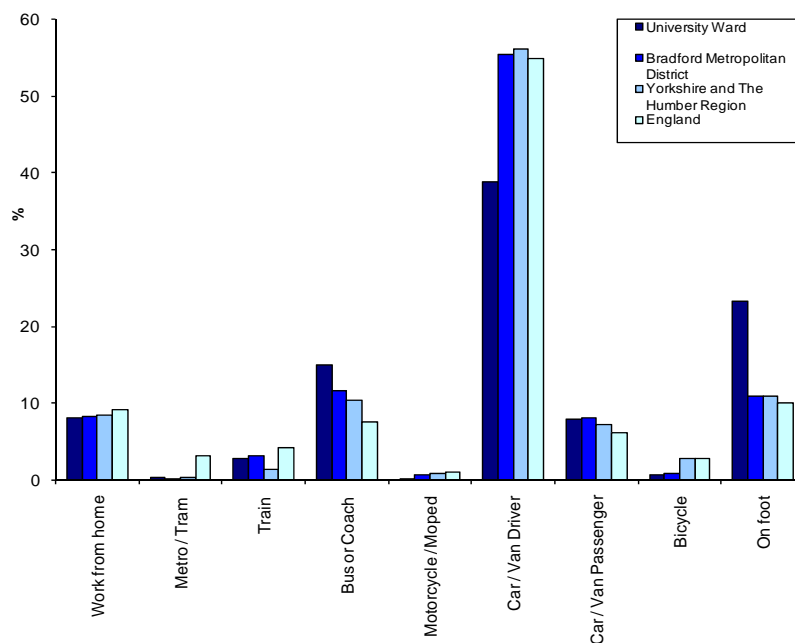
Considerably fewer people in this area have access to a car, with just under half of households having no car or van compared with 27% for England as a whole (Figure 2.13). As an indicator of social exclusion, this illustrates the relatively disadvantaged position of the area.

Figure 2.13: Households with cars/vans



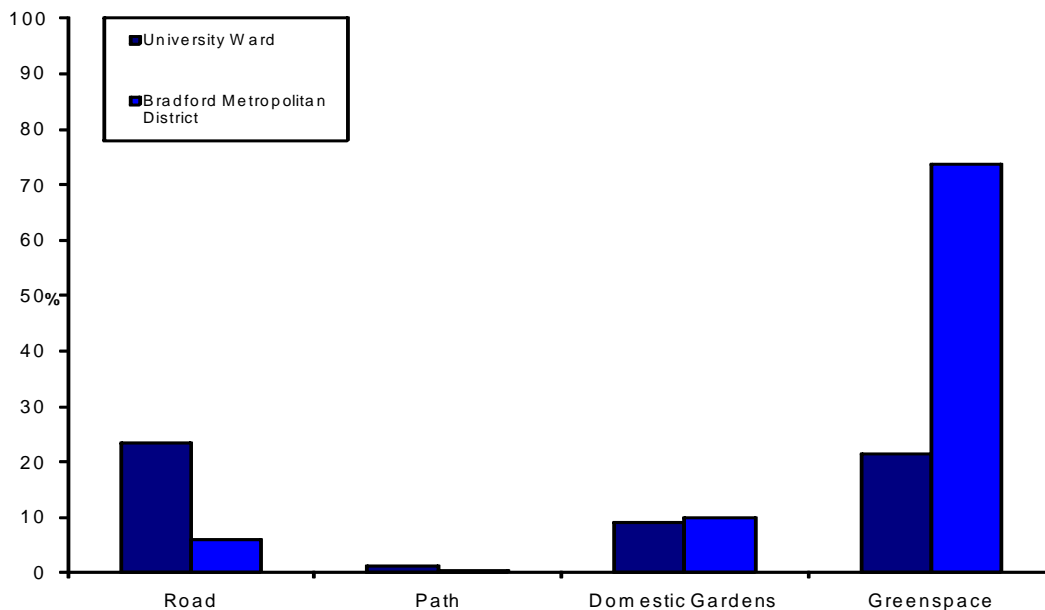
Most employed people in this area travel to work by car or van, however, the proportion is significantly less than the regional and national average. Additionally, a considerably higher proportion walk to work (Figure 2.14).

Figure 2.14: Travel to work



It is notable that roads make up a much higher proportion of land-use in the study area compared with the district as a whole. Approximately 23% of land in the case study area is used for roads compared with 6% for Bradford overall. There is also less land taken up by gardens and considerably less green space when compared with the district as a whole, which does include surrounding moorland areas. This indicates a highly urbanised environment in which residents are more likely to be exposed to roads and have less opportunity to be away from roads in gardens and open spaces (Figure 2.15).

Figure 2.15: Land use



2.2 Policy and strategy

The overarching strategy for road safety in Bradford is presented in *Safer Together: Bradford Road Safety Plan 2007 to 2009* (Safer Communities Partnership, 2007). The strategy has been developed by the Safer Communities Partnership, involving Bradford Council, Bradford Vision (the Local Strategic Partnership responsible for social and economic development), West Yorkshire Police, Bradford and Airedale Primary Care Trust, Bradford Safeguarding Children Board, West Yorkshire Casualty Reduction Partnership, West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service and Yorkshire Ambulance Service.

A key principle of the strategy is collective responsibility for road safety. The strategy promotes individual and community responsibility for their own safety, rather than a top-down agency approach. Four elements which contribute to road safety and casualty reduction are identified:

1. Environment and facilities;
2. Responsibility and awareness;
3. Behaviour; and
4. Skills to be safe.

A range of initiatives which support one or more of these elements are included in the strategy with the objectives of:

- **Promoting safer road use** – developing publicity, engaging with local people and raising awareness, for example promoting road safety through local neighbourhood forums; engaging with local people through neighbourhood action planning; promoting community involvement through the principles established in the NRSI; Think! and local campaigns, including a campaign linked to speed, seat-belt wearing and injuries to children.
- **Building and maintaining safer roads** – traffic calming, pedestrian and cycling facilities, junction improvements, lining and signing, engineering schemes to deal with locations with high levels of road injury.
- **Providing for children and older people** – child pedestrian training (developed from Kerbcraft), cycle training, child road safety education (including 'Get Across Safely', 'Arrive Alive', 'On the Safe Side' and 'Making Choices'), school travel plans, Yellow Bus schemes, walking buses, the promotion of seat-belt wearing and the use of correct child restraints for younger children, life support training, the provision of information on the transition years and the risks involved, walking campaigns, traffic/speed management in residential areas, partnership working for child injury reduction.
- **Influencing drivers** – initiatives to promote driving skills and the social responsibility of driving, for example pre-driver training, road safety 'Theatre in Education', driver improvement and speed awareness training schemes, work with driving instructors to promote safer driving, regional campaigns on seat-belt wearing and speed, and other campaigns including drinking and driving and drug use.
- **Providing for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders** – plans to improve safety for vulnerable road users and increase driver responsibility in relation to their safety, for example traffic calming, cycle route provision, promotion of walking routes, investigation and promotion of Home Zones.
- **Promote safer motorcycling** – to further understand the causes of road injuries to motorcyclists and work to address this problem through guidance on safety and training, identifying problem locations, enforcement activities and campaigns.
- **Influence road speeds** – ensure that speed limits are appropriate and enforced through auditing speed management requirements and developing a speed management strategy, introduce safety cameras, enforce the speed limit on local roads in response to the concern of residents, expand the Community Speedwatch initiative being undertaken in Keighley, refer selected offenders to speed awareness training schemes; identify local concerns about speeding; introduce road safety engineering schemes (including vehicle activated signs, speed limit gateways, traffic calming, and road signing and lining) and speeding publicity.
- **Enforce road traffic law** – prioritise and enforce road traffic law in relation to the numbers of road injuries and the level of offending through safety cameras, local policing, the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (APNR) to identify stolen, untaxed and uninsured vehicles, as well as monthly campaigns on vehicle defects, drink driving, speed, motorcycles and seat belts, and publicising enforcement activities.

The Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) is the statutory partnership for the district responsible for keeping children safe. Their vision is derived from one of the high level outcomes included in the Government's **Every Child Matters** strategy, namely to 'stay safe'. The BSCB, in common with other area boards, has a remit concerned with reducing child maltreatment, neglect, violence, sexual exploitation and bullying, as well as reducing unintentional injury. The Bradford Child Injury Prevention Strategy, *Getting Serious About Safety* (BSCB, 2008), aims to co-ordinate the child injury prevention work of a range of services provided by Bradford Council, all of the district's NHS trusts, fire and rescue, the police, the ambulance service, the Injury Minimisation Programme for Schools (IMPS), education, community and voluntary services and victim support.

The target injury outcome, identified in their three-year strategy, is to reduce by 5% the number of children killed and/or seriously injured (KSI) due to all types of unintentional injury by 2011. This includes accidents in the home, in public spaces and road traffic collisions. The BSCB supports the post of an Accident Prevention Co-ordinator to deliver and co-ordinate the Strategy and maintain operational links. The strategic objectives are to improve data collection and sharing; to increase injury prevention training; to reduce the injury related health inequalities for children from disadvantaged communities; and to increase multi-agency working.

Specific initiatives that concern road safety and joint working are:

- to promote driving at 20 mph;

- to roll-out pedestrian skills training;
- to develop and maintain a database of current interventions for practitioners; and
- to carry out a resource audit to ensure all agencies have access to appropriate resources and are providing consistent messages to parents/carers.

The strategy recognises that life cannot be totally free from risk, but aims to bring together agencies that can influence safety and the occurrence of preventable unintentional injury while managing risk to children going about their daily activities.

The Bradford District *Safer Communities Strategy* (Safer Bradford, 2005) incorporates road safety into a number of its priorities. The first priority is to provide visible responses and to ensure that people see the difference in safety in the district. This includes supporting the development of a Road Speed Management Strategy. The second priority is to support vulnerable people. This involves focusing road initiatives on vulnerable road users, children and older people, pedestrians and cyclists. The strategy also prioritises the prevention of offending and aims to tackle offending behaviour from early interventions for those at risk of offending. This may concern car crime. A fourth priority is enforcement, including the implementation of a Road Traffic Enforcement Strategy, which includes speed enforcement, drinking and driving, seat-belt wearing and motorcycle safety.

The Bradford District Local Area Agreement (CBMDC, 2005) is the agreement between the Government and the local authority across a range of key indicators that support desired outcomes. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) outcome that is relevant here is: 'For all children and young people to live in a safe community'. The indicator associated with this outcome is to reduce the number of children killed or seriously injured by 60% by 2010. The baseline is 69 (1994/98 average). The funding associated with this target was: NRSI (year 1 only); Accident Prevention funding; Area Committee traffic measures; and Kerbcraft funding from the Department for Transport.

The LAA highlights IMPS (part funded by NRSI) as an idea in action. The programme targets children up to 15 years of age, looking at each type of environment in which accident injury occurs, including roads. The programme is offered to all schools in Bradford and involves health professionals working with and educating Year 6 pupils in preventing accidents and collisions at home and on the street. The scheme includes a tour of the A&E unit, an accident sequence video and discussions, life support practice on models and follow-up visit to the school.

The Children and Young People's Plan (CBMDC, 2008) is the broad strategic plan for children and young people's services across the district. The plan sets Partnership Focus Areas, one of which is to reduce accidents and road traffic collisions within the Staying Safe theme. Road safety is therefore recognised as a priority within the plan for children's services.

Bradford's Play Strategy *All to Play for* (CBMDC, 2004) has been developed by Bradford Council Early Years and Childcare Service in consultation with other agencies. The strategy recognises the importance of free play to children in their self-development. It promotes the right of children to play out and recognises that transport policies, road safety and community safety are vital to achieve this goal. The Strategy aims to improve access and promote better quality play opportunities in parks and playgrounds. It also notes that children and young people need to be able to play not just in official play facilities, but around the neighbourhoods where they live. Barriers to this are real and imaginary dangers, as well as unsympathetic attitudes on the part of some adults. The Strategy encourages measures to reduce the impact of traffic in residential neighbourhoods such as Home Zones and Liveable Streets. It also notes the role of Community Housing Trusts in helping children to play outdoors and of Development Services in protecting informal play space. Additionally, the *B-active: a Physical Activity and Sports Strategy for Bradford District 2007–12* (Bradford Cultural Consortium, 2007) presents a strategy for promoting activity and participation in sport. It notes that participation is relatively low amongst more disadvantaged communities and Black and minority Ethnic (BME) groups and aims to address these inequalities.

The *Sustainable Community Strategy* (Bradford District Partnership, 2009) for Bradford also recognises the role that road safety has to play. One of the cross-cutting themes is Safer Communities, and within this one of the priorities is making our roads safer for adults and children. The measures for achieving this are consistent with the Road Safety Strategy and are to:

- raise awareness that everyone is responsible for road safety;
- maintain a road environment that is safe for people to walk, cycle, drive and ride, and that gives protection to local communities and schools;
- equip children with the life skills they need to travel safely and become responsible road users; and
- enforce road traffic law.

The *West Yorkshire Policing Strategy* (West Yorkshire Police Authority, 2006) identifies the approach to roads policing for the metropolitan area including Bradford. It is based on a casualty reduction approach in partnership with the local authority, with a shared target to reduce the number of serious and fatal accidents. The strategy notes that, besides contributing to road collisions, dangerous driving and the anti-social use of vehicles can lead to poor quality of life in communities. The approach to road policing therefore includes: targeting criminals using the roads through, for example, ANPR; equipping traffic officers and accident investigation staff to deal effectively with incidents; improving driver behaviour (through education, traffic calming and enforcing laws) to reduce injury and fatal accidents; attending and investigating all serious road traffic collisions; and tackling the anti-social use of vehicles in neighbourhoods.

The evidence suggests that, at a strategic level, Bradford is working to achieve a joined-up approach in which road safety is recognised in a range of key strategy documents for the city.

2.3 Services and interventions

2.3.1 Bradford Council – Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity

School education and training – Bradford Road Safety Team provide a programme of road safety education and training to **all** schools in the city. As such, they primarily offer a universal education and training service rather than one that specifically targets areas of disadvantage, such as Manningham and City. The planned programme of school-based education and training includes activities in nursery and reception classes through to secondary school. The following are included in the programme:

- Nursery/reception – education, training and publicity (ETP) use *Teddy Takes a Tumble* (LARSOA, 2006) with young children which focuses on seat-belt wearing. This is a simple picture and reading book for children to be read to or by themselves. Seat-belt wearing is a key issue in the local area and the importance of this in reducing injury risk is introduced at a young age. It aims to appeal to all young children and does not specifically include images that children from disadvantaged communities might identify with.
- *Salman and Friends* (Woodhouse, 2006), an NRSI developed resource is also used with this age group. It consists of four story books and follow-up activities for children to learn and practise as pedestrians when out with their parents or carers. The story characters include BME children so that children from the same groups can more readily identify with them. The books are accompanied by an audio CD with songs in English as well as South Asian languages, as an alternative medium for children to receive the messages. The use of this resource would seem to be appropriate in Manningham and City, given the high proportion of South Asian residents.
- Primary: Years 1 and 2 – role playing sessions on crossing the road safely.
- Year 3 – pedestrian training based on the Kerbcraft scheme incorporating practical roadside training in crossing roads safely, crossing between parked cars and at junctions. Bradford have adapted the original Kerbcraft training and apply it at a later age (7–8) and with fewer sessions for each child. The scheme is adapted because of the need to be more resource efficient and because age 7–8 is considered a more appropriate stage of child development for this training. Schools in problem areas including Manningham and City are targeted through this scheme. Pedestrian training has been undertaken in all except two of the 14 primary schools in the area.
- Years 3 and 4 – role play, crossing roads safely and the Green Cross Code.
- Years 5 and 6 – Use of *Charlie's Accident*, a resource which explores accidents, distractions, fault and consequences.
- Secondary: Year 7, *Live for Life* – a hard hitting presentation on road safety. The presentation covers what can and does happen on our roads, that accidents do not just happen to other people, and the consequences of accidents and the impact on families. It covers distractions, mobile phones, cycling/helmets, pedestrian safety and seat belts. Years 12/13 (16–18-year-olds) *Drive for Life* is a presentation aimed at new drivers, learners and those who are thinking of doing so. It includes facts and figures and photographs of fatal accidents to convey that accidents do not just happen to other people, the consequences of road death and the impact on families. It covers speed, seat-belt wearing, drink and drug

driving, motorcycling, driver distractions and mobile phones. All three secondary schools in the area have been targeted for these two presentations.

ETP have also produced materials targeted at parents and carers, including *Surviving on Jungle Street* – a guide to the Kerbcraft principles of pedestrian training as well as the principles of ‘Stop, Look and Listen’. This provides guidance to parents/carers on a technical process to train children to cross the road safely. It is thought unlikely to engage with some parents from disadvantaged areas who may have different patterns of caring, lower levels of literacy or those whose first language is not English.

A leaflet specifically on seat-belt wearing has been developed which is also available in relevant South Asian languages – Urdu, Bangla, Gujarati and Punjabi.

They participate in the annual multi-agency ‘Stay Safe Event’, organised by Keighley Worksafe, a local charity. Around 1,200 Year 6 children attend the event which involves interactive presentations around various safety issues to small groups of children. The road safety scenario is a crash scene.

In addition, the council use local radio and advertising on buses to convey road safety messages. They use Sunrise Radio, an Asian community service with a station in Bradford.

The department also produced a resource specific to the Manningham area to publicise the problem of higher casualties and to promote the use of restraints. It says: ‘Did you know 50 children were knocked down in the Manningham area in the last three years. Most children are injured near to home. A local driver is often involved.’ This was distributed to schools, libraries and community centres.

Overall the education and training that the council provides in schools seems to address some of the key issues that affect the community in Manningham and City. There is an emphasis on road-crossing education throughout primary school which is a partial solution to the higher number of children that are pedestrian casualties from this deprived area. There is also clear awareness of high levels of non-seat-belt wearing and ETP measures aimed at addressing this. They make use of resources that are accessible and relevant to all, including disadvantaged communities, through role play which avoids excluding children with lower levels of literacy; the production of materials in languages other than English; the use of images that should be appropriate and relevant to the community (e.g. *Salman and Friends*); and the use of channels of communication that are relevant (e.g. Sunrise Radio). They have also attempted to make the evidence local and, therefore, more meaningful and relevant.

2.3.2 School travel

Bradford is committed to the development of School Travel Plans (STPs) and the initiative is embedded in the LTP, District Transport Strategy and Sustainable Schools Strategy. More than 80% of schools have a plan in place. A concern is how STPs will be developed post-2010 as there are currently no plans for financial incentives. The main focus of STPs is for sustainable travel, but this is associated with the provision of safe routes to school. These interventions are district wide:

- **STP development** – the council provide advice and support to schools in the development of their STP.
- **Travel to School leaflet** – a travel to school leaflet has recently been produced covering all modes of travelling to school.

2.3.3 Bradford Council – Road Safety Engineering

The Road Safety Engineering team are responsible for the development of physical engineering schemes to reduce road accidents. The schemes are developed through one of two routes:

- casualty reduction budget – sites for treatment are based on STATS19 KSI data; and
- committee funding – area-based schemes in response to local demand. These may be community issues and not necessarily where there have been accidents.

Schemes will be discussed at one of the five Neighbourhood Forums in Bradford, each of which has six wards.

There are a substantial number of traffic engineering schemes in the Manningham and City area to reduce speed and improve road safety. Key measures on the main roads are:

- Horton Park Avenue – three refuges (central islands) and hatched linings introduced with the aim of reducing speeding on this road;

- Legrams Lane (and elsewhere) – a casualty reduction funded lighting improvement scheme where lighting was cited as a contributory factor in accidents that have occurred; and
- Bolton Road – cycle lanes and chicanes; redesignated road space to reduce speeding.

2.3.4 Road and neighbourhood policing

Initiatives that have been undertaken by the police in the wider area are detailed below. These activities have been carried out in Manningham and City, but are not specific to the case study area:

- **Neighbourhood policing** – West Yorkshire is committed to the Government's neighbourhood approach to community policing and Manningham and City wards are identified neighbourhoods as part of this approach. Each area has a team of officers charged with working with local communities to improve safety and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour. This includes 'Reassurance Mapping', where officers attend various streets and speak to local residents to find out the issues that are affecting them. They report using these survey results which are being used to inform local policing activity and partnership working, to target areas of local concern. Overall neighbourhood policing aims to provide reassurance and improve the safety of local communities, including road safety.
- **Impact 2** – this is a multi-force operation across Yorkshire that uses Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) to identify uninsured, wanted and stolen vehicles. Around 100 vehicles were seized in Bradford on a two-day operation in October 2008.
- **Community Speedwatch** – this nationally developed initiative is being implemented by many forces including West Yorkshire. Under the scheme, community volunteers work with the police to check for speeding. Those monitored breaking the limit are sent a Speedwatch advice notice, advising them that they will face prosecution if caught again. A Community Speedwatch campaign was carried out recently in the City ward.
- **School gate parking** – the police respond to requests from schools across Bradford where there is an issue of unsafe parking outside schools. They will attend the school and ask drivers to park away from the school. They have been deployed at the majority, if not all, of these schools from time to time.
- **Youth and school liaison officers** – they provided a link between the schools, police and community to promote crime prevention, reduce anti-social behaviour and improve road safety. Officers go into schools giving input on road safety and the Green Cross Code. They are currently developing a road safety programme for children.
- **Action Days** – there have been a number of Action Days jointly with the council and other partners, with the objective of tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. These consist of 'enforcement and hi-visibility' days with partner agencies to conduct a range of enforcement actions, and Advice Days to provide a drop-in service for help and advice over a range of issues. Six days were held in each of Manningham and City during 2008 and they are continuing at a higher rate.
- **Operation Wishbone** – this operation targets motoring offences such as mobile phone use, seat belt and speeding offences in areas known to be collision hot spots. Bradford Road Safety provide the hot spot information. In addition, there are other monthly operations to target particular motoring offences, such as drink-driving, child car-seat infringements and mobile phone usage.
- **Unapproved driving instructors in Bradford** – the Roads Policing Team have carried out a number of operations in partnership with the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) targeting driving instructors who are not registered and approved.
- **Home Safety** – the police work with the fire service to improve home safety by accompanying them on planned neighbourhood visits to help improve awareness and safety in the home.
- **Signal Crimes** – the fire service provide minor fires statistics that the police are able to use to highlight areas of anti-social behaviour that can then be addressed.

The following interventions are specific to Manningham or City wards:

- **Illegal child seats** – neighbourhood police officers in Manningham ran an initiative working in partnership with local junior schools and Halfords to educate people about child seats in vehicles. It was felt that a fine

was not an appropriate punishment for those driving without appropriate seats, as the money they would have spent paying the fine could be used to buy the appropriate child seats instead. Those without appropriate child seating received a car seat voucher and a warning. This was followed up by home visits.

- **Bus lane enforcement** – the police recently ran an initiative targeting illegal bus lane use. This targets poor driving behaviour and the risks to bus passengers and other road users.
- **Ramadan initiative** – neighbourhood policing team officers and members of mosque committees worked together to tackle low-level damage and youth nuisance during Ramadan. The Ramadan initiative involved mosque committee members on street patrols with the police. This is an example of an initiative involving the community to tackle low-level disorder with potentially an indirect effect on improving road safety.
- **Cycling training** – police community support officers (PCSOs) from Bradford have been working with Bradford Council to help with cycle training for children at Farnham Primary. This has proved very successful and is oversubscribed.

2.3.5 Fire service

The fire service in Bradford has played an increasing role in road safety education and initiatives since their remit to do so was introduced through legislation. Their involvement tends to be on a district-wide basis, with a community safety focus on the issues of not wearing seat belts and poor driving by young people. There are not interventions that are specific to Manningham or City:

- **Seat-belt initiative** – the fire service in Bradford is investigating running a seat-belt initiative that has been running in Calderdale, but this is subject to securing funding. The Calderdale initiative involved education through advertising in papers, booklets and signs, and enforcement through stopping people without seat belts and issuing fines. The project was run jointly with the Road Safety Department, the police and fire service, all working together, and has been considered, anecdotally, ‘a great success’.
- **Education/workshop days for youth offenders** – these are day courses run by the fire service and used to educate young offenders convicted of crimes such as stealing, torching cars and speeding. They work with the Youth Offending team, who nominate offenders to attend, to deliver these ‘hard hitting’ workshops four or five times a year. Previous courses have also involved health (paramedics). The workshop involves DVD presentations of real-life events and simulation exercises of crashes and injury aimed at increasing awareness of the potential consequences of dangerous driving. It was noted that this intervention is high cost and can only be held with small groups. The impacts have not been measured, but felt to be successful.

The Fire Service also implements various community initiatives concerned with fire safety, but these do not address road safety. These are school presentations, community fire safety checks and an Arson Task Force. There are plans to include a road safety element into the school education initiative.

2.3.6 Health Service – Primary Care Trust

Primary Care Trust (PCT) interventions are driven by a general directive around reducing accidents in the home, at school and on roads, and specifically the road safety targets for the district. Their activities are predominantly district or county wide. However, it was noted that reducing inequality is key, with support given to frontline staff to enable them to effectively incorporate accident prevention activities into their role.

There was a recognition that an examination of accidents linked to deprivation or poverty relates to a wide range of public health issues such as a culture of limited or no safety in the home and different patterns of parenting as a result of problems such as depression and/or alcohol and drug dependency.

The PCT implement the following interventions in Bradford:

- **Injury Minimisation Program (IMPS)** – IMPS is an interactive intervention aimed at Year 6 pupils. It teaches first aid and resuscitation skills to pupils and they also receive a tour of the A&E department at the local hospital. This scheme is nationally recognised as being effective in teaching important life-saving skills and is currently offered to all primary schools within the district. All schools are currently signed up to the IMPS programme and receive the training. The scheme is funded primarily through the PCT and Neighbourhood Renewal.

- **Health visitors** – health visitors have a role around promoting all aspects of safety which will include roads and in-car safety. They distribute road safety packs to four-year-olds (developed by the Road Safety Team) as well as a reflective tag for children to wear (funded by the PCT). Health visitors take part in initiatives such as the seat-belt checking days.
- **School nurses** – these nurses are based in schools and may support school staff and the Road Safety Team with Personal Health and Social Education (PHSE) lessons. Part of the remit in the PHSE curriculum includes road safety. School nurses may also give support to drug and alcohol awareness which, it was noted, could contribute to reducing road accidents.
- **Peer education programme** – the PCT provide input to a peer education programme that is run by the education department PHSE. The programme involves Year 10s attending two days' training on the dangers of alcohol and drugs, and then going back into their schools to deliver sessions to younger (Year 8) children. The PCTs present on the risk of accidents with drugs and alcohol as part of the training. They make use of a BRAKE video resource and cover topics such as joy riding and wearing seat belts. Staff nurses from A&E also attend talks about the injuries they see in A&E which are caused under the influence of drugs and alcohol. It is seen as an effective way of spreading messages and information, as young children will respond to their peers.
- **School Health Fairs** – a day is given over to healthy activities and road safety will usually be included.
- **Seat Belt On** – this is a regional campaign that is currently in the planning stages and will be led by Bradford Road Safety. School nurses will be involved in supporting schools to deliver school assembly presentations and other activities for target schools on seat-belt wearing and car seats.
- **Bullboy book** – in 2008 the PCT worked on a specific project with Bradford Bulls RFC which has involved the development of a children's storybook for primary school children featuring the rugby team's mascot, Bullboy, and covering in home, at school and on the road safety issues. This resource aims to engage with all children, but particularly boys, as they are known to sustain more injuries, yet often health promotional materials do not appear to reflect this. It is also thought that material that is based on a well-known local character can be more meaningful to people. Copies have been provided to all schools and libraries. It is only in English, but is intended for use in the classroom.
- **Car seat/seat-belt checking days** – this intervention involves health visitors and PCT staff in providing seat belt and car seat checks at locations such as supermarket car parks. The initiative also provides the opportunity to talk about car seats, as well as wearing seat belts with parents. The PCT funded further car-seat checking days in summer 2009 as part of the 'Seat Belt On' campaign across the district, including the Manningham and City area.
- **Children's Services (Bradford Safeguarding Children Board)** – the BSCB identify three types of safeguarding: **responsive safeguarding** – children known to have been harmed in some way and require putting in services to keep them safe; **targeted safeguarding** – the most vulnerable children (e.g. those with disabilities); and **universal safeguarding**, covering issues that might prevent children from being safe and feeling safe. Safety from road traffic accidents sits within universal safeguarding. The BSCB wants to focus on universal safeguarding, rather than just concentrating on the most vulnerable children for accident prevention. Because of the greater than average deprivation in Bradford, however, this work could have a greater impact than in other areas.

The Board has recently appointed a Children's Accident Prevention Co-ordinator responsible for all universal aspects of child accident prevention in the district. The post involves developing and promoting a three-year strategy to reduce childhood unintentional injuries – *Getting Serious about Safety: Child Injury Prevention Strategy 2008–2011* (BSCB, 2008). It also involves working closely with road safety partners; investigating where funding streams can be streamlined and how they can effectively deliver services with partner agencies; providing networking opportunities and encourage joined-up partnership working; and co-ordinating activities and interventions across the district relating to unintentional injury prevention. The post holder works with Early Years Childcare, fire and rescue, the PCT, Acute Trusts, Education, the voluntary and community sectors, the road safety team and road engineering at Bradford Council, and the police. The creation of this post is interesting in itself, as it recognises the role that Children's Services can play outside of responsive safeguarding and in reducing unintentional injury.

The BSCB has been involved in the co-ordination of the following interventions in partnership with other agencies:

- **Car Seat Voucher Scheme** – this scheme, initially established through NRSI, has currently been stopped due to a lack of funding. Health visitors and family support workers referred families to the scheme to receive education on the importance of seat belts and in-car safety at local children's centres. Parents were given a voucher for a car seat and contributed £10 themselves. The scheme was set up in partnership with a local retailer to ensure use of the correct car seat and fitting. The scheme focused on a number of areas, including Manningham and City. The BSCB noted that short-term funding is a problem for many projects and programmes and are trying to secure further local funding. This is an example of an intervention that directly addresses higher risk of road injury for children in disadvantaged communities.
- **Car seats for maternity ward taxis** – this scheme was established in response to the identified problem of non-use of car seats for babies and that taxis are currently exempt from the law governing the use of child restraints. Ten infant carrier car seats have been provided for a taxi firm holding a contract with the Bradford Royal Infirmary and they are obliged to use child seats on all journeys involving newborn babies from the maternity unit. The hospital is based in the Manningham/Girlington area of Bradford. The project aims to raise awareness of the need for restraints from the outset. The scheme has been part funded by BSCB and Bradford Council, and is sponsored by a local baby shop.
- **Training** – BSCB has provided multi-agency training for staff in basic awareness of child safety, including presentations on in-car safety and road safety for professionals and groups of foster carers. They have also organised a BRAKE peer education training session for community staff working with parents/carers. A training day is planned for practitioners in preparation for child safety week to provide staff with creative ways of engaging parents and children in safety.
- **Children's Centres** – a joint initiative between BCSB, Road Safety and the Early Years and Children's (EYC) service has involved the development of signs and dressing up materials and an intervention package for Children's Centres to enable staff to work with children on road safety.
- **Teaching Injury Prevention Skills (TIPS) file** – this concept was developed by Manchester IMPS and involves the setting up of a database to monitor safety initiatives that are in place in different schools in an area. TIPS has been sent to all schools in the district and outlines what interventions are available to what age groups. The database aims to prevent duplication, support partnership working and provide some evidence of what interventions are working well. This resource could usefully be examined, when further developed, to measure how provision in Manningham and City compares with other areas.

2.3.7 Housing – Manningham Housing Association

Manningham Housing Association (MHA) is one of the main providers of social housing in the study area and also helps people access the owner occupied sector. Their strategy is to ensure people are housed and that they can play an active management role in their community. There is recognition that housing impacts on education and employment opportunities, not least in providing a home environment that permits security and study, and these inter-relationships influence people's life chances. The Housing Association has not specifically identified road safety as a priority, although some residents have raised it as a concern because of children playing on the street on certain housing schemes where the road layout could be a problem. Children engaged in recreational activity on the street are not seen as problem unless they are engaged in any sort of anti-social behaviour. MHA interventions are as follows:

- **Accommodation for larger families** – one of the reasons MHA was set up was to provide housing with four or more bedrooms to accommodate larger families. It was recognised that many people live in extended families in BME communities in Bradford and that this need was not met by local authority housing. MHA has targets to let the majority of properties to BME residents.
- **Home ownership schemes** – MHA implement a number of schemes to enable home ownership, including assisting tenants to buy and shared equity schemes.
- **Neighbourhood forum** – MHA also work with the local authority, through the neighbourhood forums, to encourage residents to play a key role.

- **Kick Start initiative** – MHA provides some funding and advice in partnership with other local housing associations for new business start-ups to social housing tenants and training for employment.
- **Residents' parking** – there is a problem with city centre users parking on housing schemes and match day parking in the Manningham area. The match day issue has been improved by police patrols, but there was felt to be little progress on other parking. Parked cars can present a risk for children in these streets.
- **Tackling drug misuse** – MHA participates in a housing association steering group with the police to discuss drugs and other issues. They provide information from residents and Community Safety Wardens to tackle hot spots, including Manningham. Speeding linked to drug misuse is recognised as problem.
- **Initiatives for young people** – MHA provide activities for children and young people, often in conjunction with the council's youth team, particularly in school holidays. In some cases, residents themselves take a lead in setting up the initiative.
- **New build parking provision** – new build developments are designed with two car-parking spaces per home to avoid the need for on-street parking which is a road safety risk for children.

2.3.8 Leisure

Interventions for council leisure provision in the Manningham areas are guided by the Planning Policy Guidance Note on sport and recreation (PPG 17), which states that local planning authorities should take account of the community's need for recreational space, having regard to current levels of provision and deficiencies. It is also guided by the Play Strategy and Physical Activity and Sports Strategy (see Section 2.2 above). The department undertakes consultation on any new play areas and youth facilities. Interventions in the Manningham and City ward are as follows:

- **Lister Park refurbishment** – Lister Park is a major municipal park in Bradford, located close to the study area. This project brought about significant improvements to the park, including new play facilities for all age groups, in particular for children with special needs.
- **Horton Park improvements** – the park has been improved through shrub removal and playground refurbishment.
- **University facilities** – the Sports Strategy notes that existing on-site sports facilities include a sports hall, health and fitness and swimming pool provision. The university is currently assessing its policy in relation to community use and, therefore, additional facilities may become more publically accessible in the future. There is an opportunity for partnership approach to the management and use of these facilities for the community.

2.3.9 Youth offending

The Bradford Youth Offending Team work with young offenders whose most common crimes include theft, assaults and criminal damage. They observe that young people involved in offending behaviour have a high-risk threshold, low level of personal responsibility and often regard risky behaviour as fun. They also observe that, as a Muslim area, going into pubs and alcohol abuse may be relatively low, but instead young Asian men are more likely to use cannabis and hang around with their friends in their cars. The team's activities are Bradford wide and do not focus on the case study area. Overall they report significantly reducing the re-offending rate of young people. The following interventions have been undertaken:

- **Youth offender supervision, assessment and assistance** – the board work with youths from their first offence right through to young people in custody to try and help them and reduce their criminal behaviour, which may include activities that put them and others in danger on the roads. Work includes supervising young people who have been prosecuted for criminal offences such as driving without insurance, car theft and car torching. They are also involved in youth assessment. This involves examining the risk factors that lead them to offending behaviour, such as their family circumstances, where they live, their neighbourhood, their education, drugs and alcohol use, mental health and their attitude to offending. A plan will be put in place on the basis of the assessment.

- Education sessions with the police and fire service – the Youth Board jointly run sessions with the police and fire service with young offenders around issues such as trying to get youths to understand the impact of their behaviour on the roads, the risks that they are taking, and the risks that they are putting other members of the public in.
- **Seat belts** – the Youth Offending Team are aware of the problem of a culture of not wearing seat belts among young drivers. The Youth Board try and talk to young people about the risks.
- **Spot checks with the police** – the Youth Offending Team are involved in the partnership initiative to stop cars and undertake spot checks on cars for tax, insurance, MOTs and licences.

2.3.10 Regeneration and environmental improvement

Manningham is an identified regeneration area. Work in the area is now in its second phase and is guided by the Manningham Masterplan. This was commissioned by Bradford Council and Yorkshire Forward in June 2004 for the regeneration and spatial development of the Manningham area to create a sustainable neighbourhood. The objectives stated in the Masterplan are to: improve social cohesion, community pride and neighbourhood renewal; stimulate the growth of distinct business sectors; capture the positive impact provided by investment at Lister Mills; stimulate new business start-ups; improve the retail offer; bring vacant and underutilised sites and buildings back into productive use; impact positively on the housing market; improve the delivery of public services; and support the learning and skills agenda. The regeneration team have a role in facilitating access to funding. They interface with the Manningham Partnership:

- **Local enterprise growth** – the council has successfully applied for the local enterprise growth initiative (LEGI). Within Manningham there is an enterprise facilitation scheme to help start up new businesses, providing support and advice, and also providing small business units so that if people do want to start up they have got 'easy term premises' (easy in, easy out, low costs to enable them to start businesses). Funding was initially for three years, with two extensions following good performance in new business start ups.
- **Street improvements** – Gateway officers are employed to source funding and improve the environment for the gateways into Bradford. Consultation with the local community is seen as an important element, but expectations have to be balanced against realistic delivery and providing projects that offer the best value and return. Environmental improvements have been made on Manningham Lane, including railings, lamps, bins, poster boards, hanging baskets, tree planters, new lighting for buildings and more CCTV. More work is proposed to create a high-quality environment and to improve parking. Street improvements have also been undertaken on Oak Lane and Victor Road.
- **White Abbey Road** – businesses on White Abbey Road and Whetley Hill worked with the council and community on this project. It is designed to create a specialist and culturally focused shopping and leisure destination. This involves the development of a distinctive public realm and gateway feature, shop front improvements, widening footpaths, and the introduction of trees and distinct street signs.
- **Green space improvements** – green spaces adjacent to the Milan Centre, Oak Lane and Victor Road have been re-landscaped and brought back into use.

2.3.11 Partnership working

There are a number of partnerships and groups in place in Bradford which enable joint working between different departments and agencies. Road safety is integrated into a number of these structures. Key to this is the **Road Safety Partnership**, which includes representation from the Road Safety Team as well as the Youth Board, local policing teams, and the fire service. The Partnership is considered effective as a forum for sharing information, co-ordinating interventions and engaging with the community. It is recognised that road safety is concerned with a range of issues which requires a multi-agency response.

The **Bradford District Safer Communities Partnership** is a multi-agency steering group including Bradford Council, Bradford Vision, West Yorkshire Police, the NHS PCTS and the West Yorkshire Casualty Reduction Partnership. The partnership works towards improving community safety across a range of issues including low-level crime, anti-social behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse, and road safety.

The **West Yorkshire Casualty Reduction Partnership** is a county-wide partnership between the local authorities, police, health authority, Magistrates' court service and highway authority for the installation and management of speed cameras in the area.

The PCT and Safeguarding Board have partnership arrangements in place. There is PCT representation on the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board, the Safe Communities Board and the **Child Injury Prevention Strategy group**. A **University and College Safety and Security forum** is in place, which runs monthly with representatives from the police, housing association, council area co-ordinators and the university and college, including student representatives. Bradford Council's school travel team work with the education authority in addition to Road Safety and the PCT.

Regeneration activities are overseen by the **Manningham Partnership**. This partnership meets every two months and includes representation from a range of bodies including third-sector organisations, social enterprises, private-sector organisations, statutory bodies and local residents.

There are five neighbourhood areas in Bradford and each hold a **neighbourhood forum** with multi-agency representation. These are open meetings which residents can attend to discuss local concerns and proposals.

2.4 Community views of local road safety

The community research took place within the Manningham ward of Bradford. This ward was selected on the basis of it being the most deprived in Bradford and had high incidents of child road traffic casualties.

The majority of the residents we spoke with were Black and minority ethnic (BME), and were mainly Pakistani or Bangladeshi in origin. We spoke with both mothers and fathers, but it was the mothers in the community that were predominantly responsible for the childcare and many cared for more than one child. Many parents also cared for other relatives living at home. The fathers were more likely to be responsible for any driving done in the household. It was mainly the fathers who had paid work in the household and this tended to be low paid employment, with unsociable hours, such as delivery or taxi driving and evening restaurant working.

Residents we spoke with expressed pride in living in Bradford. It was their home and they felt it had a real sense of community. They particularly liked the multi-cultural nature of the city and took pride in its current regeneration. However, residents also felt that their city was often portrayed negatively in the media.

2.4.1 Relative importance of road safety within the community

The key actor group, which consisted of local councillors, businessmen, youth and community workers and others, considered road safety to be very important, so much so that they regularly engaged in discussions on the topic during neighbourhood forum meetings held within the vicinity. In the parents' group, mothers were concerned for their children's safety, especially as the majority spoken to were pedestrians and they were worried about being able to get their children to and from school without harm.

In contrast, some young people felt that other issues were more important to them than road safety, particularly drugs and crime. The area directly surrounding the young people's youth club was renowned for drug dealing and this seemed to be linked to large and/or fast cars, with drugs deals noted for taking place in cars. This had an impact on young people's perceptions of driving and admiration for 'cool' older young men (discussed below in Section 2.4.3).

2.4.2 The environment

Bradford is a densely populated city with narrow residential side streets and it has very little open land on which to build further in the future. Manningham ward is in close proximity to the city centre, and the main arterial roads cut through the wards from the motorway and from neighbouring towns. The city's ring road runs directly through the ward, bringing traffic into and out of the city centre. The area is saturated with cars. There is no 'Park and Ride' servicing the city and, despite the availability of local bus services on the main routes, there is a general reliance on the car to get around in the community, particularly among young men.

There are also a number of other environmental or structural issues which impact on road safety and are of concern within the community. These were highlighted and discussed during the mapping exercises. They include:

- **Unadopted back streets** – these are back alleys that run between rows of terraced housing. They are considered unsafe and are poorly maintained as they are privately owned and, therefore, not maintained by the

council. The properties along these streets have gates that open directly onto the road. This makes it unsafe for children, in particular, as they are also used as short cuts by traffic in the neighbourhood.

- A **lack of parking facilities**, coupled with a large number of cars in each household, results in congested roads and side streets. This seems to be because many Asian households comprise large extended families and many household members have cars. This may be because of the elevated status given to the car, particularly among young men. Problems are compounded because the housing is primarily terraced with no off-road parking and very little space for cars to park on the street.
- A **lack of pelican and zebra crossings** in certain places and a lack of signage around schools.
- Large numbers of people driving to **mosques and supplementary schools** at certain times of the day (4.30 to 7.00 pm). The mosques do not have any parking spaces.
- A **lack of play space** for children. The majority of houses in the Manningham ward are terraced houses with very small back yards and a lack of nearby green recreational spaces and good quality spaces. In addition, there are a number of 'back to backs' that have no outside space at all. Although there is a large park in the vicinity, it did not seem to be close enough for young children to be able to access unaccompanied.
- The location of **Bradford City football ground** and three large wedding venues which are used by people from all over the country. At certain times, this means that neighbouring streets are used as car parks, making it congested and hazardous for the residents.
- **Schools located on busy roads** and, in one instance, on a bend. This road is used by some as a short cut to avoid congested junctions and to save time.

2.4.3 Behaviours and attitudes

Certain behaviours were found to be a cause for concern among the residents of the community, including children and young people. These included speeding and driver behaviour, and certain pedestrian behaviour including children playing out, 'messaging about' in the streets and going to places unaccompanied by adults. Resident's attitudes to in-car safety were also explored.

2.4.4 Speeding and driver behaviour

By far the most commonly cited problem among all the residents we spoke with was the issue of speeding. Speeding was generally blamed on young people in general and young men in particular. Parents highlighted concerns in the local area about the immaturity and inexperience of drivers who drove too fast in the local area, and mothers we spoke with were of the view that young people drove too fast because they liked to show off:

W1: Relating to what she was saying, you know the drivers, the age of passing is too young. Because you have got too many young drivers and I think they are the ones that are likely to cause accidents. That is my opinion anyway.

INT: Why, why do you think that might be?

W1: Because, especially boys, I mean it is just from personal experience really, you know they are really into driving and that and they just can't wait to pass basically and you know I think.

W2: Showing off.

W1: Yes, showing off really, you know.

(Bradford parents' group)

A few parents felt that the driving test age should be raised as a solution to the problem. However, most mothers felt that speeding would be better solved by installing more flashing speed limit signs on main roads and by cutting the speed limit further in more densely populated areas. Others, particularly the men from the key actor group, believed it was a question of dealing with young people's perceptions of risk itself rather than by making other changes:

M3: Driver behaviour is a big issue.

M5: For me it is about perception, risk perception. Driving in this sort of area there is a likelihood that there are going to be pedestrians, children and it is taking that risk into account, slowing down you know, instead of speeding up say. You know you are going into a busy area, you slow down.

M3: Yes.

M5: When you are into an open area where there is less likelihood of pedestrians and children, you could possibly speed up a little bit there. But it is that perception which doesn't, for some people doesn't register. It is the same speed fast, wherever they are. And that is I think one of the main problems.

(Key actor group, Bradford)

When we spoke with young drivers themselves about who they thought was to blame for pedestrian casualties in the area, they began by blaming pedestrians for not looking properly for oncoming traffic when crossing the roads. However, during the course of the discussion they generally accepted that they could also be considered to be at fault for speeding and the way in which they drove in the local area. They also highlighted how their behaviour changed depending on their mood and how this, in turn, played a part in risk-taking behaviour when they were driving:

INT: Young people between the ages of 17 and 25 are particularly vulnerable when they are out on the roads driving. Why do you think that might be?

M1: I know exactly why that is. You know sometimes if you are just in the mood you just want to do daft stuff.

INT: Like what?

M1: Put your foot down.

M2: It is a mood thing yes.

M1: When you have music on and people in the car.

M2: Yes a lot of that stuff.

(Bradford young people, 16–21 years old)

This group highlighted the aggressive and macho driving culture that they lived in, and learned to drive in, themselves. This was borne out during observations when predominantly young men were seen to 'tailgate' behind others and display their impatience by sounding their horns regularly if people did not move out of their way. During the discussion it was noted that some provision for a facility where they could go and safely drive faster away from pedestrians might be worth considering:

M1: The drivers, they come and look at you.

M2: Intimidate you.

INT: Who intimidates you on the road?

M1: Other drivers.

INT: Just anybody?

M1: Yes, anybody yes. It depends what they do and the actions of other drivers really.

M2: Like if one person will overtake a younger driver, he puts his foot down and tries catching up with him.

M1: Road rage.

M2: If someone overtakes you, you just want to prove that your car is faster by catching up.

INT: Right. So is it a boy thing, is it a bloke thing?

M2: Yes it is definitely yes.

M3: I think we should have a racing track.

M1: Just to let it all out.

(Bradford young people, 16–21 years old)

The younger age group of boys, aged 11–16, also talked about the difficulty they had crossing roads in their neighbourhood due to speeding cars and they described the uncertainty they faced about whether cars would stop at zebra crossings for them to get across safely. However, it was evident during discussions with them how much they admired and looked up to some of what they perceived to be 'cool' behaviour of the older age group of drivers (aged 16–21) such as speeding and handbrake turns. This issue becomes of more concern in that we were told that some older young men were involved in teaching some of the younger boys to drive on local car parks in the

evenings, thus passing on attitudes about driving that may contribute to the higher incidence of casualties in the local area.

One further issue that was highlighted as having an impact upon driver behaviour by young drivers themselves was the difficulties they faced in affording to pay for driving lessons and car insurance. They had learnt to drive by primarily relying on family and friends to teach them the basics (clutch control for example), which reduced the cost of paying for formal lessons. In the context that Bradford has the highest number of uninsured vehicles on the UK's roads (Buttoo, 2009) and that many also lack car tax and MOTs, it was notable that young drivers spoke openly about the impact that not being able to afford car insurance had on their driving. One young man in particular (noting that he did not think himself unusual) said that he believed that not having car insurance had made his driving more reckless as he was keen to get in and out of places very quickly to avoid detection and that if he was involved in an accident he would drive off:

M1: Most of the people that do have accidents are uninsured ... To be honest for three years I didn't drive around with insurance, I used to speed around, I used to drive about because ... I thought if I drove quicker I would quickly get there and then basically I thought, if the police did stop me they couldn't do anything to me that would really affect me. I didn't have no insurance.

M2: And it wouldn't affect you?

M1: Well if I was insured I would get banned, my insurance would go even higher.

(Bradford young people's group, 16–21 years old)

There was also felt to be a general lack of respect for speed limits by many residents, some of whom had been on the receiving end of overly aggressive behaviour when they themselves were driving within the speed limit. There was also concern about 'bad' parking outside schools and mosques, with cars pulling up on keep clear 'zig zags' and cars inappropriately and dangerously parked on yellow lines outside shops on busy main roads and side streets. This obscured the vision of children and motorists alike, increasing the likelihood of road accidents involving children.

2.4.5 In-car safety

We found that there was some confusion about what was legal with regard to wearing seat belts among some of the residents. While most women said that their children were strapped in, many mothers in the parents' group believed that it was **not** a legal requirement to wear a seat belt if in the rear of the car. Furthermore, some of the women believed that being in the back of the car with their children meant that they did not need to secure themselves in. This was explained in terms of them feeling that they could reach their children more easily, should they need to, without being fastened in. One woman thought that she would be able to reach her children quickly if they attempted to get out of the car, which indicated that her children did not wear seat belts in the back of the car either.

A further issue that arose during discussions with mothers and with primary school age children was the amount of space available in cars to accommodate large families, coupled with, in many cases, extended families. Some of the women believed that having to get a booster seat for their children was 'silly' and was not seen as an essential car cost. Actually being able to get their entire families in cars along with car seats and/or booster seats was also a problem for many families. The only solutions they believed were to leave some of their family behind or to buy a bigger car, which they said they could not afford. A few children told us about how they did not have enough room in the back of the car to wear their seat belt comfortably when their older relatives accompanied them on journeys. Observations in the area during the course of the research confirmed the extent of non-seat-belt wearing, both in the rear by children and by many young men while driving or as front-seat passengers.

Seat-belt wearing was discussed further with young drivers who said that seat belts were uncomfortable and 'uncool'. However, like Christmas *et al.* (2008), we found that there is no such thing as non-seat-belt wearers, only inconsistent seat-belt wearing. Young people said that they would be laughed at by friends if they wore seat belts, but with their family they would be more inclined to do so. They also told us that they would be more likely to wear a seat belt as a front-seat passenger if the driver was wearing one. The problem is, however, that many of their friends did not wear a seat belt while driving, suggesting that they would not either, thus increasing the likelihood of significant injury to all young car occupants if involved in an accident. This highlights the strong influence of peer pressure on young people even when they are aware of the need to wear a seat belt. The young men also told us that they pulled their seat belts around them to make it look like they were fastened if they saw police in the area, but let it go once the threat of being stopped had passed. In so doing, they suggested that the law was not being enforced properly in the area:

- M1: *They do not enforce it. Three times the police told me to wear my seat belt, they did pull me over and say, wear your seat belt, but they didn't do anything else ...*
- M2: *There are fines in place anyway but most officers are just lazy and can't be arsed pulling you over and going through the whole procedure of giving a fine.*

(Bradford young people's group, 16–21 years old)

They felt that, if the law was enforced by fining them on the spot, it would increase the likelihood of them putting their seat belt on. However, it is unlikely that many of these young people would be able to afford to pay a fine if caught. Given that not having car insurance increased instances of dangerous driving, it is a possibility that they might drive more dangerously to avoid being caught for not wearing a seat belt. This, and driving without insurance, raises questions about the efficacy of current sanctions for breaking the law – particularly among young people. As one police officer told us: *'If I spent all my time stopping those who don't wear a seat belt, I wouldn't have time to do anything else'*.

2.4.6 Children and young people's pedestrian behaviour and attitudes

The primary school children we spoke with were very well versed in how to keep themselves safe while crossing roads. For example, they told us that they knew they had to stop, look and listen before they crossed, and they knew that they had to wait for cars to stop before they crossed roads, especially when they were using zebra crossings. However, some of their conversations highlighted how easily children can get distracted, either by other children or through simply daydreaming while crossing the road:

INT: *What is going on here (in the child's picture about children crossing the road on the way to school)?*

B: *I think of a cheeseburger.*

INT: *Cheeseburger, why do you think of cheeseburger?*

B: *Because I like them ... I am thinking of it. Then I just get tired and start walking forward and my mum quickly grabs me.*

(Boy, Year 3, Bradford)

There were many instances of younger children being escorted to school by older children (either siblings or neighbours). From the children's point of view this was often because their mothers had caring responsibilities for other younger children or older disabled relatives. One child told us that their house was very busy in the mornings with her aunt and nieces coming round, and that her mother had to prepare breakfast for her blind grandmother before she left for school. Parents also told us how having younger children in the home could affect how much they supervised their children. For example, one woman with two younger children told us that she had to supervise her older child crossing the road from the doorway of her house in order to be readily accessible to her younger children inside the house.

As Lupton and Bayley (2007) have pointed out, it is children's **social** behaviour that can lead to risk taking, despite their knowledge of safe roadside behaviour. We found that children were highly social during their excursions to and from school and like to follow or chase others in order to play or tease them. During observations we witnessed many instances of primary school children dashing across roads without looking for oncoming traffic, primarily because they wanted to catch up with other children that they wanted to speak to or play with. Children were also observed playing with balls, and other children talked about how their siblings played with cards or other toys on journeys to and from school.

Some of the primary school boys told us about their frequent unaccompanied trips to mosques or how they often went with older cousins or siblings. In some instances this meant crossing very busy roads in the dark during winter months. They pointed out that these journeys became even more dangerous when they decided to play games en route: as one boy told us, he and his cousin had races to get to and from the mosque. Some children also told us that they went to pick up items unaccompanied from shops in order to help their parents and save them time. These journeys were also seen to carry risks because of the busy junctions and the likelihood of distractions.

Previous research has noted the importance of open space for children in disadvantaged communities (Sutton, 2008) and how street play occurs due to a lack of safe alternative space or activities there (Christie *et al.*, 2009; Sutton 2008). As noted earlier, there was a real lack of play space in the area, with the majority of houses having very small back yards with very little space to run about in. Very often this meant that children as young as three or

four were observed playing out at the front of houses, running backwards and forwards along the pavements, and occasionally stepping into the road. In the densely built streets with many cars parked along the roads, children were hidden from drivers' views behind parked cars along the way. The potential risk to them here was clearly evident. Older children (aged eight and above) told us about how important it was for them to meet up with friends and to play out on the streets – it was fun. They recounted how they played 'kerby'³ across the street with their friends, but sometimes on their own. Parents, on the other hand, expressed anxiety about the environment that their children played in and their inability to prevent their children from playing out, as other children frequently played out on the streets in the neighbourhood:

My children play on the road right, and it is not a one-way road, it has got through traffic. It is quite a busy road. The problem I have is, I have told them off many times, not to play there, but they inevitably do play there, because it is just outside the house, they want to kick a football somewhere and it is impossible to stop them from doing it.

(Father, key actor group, Bradford)

... But in the front, there are kids playing in the front, they play on their bikes and my son is eight and because I have always kind of kept him closer to me, it is like I am scared because I think if I let him out, like I said on [name of drive] it is like a cul-de-sac, and cars just come and they don't look and I am scared.

(Mother, parents' group, Bradford)

Mothers who we interviewed said that they were concerned for the safety of their children when they played out in the street and that they would prefer to have them play in a local park. However, as some pointed out, they could not afford to spend the time in the park supervising their children, as most were perceived to be too young to make the journey unaccompanied by adults. This was a particular concern when there were other children to care for and house work to be done. Parents expressed their dissatisfaction with this situation, but were clear that they had little choice. They therefore had to let children play in their street, but either arranged for neighbours and friends to keep an eye on them or went back and forth between the home and the street to supervise them. As a consequence, parents were focused on solutions that would make their immediate environment safer for their children and suggested changes like the installation of more speed bumps and having lower speed limits on residential roads.

Secondary school age children in the area also told us about how accidents can occur during 'horseplay' when out with friends. They recounted incidents of boys who were bullies who pushed and grabbed others and of stepping into the road to avoid them. They also knew that they could be distracted by using mobile phones and music players, as well as recounting how they often played kerby with friends. Playing kerby was not seen as dangerous by these young people. It was perceived as simply a game that they could play together with their friends and as fun.

2.4.7 Types of accidents in the area

There was an accident involving a young boy who had been hit by a car as he walked across a road. It happened near a blind corner, where cars have to pull out further for the driver to see if there is any oncoming traffic, and the boy ran out into the road simultaneously and was killed. Another boy was also knocked off his bike and killed in the vicinity. Several other instances of 'near misses' were cited which involved children and young people. They also involved speeding cars and difficulty in being able to get a clear view because of double parked cars along the streets in question.

2.5 Conclusions

A combination of factors appears to increase the propensity of accidents among child pedestrians and young car occupants in the Manningham ward. These involve a real mixture of environment and behavioural issues.

On the one hand, the city experiences intense density – of population, housing, and cars. It also has a number of venues that contribute to increased congestion within the city at certain times. On the other hand, there are a whole series of cultural behaviours and attitudes towards car and road safety, particularly in relation to children, both within cars and as unsupervised pedestrians. Furthermore, there is a cultural value placed on car ownership in Bradford.

³ 'Kerby' is a game where children, facing each other, take turn to bounce a ball across a street and they aim to hit the kerb cleanly with the ball so that it bounces back to them.

Young men and young boys, in particular, saw cars as a status symbol and even poor households had multiple cars, or had households where cars were acquired by young people within them. Young people's different perceptions of risk taking and their attitudes towards driving behaviour are potentially lethal when combined with this reliance on, and perception of, the car – both as a means of transport and as a 'cool', macho symbol. This, coupled with narrow, densely populated streets, and a dearth of secure open space in which children can play safely, places increased strain on keeping children safe from the likelihood of road accidents. In general, key actors, parents and younger people believed that there was little deterrent for such poor driving behaviour as speeding and non-seat-belt use, and they felt that the police needed to enforce these laws more consistently and thoroughly.

In addition, many households in the area are poor and do not prioritise the purchase of bigger or safer cars, and by implication may not perceive MOTs or car insurance as essential. Furthermore, the required number of car and/or booster seats may not be regarded as a spending priority. Household circumstances may also affect the safety of children, in that many households have large families. Family size impacts upon the amount of space available within their cars and homes, and, as many households have no outside space, the street becomes the favoured space to play. Household circumstances can affect the extent to which parents are able to supervise their children, and larger families can often result in more distractions. Furthermore, some families have other caring responsibilities, such as caring for older or ill relatives, which could cause time pressures and affect their ability to accompany their children.

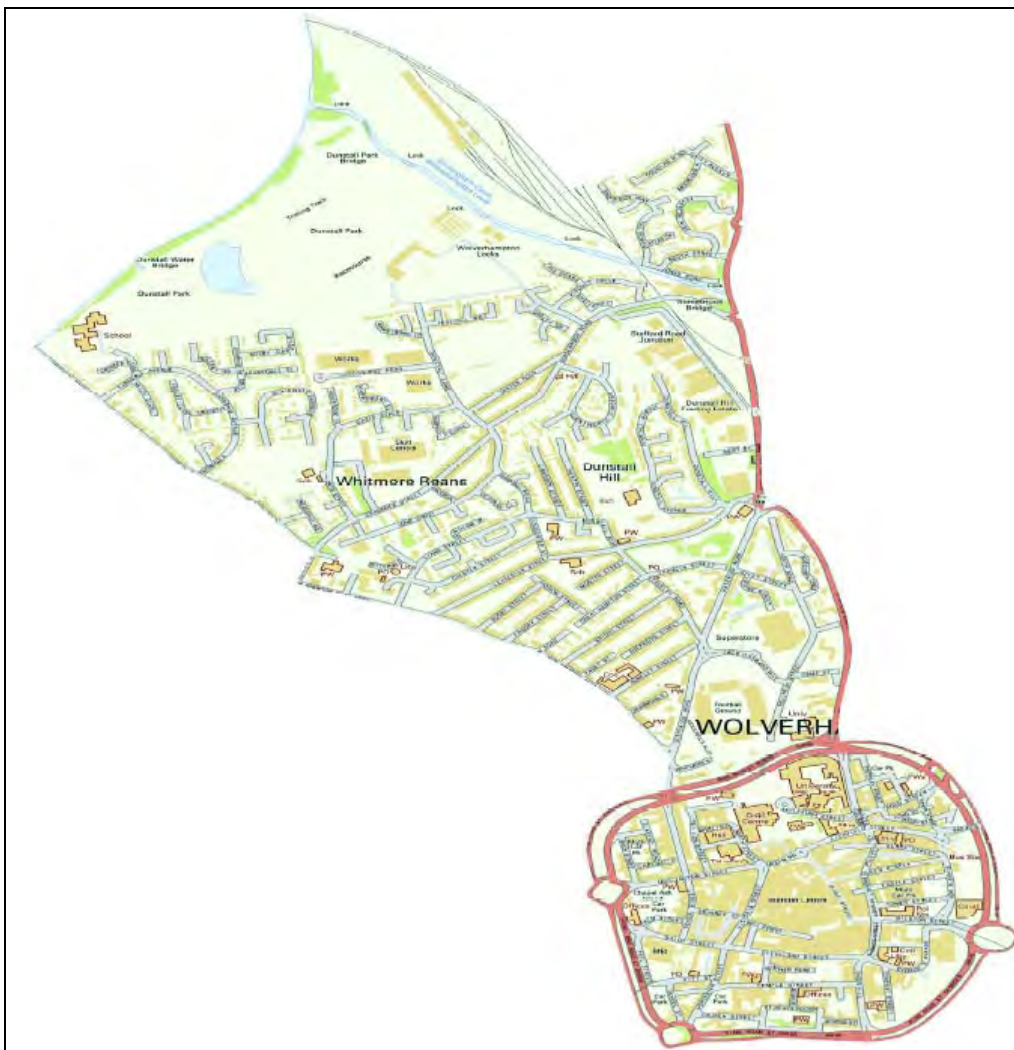
3 Wolverhampton case study

3.1 Background

St Peter's ward in Wolverhampton was selected as a case study on the basis of its high level of deprivation and high level of pedestrian casualties (16,429 1–17-year-olds per 100,000 population). It provides an example of a local authority that has not been involved in Department for Transport initiatives, such as the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI) or Kerbcraft, and has not received Road Safety Partnership Grant Scheme funding for any scheme in this area.

St Peter's is located immediately to the north of the town centre in Wolverhampton (Figure 3.1). It is severed from the town centre to some extent by the ring road. It is within the Dunstall sub-division of the Whitmore Reans Local Neighbourhood Partnership Area. Reluctance to use subways leads to increased potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.

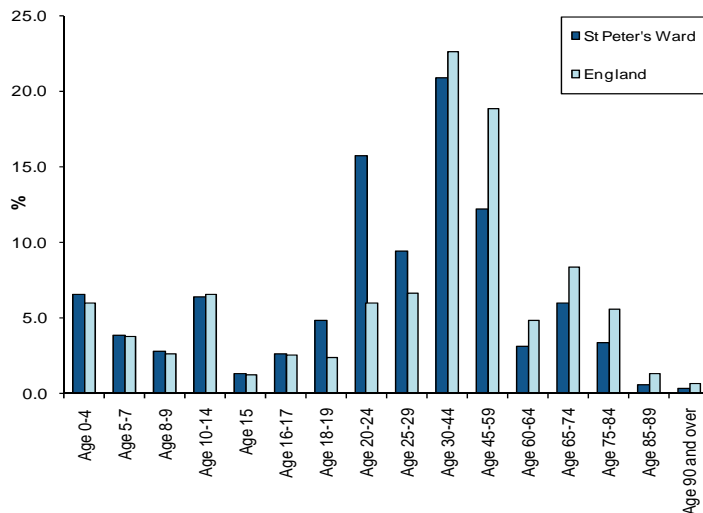
Figure 3.1: St Peter's, Wolverhampton



Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2008

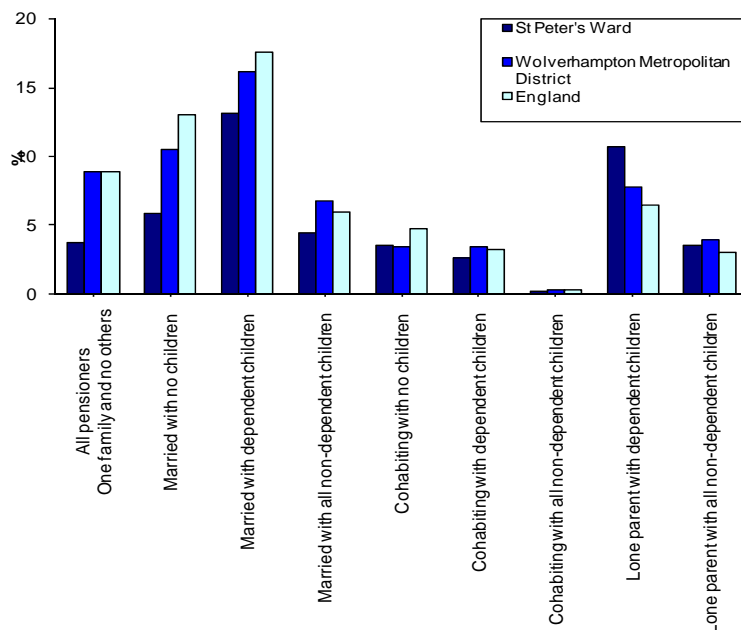
St Peter's ward has a young population when compared with England as a whole. There are, in particular, a much greater proportion of young adults between 18 and 29 (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Age



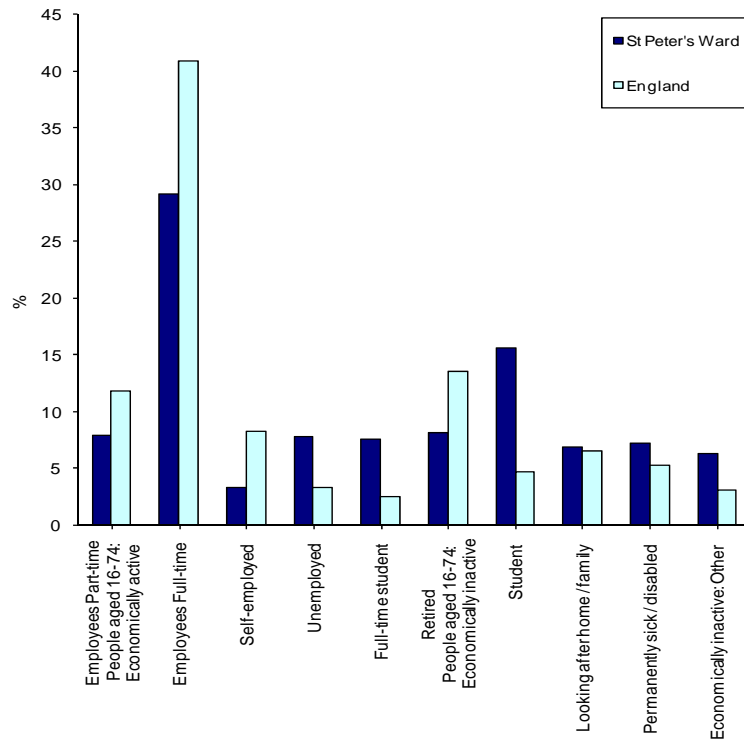
The case study area has a significantly higher than average rate of lone parents with dependent children when compared with the region and England as a whole (Figure 3.3).

Figure 3.3: Household composition



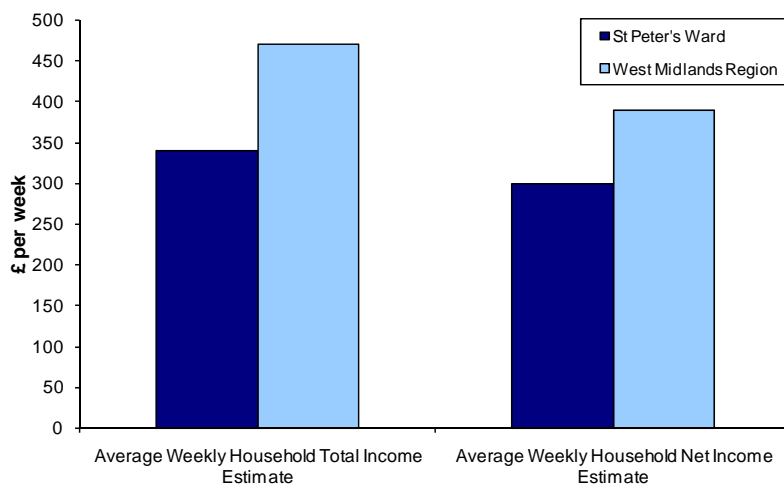
Residents in St Peter's ward have a considerably lower than average rate of employment and higher proportions of unemployed, carers, sick/disabled and economically inactive. There are also significantly more students than the national average (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4: Economic activity



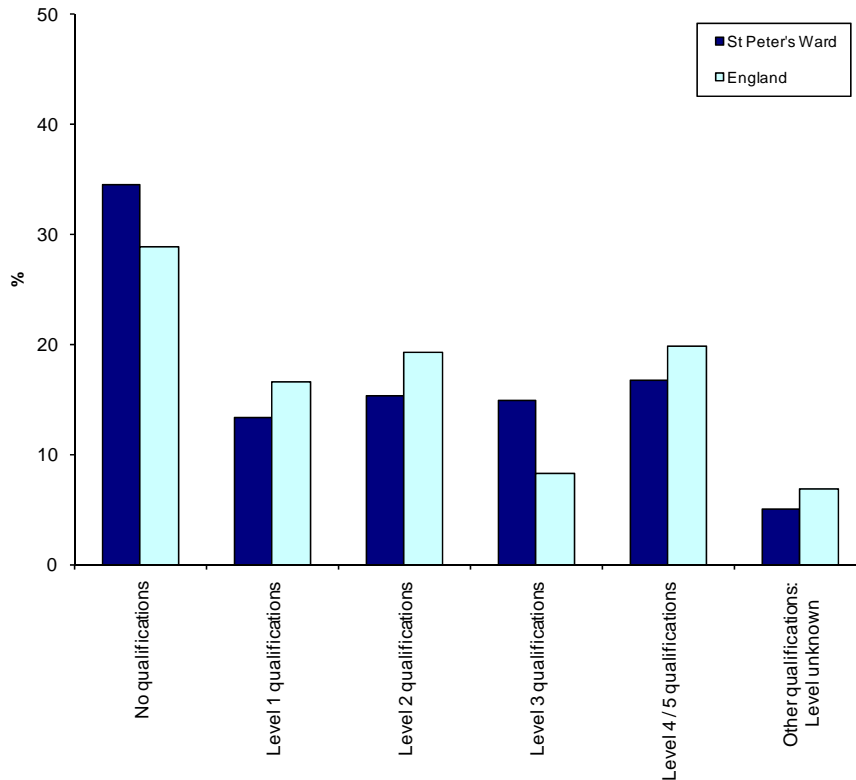
Incomes are relatively low in the area. The average weekly household income is around £320 compared with a regional average in excess of £450 (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5: Income



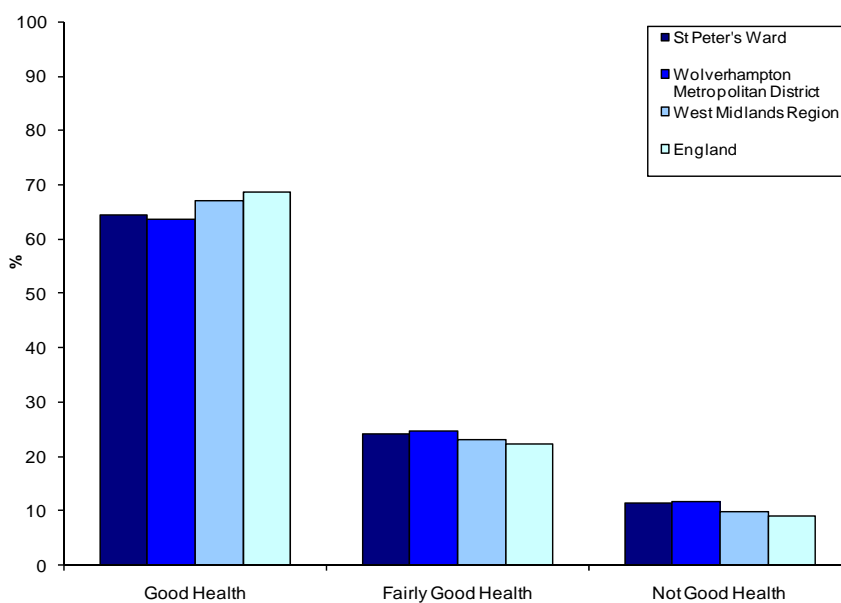
Residents have fewer qualifications in this area when compared with England as a whole. There are, however, more residents with a Level 3 qualification than the national average (Figure 3.6).

Figure 3.6: Qualifications



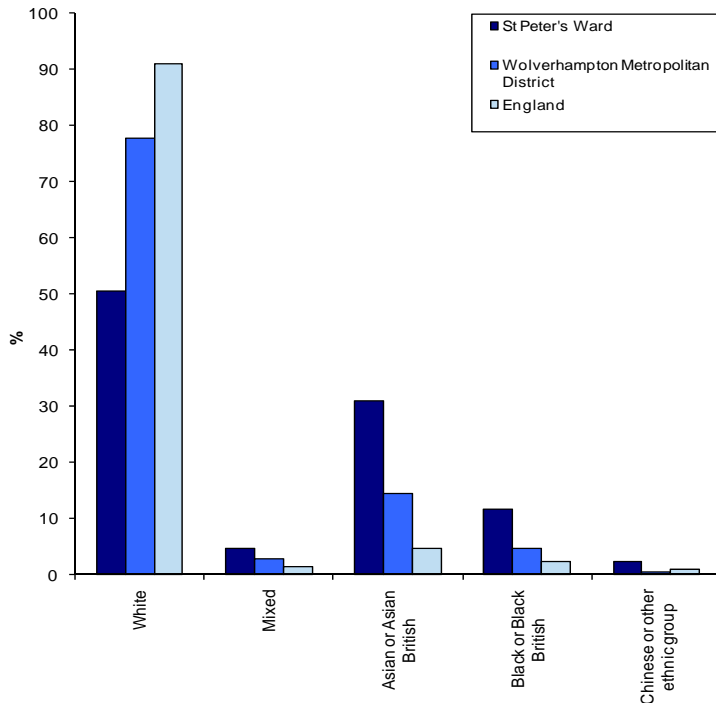
The health of local residents is marginally worse than for the region and England overall (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7: Health



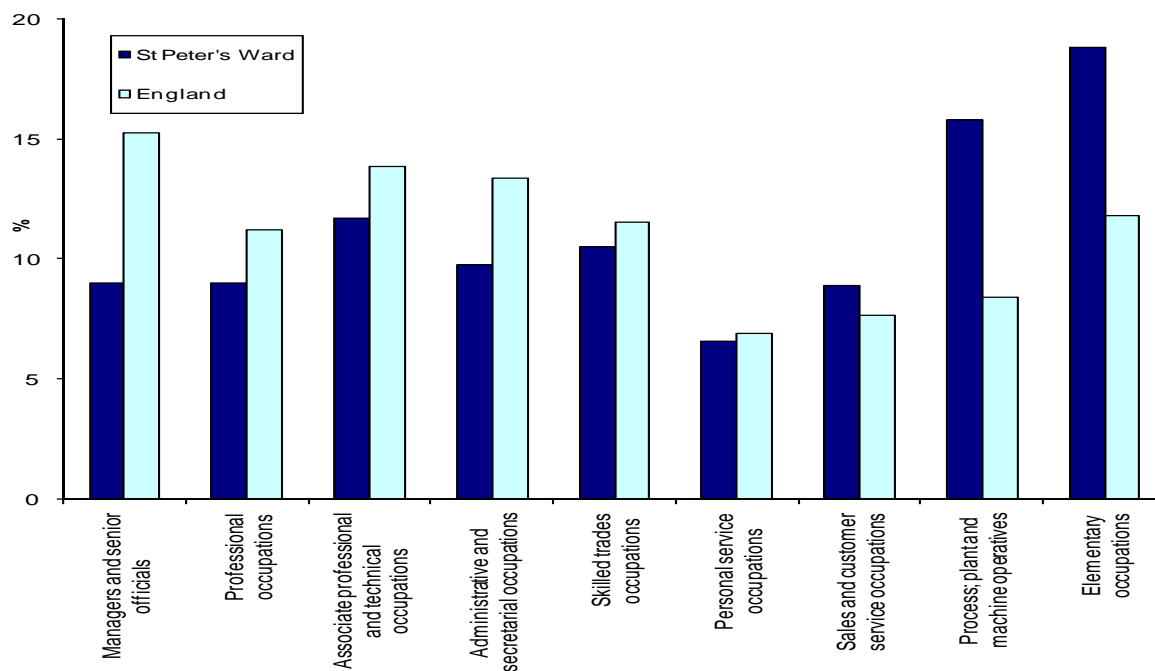
Just over 30% of the population of St Peter's are Asian or Asian British, a significantly higher proportion than the regional and national averages. However, the majority of the population in the area is White (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8: Ethnic group



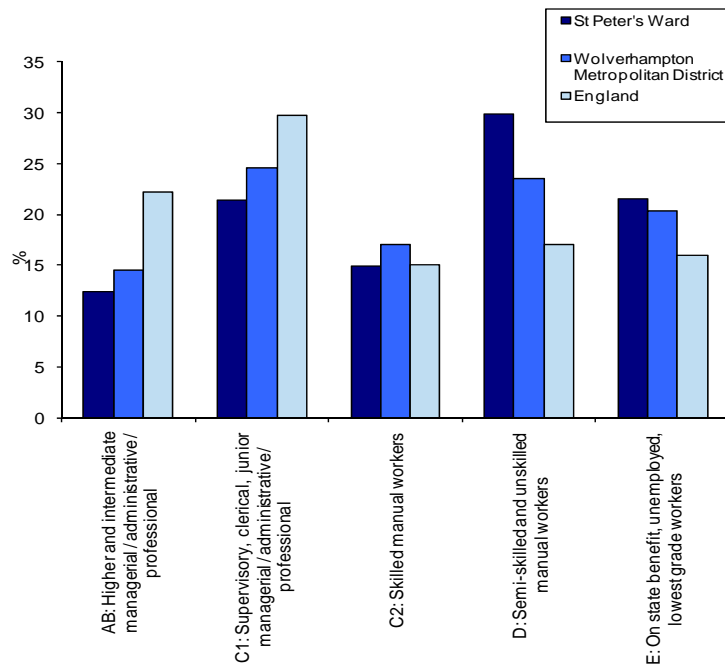
The area has a considerably higher than national average proportion of residents in sales/customer service, plant and machine operatives, and elementary occupations (Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9: Occupation group



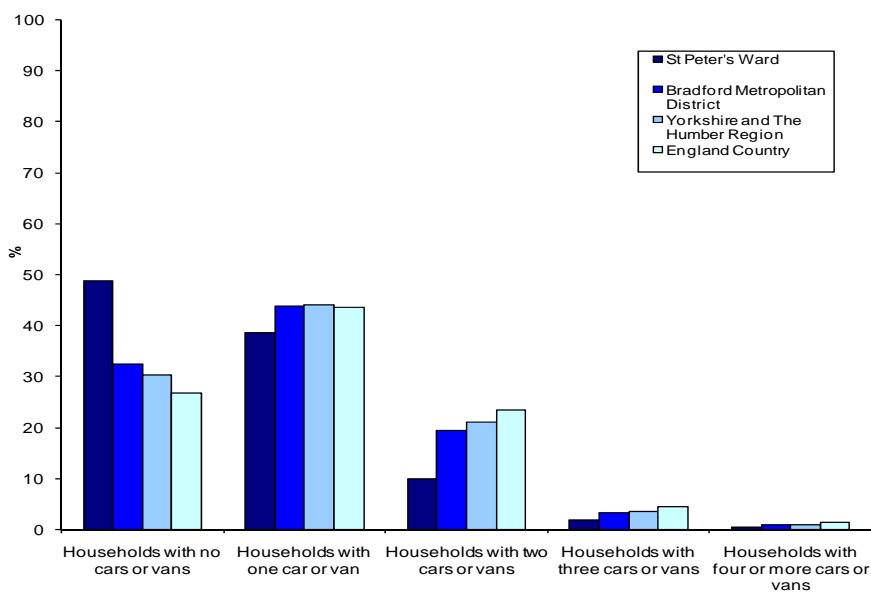
St Peter's is characterised by a high number of people employed in low-skilled work or unemployed or on state benefits when compared with the region and country as a whole (Figure 3.10).

Figure 3.10: Social grade



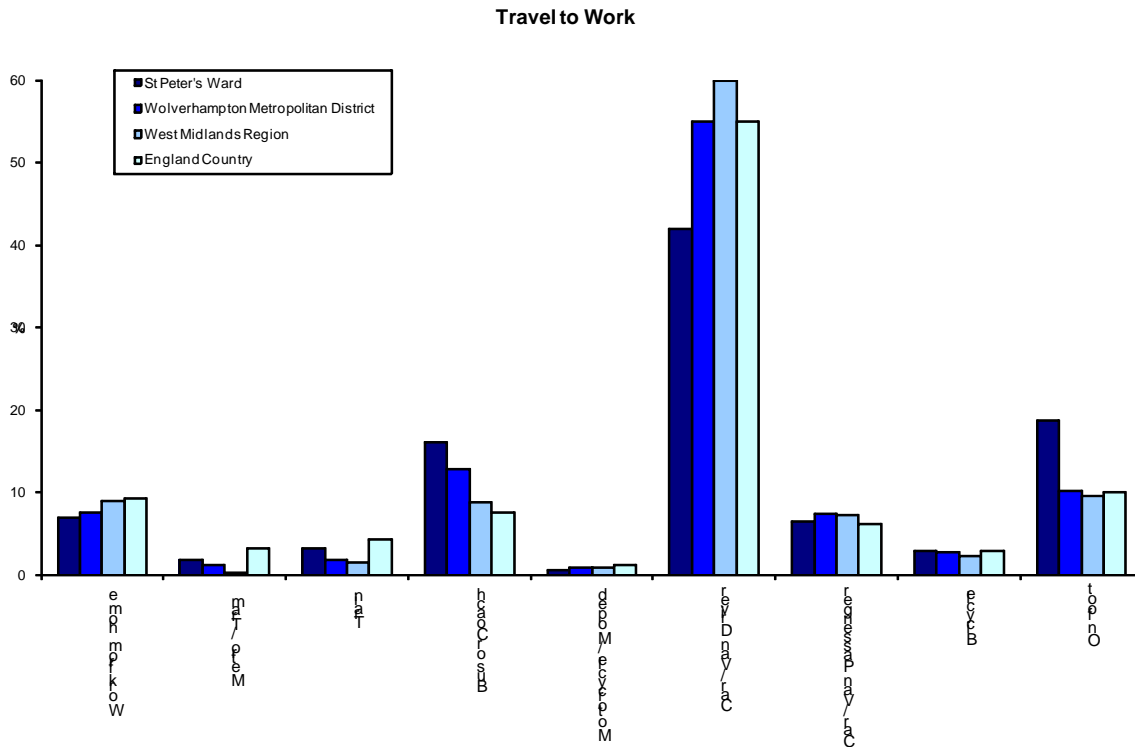
There are a significantly higher proportion of residents with no car or van when compared with England as a whole (Figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11: Car/van ownership



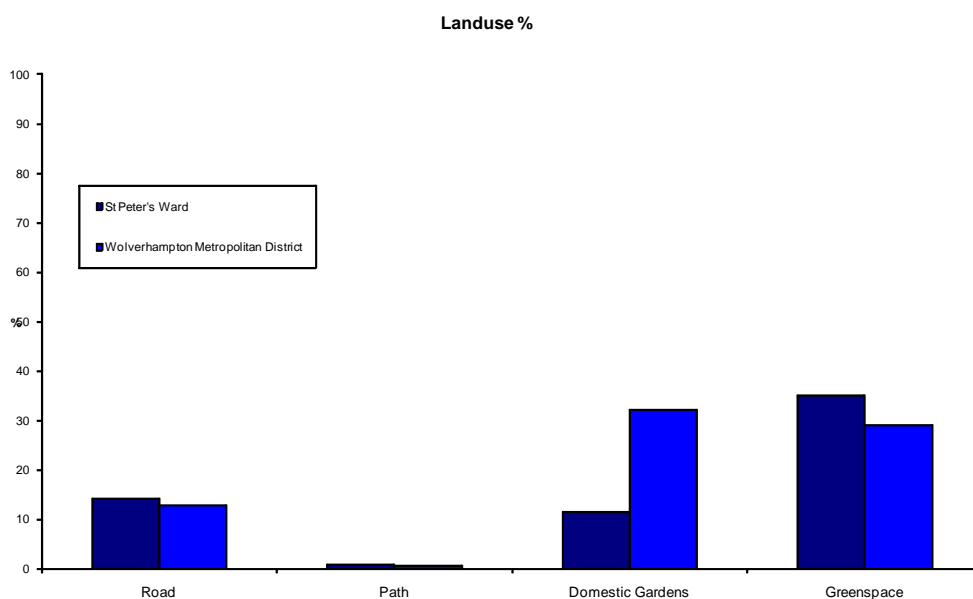
Although most St Peter's residents travel to work by car or van, they are much less likely to do so when compared with Wolverhampton as a whole or the regional average. Many more walk to work or go by bus (Figure 3.12).

Figure 3.12: Travel to work



The land use analysis indicates that there is less space dedicated to gardens compared with Wolverhampton as a whole and marginally more road space. St Peter's does have proportionally more green space than the borough generally, as Dunstall Park sits within the ward boundary (Figure 3.13).

Figure 3.13: Land use



3.2 Policy and strategy

Wolverhampton's broad strategy for road safety is contained in their Road Safety Plan. The council is currently drafting their next plan for 2009 to 2012 (Wolverhampton City Council, 2009a), which is anticipated to include the continuation and expansion of existing activities which are seen as successful, as well as new initiatives. The draft plan recognises the Department for Transport's strategies included in *Tomorrows Roads – Safer for Everyone: The Second Three-year Review* (Department for Transport, 2007a) and *Child Road Safety Strategy* (Department for Transport, 2007b), as well as *Changing Lanes* published by the Audit Commission (2007). The Audit Commission report emphasises the need for a range of public-sector bodies to be involved in delivering casualty reductions with local councils providing co-ordination and leadership.

Wolverhampton's draft Road Safety Plan notes that the road casualty reduction targets for the West Midlands have already been met, but that new national targets are being developed which will be used to drive continued progress. The council has identified four high-risk groups which guide the strategy towards continued casualty reduction:

- young drivers;
- teenage pedestrians;
- cyclists; and
- motorcyclists.

The Road Safety Strategy identifies the need to co-ordinate a range of engineering, enforcement and education activities by key partners. The key partners are the council along with the police and fire service, who form part of the West Midlands Road Safety Partnership.

The draft plan highlights:

- speed reduction and management, including 20 mph zones, the installation of safety cameras and speed-activated signs, Community Speedwatch and engineering and camera schemes guided by analysis of casualty data;
- road safety education and training, including pedestrian and cycle training;
- publicity initiatives for children, parents, young drivers, offenders and others; and
- Safer School travel activities.

Road safety is embedded in the *Walking Strategy for Wolverhampton* (Wolverhampton City Council, 2005a) and the *Cycling Strategy for Wolverhampton* (Wolverhampton City Council, 2005b). One of the stated policies for walking is to reduce pedestrian accidents in line with local authority and government targets. Measures designed to meet this objective include: reducing traffic speeds within residential areas; enforcing speed restrictions in partnership with the police; focusing safety schemes on accident danger spots; providing safe and attractive alternatives to subways; and continuing to expand the Safer Routes to School initiative. The Cycling Strategy also notes the need to provide a safe network and facilities to encourage cycling. This includes support for traffic management and enforcement measures for cyclists, and promoting responsible and safe use of roads by motorists and cyclists. The strategy also includes the offer of on-road cycle training for all 10-year-olds in Wolverhampton.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership in Wolverhampton sets the strategy for improving outcomes for children. The strategy is identified in the *Children and Young People's Plan 2006–2009* (Wolverhampton Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, 2005). The plan identifies a range of targets concerned with improving opportunities for children and young people that can have an indirect impact on reducing the risk of injury from road accidents. It also identified a number of key actions aimed at reducing the number of children and young people killed or injured in road traffic, with leadership from different partners. These are to:

- improve road safety for newspaper deliveries (Schools);
- establish Child Death Review Panels (Local Safeguarding Board);
- extend the offer of road safety training programmes in schools, targeting younger pupils and those at transition points (e.g. primary to secondary) (Council Road Safety);
- involve children themselves in promoting road safety, through the Junior Road Safety Officer Scheme, with the aim of involving all schools in Wolverhampton;

- support schools in the development of travel plans, as part of the Healthy Schools initiative;
- organise national and international Walk to School weeks, and continue with the Walking Bus (Healthy Schools Team); and
- delivery of the Dying to Drive and Your Choice initiatives (West Midlands Fire Service).

At an operational planning level, road safety is less well integrated within strategy for children's services in Wolverhampton. *Children and Young People in Wolverhampton – A Strategy for Interagency Working 2003 – 2006* (CYPSP, 2003) includes the issue of child safety, but does not take account of road safety. Similarly, the Safeguarding Children Board Policy and Procedures (Wolverhampton's Safeguarding Service) details the approach and procedures to be followed for children at risk of abuse and neglect. It does not extend to matters of accidental injury including road traffic accidents.

The Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Strategy for Children (Wolverhampton City Council, 2009b) recognises the role of school travel plans, including Safer Routes to School, and other initiatives that promote cycling and walking in delivering the outcome of reduced obesity in children. This strategy also notes that, while it is directed at improving the health and life chances of all children, it places particular emphasis on those who are most vulnerable and subject to the most debilitating inequalities, including children from deprived backgrounds.

3.3 Services and interventions

3.3.1 Wolverhampton Council – Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity

Road Safety education, training and publicity (ETP) in Wolverhampton is predominantly education based and delivered to children through schools. However, they also develop publicity initiatives for the wider population.

The following programme of activities are used in schools and they are currently developing a programme that runs from Key Stage 1 up to Key Stage 5 to roll out to schools across the city:

- **School crossing patrol visits** – role play sessions with children ranging from four to seven, teaching them to use school crossing patrols.
- **Street Feet resource** – role play equipment including kerbs, crossings, etc. (initially developed by Richmond Council with Transport for London funding and now produced commercially), loaned to schools for Key Stage 1 children. Role playing is likely to be appropriate to reinforce messages and for children with lower levels of literacy, of which there are a higher proportion in disadvantaged communities.
- **Teddy Takes a Tumble** (LARSOA, 2006) – this resource is provided to all dedicated nursery schools and children's centres within the area. This simple reading book aims to convey the importance of wearing a seat belt to young children. (see also the Bradford case study (Section 2)). *On the Way to School* booklets are delivered to all nursery/reception children within the area. This is a resource for parents and children to look at together, promoting pedestrian safety when walking to school. All children are also given the *Green Cross Code* (Year 1) and child car seat DVDs are sent to all schools for use with 6–7-year-olds.
- **Stepping Out pedestrian training** – Wolverhampton provide schools with a CDROM resource called 'Stepping Out', developed by Manchester City Council, for use with Year 3 children. The initiative involves five sessions using the interactive CD, followed by a practical roadside training session delivered by the road safety team. It follows the three Kerbcraft principles of pedestrian training: finding safer places to cross, crossing between parked vehicles and crossing at junctions.
- **Bikeability** – this initiative involves practical cycle training in all schools. They try to encourage parents to join in the training.
- **Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs)** – Wolverhampton implement the JRSO scheme in the city. This is a peer-led scheme targeted at children aged 10 and 11 to disseminate road safety information to all pupils within schools through their JRSOs.

At Dunstall Hill Primary School, the JRSOs produced a Road Safety Newsletter for pupils at their school which introduced the JRSOs to pupils and had a special focus on 'Be Bright, Be Seen'. The newsletter also gives details on a poster competition and featured a newsflash section, which reminded pupils at Dunstall Hill to remember to use the footpath and zebra crossing when coming to and from school. The Junior Road Safety Officers at West Park Primary School wrote a road safety poem to introduce themselves to the school and to promote 'Be Bright, Ben Seen' and using the crossing.

- **Seat-belt Sheriff** – through this scheme Wolverhampton visit some schools and supermarkets to empower children with knowledge about seat belts and to promote their use.
- **Transition Campaign** – this initiative targets primary school pupils as they move to secondary school. Resources are provided to Year 6 children, parents and teachers to encourage the planning of safer routes to the children's new secondary schools. This is reinforced in September with posters to all secondary schools, encouraging the children to maintain safer routes to their new school.
- **Secondary School Workshops** – Wolverhampton Road Safety Team are currently trialling a series of workshops for 11–18-year-olds focusing on issues such as seat belts, pedestrian safety, young drivers and mobile phones. They are looking at potential partnering with the fire service to deliver this programme.

The following schools are in St Peter's or nearby and take children from this area: Dunstall Hill Primary, New Park Special School, Kingston Centre, West Park Primary, Oxley Primary, St Andrew's Primary, the Giffard Primary and St Jude's. Most participate in school crossing patrol visits, pedestrian and cycle training and Street Feet. All except New Park and Kingston have participated in Walk to School Month, *On the Way to School* booklets, the Green Cross Code Campaign, the Transition to Secondary School Campaign and the School Gate Parking Campaign. Four schools run the JRSO scheme.

- **Publicity** – the council use a range of advertising and promotional activities to promote road safety measures. This includes **bus back advertising** with messages such as 'Don't use your mobile phone and drive'. They speak on **local radio** to promote road safety if opportunities arise. They distribute **leaflets** via targeted communication channels. Information on a child car-seat leaflet is distributed via nurseries and reception classes, and a drink-driving information leaflet is distributed via pubs, restaurants and doctors' surgeries. Advertisements and articles have been placed in the *Whitmore Reans Newsletter* (a free publication delivered to all residents within the case study area), covering issues such as mobile phones, speeding and child pedestrian training. The council hosted a drink-drive event at the city show where the public could experience a drink-drive simulator.

3.3.2 School Travel Plans/Safer Routes to School

Wolverhampton is committed to the development of School Travel Plans for promoting sustainable and healthy travel. More than 80% of schools in the city now have a plan in place and work continues to ensure their implementation.

3.3.3 Wolverhampton Council – Road Safety Engineering

- **Local Safety Scheme** – the major local safety scheme in St Peter's ward is on Newhampton Road. This is the main arterial road running northwest from the city centre ring road and is one of the highest accident locations in the city. Accidents are reported to be largely attributable to speeding. As a major route, traffic-calming measures are restricted. The road is being improved with pedestrian crossings and junctions, road narrowing (bus/cycle lanes), signage and road markings. At junctions the engineers will try to improve visibility problems by narrowing the junction to bring the give way line forward from the side road. They also use waiting restrictions so vehicles do not park too close to junctions.
- **Traffic calming** using speed humps, cushions and raised tables have already been implemented in most of the local residential areas. In addition, the council monitor speeds and, if around 20 mph, a 20 mph residential zone will be installed. Residential traffic-calming schemes have reportedly been very successful in terms of slowing cars and reducing casualties by between 70% and 90% in most local schemes.
- The council try to produce **consultation packs for safety schemes in different languages**, but report that significant costs are a barrier. They often rely on community leaders (temples or mosques) to spread the word.

- **Parking** – the decriminalisation of parking is reported to have reduced the problem of parked cars in the area as the council now has responsibility for enforcement. A Match Day Parking scheme for Wolverhampton Wanderers FC matches has also been introduced.
- **Speed-awareness signs** – the road safety department has eight speed-awareness signs which they put in to try and reduce drivers' speeds and increase drivers' awareness of their speed.
- **Speed cameras** – speed cameras are installed and managed by the West Midlands Road Safety Partnership who have put in about three a year.
- **Speed checker** – the council has provided funding for an unmarked police car to provide a quick response to members of the public who complain about speeding. The team will analyse the results and take action as required. The perception of this initiative is that speeding may not be as bad as residents feel.

3.3.4 Policing

Discussion with the local police indicates that policing priorities in the local area are reducing gun crime, burglary and violence. Gang culture and problems associated with this are also a priority. There is a commitment to community policing and customer satisfaction, and the police aim to involve the community in policing priorities where, typically, issues such as litter and anti-social behaviour are raised.

Road safety issues are a lower priority. Uninsured and unlicensed driving is thought to be a problem in the area, but is not given priority in part because of the cost of recovery of vehicles and they do not have anywhere to keep them. The area includes Wolverhampton Wanderers FC ground and illegal parking can be a problem, particularly on match days, but the police do not prioritise parking enforcement. However, the police do lead or work in partnership on the following interventions – these are typically in place throughout the West Midlands, including, but not specific, to the study area:

- **police community support officers (PCSOs) in schools** – the police organise for PCSOs to talk to children in schools, with some having school-based PCs, although this is not the case in Whitmore Reans where it is not considered necessary. They cover issues such as drugs, gangs and crime. Road safety is covered in primary schools.
- **Drink Drive Campaign** – a bi-annual force-wide campaign which targets drink-drive hot spots locally. Drivers are breathalysed and the campaign makes use of Home Office literature which emphasises the dangers of drinking and driving.
- **Enforcement activity** using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) to identify uninsured and untaxed vehicles.
- **Driver Improvement Scheme** – following an accident in the West Midlands, drivers are offered the opportunity to pay £120 to attend a driving course as an alternative to prosecution.
- **Police surgeries and community meetings** – the local police run surgeries and meetings which aim to increase their contact with the community and therefore improve links.
- **Crime Safety Group** – the local police lead a monthly meeting with the local authority to look jointly at crime and safety issues.

The following are specific to the local area:

- **Football Weeks** – Whitmore Reans Police organise football weeks for children/youths in half terms. The main aim is to engage them in activities rather than crime, but they also recognise that a side effect is reducing youths on the roads/playing by the roads. This initiative is sponsored by the police and is dependent on someone who is an FA coach, who gives his time for free.
- **999 Day** – the local police are aiming to continue with this community event day for the Whitmore Reans area. It provides an opportunity for the emergency services to engage with the community. It will incorporate a road safety element.

3.3.5 Fire service

The fire service in Wolverhampton organise a number of activities focusing on issues such as not wearing seat belts, using mobile phones while driving, anti-social driving and pedestrian safety. An Audit Commission inspection letter to the West Midlands Fire Service makes reference to research by Aston University which concluded that there was increased awareness among young people of the risks associated with driving:

- **Your Choice on the Road** – this is an annual two-week programme of day long education delivered to 10 targeted secondary schools. It is a multi-agency event managed by the fire service, but also involving the police, A&E and road safety. The initiative makes use of DVDs showing various scenarios and classroom discussion with an emphasis on choice and consequences, including road injury, fines and losing a driving licence.
- **School presentations following fatal accidents** – in cases where there is an accident where a child dies or is seriously injured in a car crash, the fire service and police visit the school and undertake a road safety presentation.
- **Dying 2 Drive** – a multi-agency drama with workshops, highlighting the dangers and consequences of dangerous driving.
- **Road Stops/Awareness Raising** – the fire service work with the police in jointly undertaking road stops in hot spot areas with higher numbers of road casualties. Drivers who are committing traffic offences such as using a mobile phone, not wearing seat belts and minor infringements of the speed limit are given the option of a fine or to talk to the fire officers on site. The information given to drivers focuses on actions and consequences using the 'Your Choice on the Road' material, with discretionary use of graphic materials showing accidents caused by speeding. They will ask participants for their views on the information given. One difficulty with this intervention is the problem in tracking whether they have stopped people before or not.
- **Bicycle maintenance courses** – this intervention is not currently in place, but is being developed. Road safety plans to fund the training of fire fighters to train and run training courses in bicycle maintenance with the broader aim of encouraging cycling. It is hoped that this will be extended into schools and cycle training.
- **Children's activity sessions** – this initiative is being developed in partnership with School Sports Development in Wolverhampton. Fire fighters are being trained to run activity sessions in schools with children identified as insufficiently active. The sessions cover safety in the home at the same time, and in the future they will cover safety on the roads.
- **Mentoring of youth offenders** – youth offenders who have been involved in low-level anti-social behaviour, including fire starting and criminal damage, are selected by community wardens for mentoring by fire fighters. The aim is for these officers to be role models for youth offenders and to deter re-offending. The intervention is based on the perception that the fire service is accepted and regarded positively by youth offenders, for example, in contrast with the police. Problems with the concept have been achieving family support as well as language and cultural barriers
- **Fire courses** – the fire service run week-long training courses with young people referred by the police. This includes lectures with information from the 'Your Choice on the Road' resource. The course is considered successful in engaging with disaffected young people (some have joined the Young Fire Fighters Association youth club) and reducing anti-social behaviour, re-offending and accidents. However, it is an expensive and resource-intensive initiative.
- **Family learning** – the fire service is hoping to expand their educational interventions to run family learning courses in the community, but this has not yet been developed.

3.3.6 Children's Services – Safeguarding Children's Board

The Safeguarding Children's Board in Wolverhampton focuses primarily on child protection from abuse and operates a rapid response approach to such cases. The board is required to implement a Child Death Overview Panel where they will react to any deaths and aim to identify preventability factors. There has been one such case in the last 12 months (16-year-old motorcyclist). In this case the attitude of the rider was identified as a contributory

factor and the response was for police talks in local schools to raise awareness of the dangers. Road safety also liaise with the board annually to discuss child road safety:

- **Crucial Crew** – is run by the Safer Wolverhampton Partnership. It is an annual activity for Year 6 children on a wide range of safety issues, including road safety.
- **Children's Centres** – there are a number of Children's Centres in Wolverhampton in areas of relative disadvantage, including one in Whitmore Reans. The centres may do outreach work involving visiting families and discussing issues such as car seats, having a valid MOT and insurance.

3.3.7 Housing

Wolverhampton Homes is an arm's length management organisation (ALMO) that manages the council-owned housing stock, including 1,188 properties in Whitmore Reans. Road user safety is not a priority issue for the organisation, but they are committed to preventing and deterring anti-social behaviour. They report taking a proactive approach and are keen to make a difference in the community beyond the immediate housing management function. They are a strategic partner within the city and contribute towards the achievement of wider community objectives. Their strategy includes a Black and minority ethnic (BME) Housing Action Plan which aims to support, evaluate and promote allocation of housing in BME groups. Their interventions include:

- **Anti-social behaviour measures** – Wolverhampton Homes Anti-social Behaviour Unit co-ordinates the organisation's response to tackling anti-social behaviour, including drug dealing, abuse and threatening behaviour, as well as issues such as ball games, if they are seen as a problem. They feel that they have a positive image with the community. They have awards for people who are seen to have done something outstanding in the community and stood up to anti-social behaviour. The ALMO also implement anti-social behavioural contracts, acceptable behaviour contracts and parental control agreements with their tenants. The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit is working in Whitmore Reans on drink-related problems and prostitution.
- **Crimestopper's event** – Wolverhampton Homes are providing some funding and will participate in this planned event for Whitmore Reans with the police. It will be advertised as a community fun day and aims to raise awareness of crime reporting.

3.3.8 Leisure

The sports and recreation service in Wolverhampton is guided by the Cultural and Community Strategies. The service aims to be neighbourhood focused and to rationalise their services to meet community needs with less sites. They recognise the health inequalities that are apparent in the city and are aiming to address these and to engage with the wider community who may not otherwise take part in recreational activities. They rely on volunteers to run some of the centres, and there are sometimes problems with capacity and the ability to meet legislative requirements. However, centres are seen as a real focal point for communities and it was felt that, once people come together and share experiences and cultures, then that will lead to other things.

The following activities and interventions are in place:

- **Community Centre, Dunstall Hill** – this is considered one of the best performing centres in Wolverhampton and runs activities such as the Kellogg's free swim initiative and family swimming lessons.
- **Wolves Football Club/ Community Trust** – the Trust provides grants for local people and initiatives, and promotes activities such as cricket and netball. They are targeting 14–19-year-olds.
- **Sports opportunities for children** – the authority works with Local Area Neighbourhood Arrangement (LANA) managers, clubs and school sport co-ordinators to provide sport opportunities for school children in certain areas. There is a school in the area that receives some funding which offers facilities outside normal hours.
- **Social inclusion and health promotion activities** – Wolverhampton run a number of programmes to engage with socially excluded groups and those at risk of health problems.

3.3.9 Regeneration

Wolverhampton has a number of Local Neighbourhood Partnerships (LNPs) in place, including one for the Whitmore Reans area. The local LNP is responsible for the development of a Neighbourhood Action Plan (NAP). The following is taken from a recent NAP update for Whitmore Reans (Wolverhampton Partnership, 2008), as an indication of local regeneration activity. The Whitmore Reans NAP has been in place for one year. Interventions in partnership with service providers and other agencies have included:

- **Diversions activities for young people**, with the aim of reducing gun and knife crime, and reducing anti-social behaviour.
- **Whitmore Reans Cultural Day** for promoting community cohesion.
- **Whitmore Reans Community Newspaper** to promote and inform the community of local services and improvements, and to involve them in the work of the LNP.
- **Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund (NLDCF)** to support activities and organisations with projects.
- **Federation of Stadium Communities funding** – funding has been obtained from this charity for health inequality initiatives in Whitmore Reans. The charity funds community projects near football stadia.
- **Wolverhampton Wanderers' healthy eating and physical activity programme** – the football club, working with Whitmore Reans Children's Centre, have developed a programme of activities based around 'lads and dads' football.
- **Whitmore Reans Empty Homes Project** – working with Midland Heart Housing Association and the city council, seven long-term empty properties that had been blighting the area have been brought back into use and sold through a shared ownership scheme.

3.3.10 Partnership working

- The **West Midlands Road Safety Partnership** includes representation from local authority road safety teams and the fire and police services across the West Midlands. This is a speed camera partnership responsible for managing safety camera revenue, with the aim of reducing road casualty levels.
- The **Safer Wolverhampton Partnership** is a partnership between the council, PCT, police, fire probation services and the Wolverhampton Community Safety Partnership (recently disbanded) to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and substance misuse. The focus is on crime reduction and road safety is not directly involved with this partnership.
- Previously, a partnership was in place for the south of the city (**South of Wolverhampton Partnership**) which included representation from road safety, the police, the fire service, PCT, youth services and LANA. However, this has recently been disbanded due to a lack of funding.
- **Police and fire service liaison meetings** are currently not running, but there is an intention to set up future meeting as a forum for discussing planned campaigns and engineering schemes.
- Wolverhampton road safety organise an **internal road safety forum** every sixth months and invite other agencies to attend, such as the police, fire and engineering, as well as the public. The forum provides an opportunity for presentations on issues and initiatives from different groups.
- Wolverhampton Homes report strong partnership working arrangements particularly with the police, but also with a range of other agencies, including the Antisocial Behaviour Unit at the council. Fire and council road safety partnership working is reportedly in the early stages of development, and the leisure department work in partnership with the PCT and a private sector provider.

3.4 Community views of local road safety

The community research was conducted in St Peter's ward due to its high number of child pedestrian accidents and because it has high levels of deprivation.

This ward has a diversity of different ethnic populations and a large number of BME groups. It has also undergone a recent intake of a variety of eastern European and other populations. The majority of all the groups of residents and children and young people were from BME groups, and our older young people's group came from families from countries as widespread as Kosovo, Chechnya and Somalia. All of the mothers we spoke with had more than one child, were from various ethnic minority backgrounds and the majority were non-drivers.

As in the other case study areas, residents expressed pride in their community. They liked the multicultural nature of the city and the variety of local shops and fresh produce available in them. Young people, in particular, liked the fact that they could hear many different languages spoken in the streets around them. Some older children also felt that it was an exciting place to live. A few adult residents felt that their city was also portrayed negatively in the media due to incidents of gun crime.

However, there was an overarching fear of crime here. This was particularly the case among the older teenagers (16 and above) that we spoke with, who expressed a real fear of crime and, in particular, violence in the vicinity, to the extent that they rarely ventured out in the evenings.

3.4.1 Relative importance of road safety within the community

Road safety was simply not a priority for any of the young people or adults that we spoke with. The key actor group, which consisted of local residents and CPSOs, did not seem to think that they had many road casualties in the area.

The key people that we consulted to set up groups were also surprised that we had chosen to focus on their area. Furthermore, young people simply had other priorities. These were to keep themselves safe from violence, gang culture and gun crime, and the 11–16-year-olds, in particular, did not consider road safety an issue of any relevance to them. Violence and the fear of attack was so important that many of the older teenagers (aged 16–21) we spoke with were frightened to go out alone in the evening, whether walking or driving:

I have been out a few times [in the evening] but even if you are parked, people open your doors and say 'Give us your money' or things like that. You get that quite a lot. If you have a shopping bag they tend to think this person has money, these gangs are looking at you and staring at you

(Girl, Wolverhampton young people's group)

3.4.2 The environment

The environment is very similar to Bradford in that it is a densely populated city, has many narrow streets with terraced housing and small back yards, a football stadium, and has many arterial roads branching through the city from the motorway and neighbouring towns. An added concern, discussed in the key actor group, was how heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) often got lost in the city, having taken a wrong turn from the motorway. This was felt to cause a problem with traffic and was generally thought to be because of poor planning and design.

Given the lack of concern about road safety, it was interesting to note that many of the issues highlighted by residents in Wolverhampton about their environment were extremely similar to those in Bradford, including:

- a lack of parking facilities;
- a lack of zebra crossings or other safe crossings, particularly to get to parks;
- volume of traffic – particularly during rush hours;
- a lack of speed limit signs on very busy main roads;
- parking in side streets, particularly when there are football matches, to avoid the parking fees – leading to congested streets;
- residential streets and roads used as short cuts to cut out congested junctions, roundabouts and to access the motorway more quickly;

- a large number of junior schools in the area with many parents driving their children to and from them, leading to congestion in the vicinity at certain times;
- a lack of play space; and
- changing the road traffic priorities in one area which has created confusion and difficulties for drivers and pedestrians.

The shops in Wolverhampton are widely dispersed. The consequence of this is that people reported that it made it more difficult to access them by car, as there were fewer available parking spaces in the vicinity. Parents told us how people often double parked in one road to access shops and new takeaways, which were proving to be popular. These shops were on a busy main road with a particularly bad bend.

The added problem of double parked cars meant that pedestrians did not always have a clear view of oncoming traffic when crossing the road. This was compounded further when there was a football match on at the local ground, as people would double park along busy main roads causing considerable congestion and delays and add to the already evident risk to pedestrians. Some Wolverhampton residents also thought that it was safer to be in the city centre as a pedestrian, as there were more crossings than in the St Peter's area where they lived. As in Wigan, residents mentioned the lack of activities available in their community for young people – and the impact that this had had on the kinds of things that they did (particularly in the evenings) – but, moreover, that recently certain facilities had been removed:

In the high street there used to be a little area like the garage area, where you could go, and there were loads of kids playing football, cricket. And all the community were there, sort of thing. Every Saturday they would go and play cricket and they went and fenced it over. Now they play in the road and have gangs everywhere and hang out at night.

(Girl, Wolverhampton young people's group)

The general lack of crossings in the area was emphasised, in particular, by parents when trying to access the local park with their children:

W1: *They should have a pelican crossing or something like that so that we can pass.*

W2: *And you have to cross sometimes with the bike and pushchair and cars are not happy because we are in the road and they have to stop the car. It's very hard.*

INT: *So there's no crossing directly to a park where you go with your children?*

W1: *No ... It's got four gates or three gates, I don't remember, but no road has got a crossing. It's quite a big park and they haven't got it.*

W2: *They should have a zebra crossing near every gate.*

(Parents' group, Wolverhampton)

This made getting to and from the local park a real ordeal, as parents with large families had to take one or two of their children across to the other side first, leaving them alone on the other side, before going back across to fetch their other children. They explained as follows:

INT: *Tell me about when you do go to cross the road.*

W1: *We go first and we stop the car.*

W2: *We stop the traffic.*

W1: *Sometimes what I do is let my daughter, the five-year-old one, she holds my pushchair and I'll see, 'OK that's fine, come on let's run fast, fast, fast'.*

W2: *Mostly we have to run.*

W1: *We have to check both sides, cars are coming both sides and then when they're not coming we have to run ... Because we don't have any pelican crossing or anything.*

W2: *I hold my 10-year-old's hand. He doesn't like it because he's 10, but it's one of those.*

W1: *Even the five-year-old one, they don't want to hold but they must.*

W3: *... So I'll get the older girls to stop with one of them and get the other one to cross over, pull him well away [from the main road] and issue him with all sorts of threats and then come back and get the others.*

The parents also highlighted the issue of the lack of safe play space for their children. They talked about an open stretch of green space that was directly accessible through an alleyway at the rear of the residential estate. However, it was also used as a 'dumping ground' for burnt-out cars and was considered dangerous due to criminal activity and drug dealing.

3.4.3 Behaviours and attitudes – speeding and driving behaviour

The key actor group, the young people's group and the parents' group thought that there were certain driving behaviours that were a problem in the vicinity. These included speeding and 'general recklessness'.

Young people told us about how difficult it was for them to get across a particular road to get to a college. They believed that drivers sped up when they saw them trying to cross the road, owing to the release of traffic into a dual-carriageway from a congested road island immediately beforehand. Younger teenagers and youth workers also recounted incidents of cars failing to stop at zebra crossings for them. Many young people thought that residential areas should have lower speed limits (20–25 mph) so that they could avoid injuring small children playing out.

However, some young people felt that there were situations where they would break the speed limits – primarily if they were late, if it was a 'fast' road and/or it was night-time because the roads would be emptier. Furthermore, the young male driver in the group pointed out that speeding could be a pleasurable sensation: 'You are going quite fast and you are kind of enjoying it'.

Parents, however, were concerned for the safety of their children owing to many incidents of speeding in residential areas where children were out playing or walking with their parents. Speeding, they thought, was primarily due to people being late. The key actors highlighted the issue of young men speeding and 'trying to impress', but believed that these were people from outside the community who were on their way through the local area to somewhere else and, as such, were possibly unaware of local dangers.

Others in the key actor group expressed concerns about inadequate driving standards and believed that it was those who had newly or recently arrived in the country that were to blame. They believed, for example, that they had a lack of knowledge about UK road laws and customs, and perceived them to have a different driving culture. Examples were given of erratic driving and dangerous parking:

On X Road, we had quite a draw of young Kurdish men because of the restaurant on the corner. At particular times of the day we can say that, sort of, it is frequented quite heavily, it attracts a lot of cars and draws a lot of cars and we can say then that if you wanted a profile, a driver giving us a problem at that particular time of night, it would be that profile. An example being would be, like the other day I found the whole of X Road was blocked, I found that a gentleman thought it was acceptable to park his car in the middle of X Road because there was no parking available. So he left it in the road and blocked the road up, to pop into the shop. Because it was an emergency. But the emergency was milk, so you know ... it is about perceptions and I can't comprehend that. I have never experienced that anywhere else.

(CPSO, Wolverhampton key actor group)

3.4.4 In-car safety

This lack of understanding of 'correct' driving behaviour, according to the key actors, could also be applied to attitudes to in-car safety, with examples given of too many children being conveyed in cars, some being seen sitting on adult's laps and, in one instance, of a child being placed in a footwell to avoid detection. The police present at the key actor group felt that this was because some recent immigrants were not familiar with the requirements for car safety in this country and/or they had not had to take these measures in their country of origin.

However, not wearing seat belts appeared to be something that was permitted among some families in the Wolverhampton area. For example, a few of the children of primary school age told us how their parents allowed

them not to wear a seat belt once they were a bit older, and also how they enjoyed not wearing one because it enabled them to have freedom of movement to look out of the window:

- INT: *Your little brother has a seat belt?*
- Girl1: *He is in reception.*
- INT: *Right, do you?*
- Girl1: *No.*
- INT: *Why is that, why don't you wear a seat belt?*
- Girl1: *Because you know my mum says it is all right, and anyway I like it because I can see out of the window.*
- Boy: *Sometimes I open the window and put my head through.*
- INT: *Blimey, don't you get told off.*
- Boy: *My mum doesn't.*
- INT: *Doesn't she, doesn't she tell you off?*
- Boy: *She tells if you are doing naughty, when I do that I tell my mum I put my head out and she says, don't jump out.*
- INT: *Right, no you don't want to jump out. What about you [name of girl] when you are in the car, what do you do, do you have seat belts?*
- Girl2: *No.*
- INT: *You don't wear a seat belt, why do you not wear a seat belt?*
- Girl2: *Because I am old enough.*
- INT: *You are old enough, who said you are old enough?*
- Girl2: *My mum.*

(Primary school aged children, Wolverhampton)

A few children with younger siblings also told us that their mothers did not wear a seat belt in order to allow them to be able to comfort their younger children on longer journeys. From discussions with parents and younger children we found that many had large families and some also had extended families, such as aunties and uncles, who helped out each other by taking children to and collecting them from school. They may not have always had adequate room in vehicles or thought it necessary to ensure that children were secured safely. One mother highlighted the difficulty of accommodating her four children and the required booster seats into her car. She also pointed out that many mothers would rely on others to pick their children up and that they would not necessarily have booster seats available to use.

The young people in Wolverhampton were also inconsistent seat-belt wearers. However, they appeared more inclined to wear one if they were in the front of the car than was the case among young men in Bradford. This may have been because the majority of drivers in this group were female and possibly more risk averse. Those who drove said that they always wore a seat belt when driving, but most admitted to not wearing a seat belt if they were in the rear of the car. They felt it was unnecessary, especially if they were on short journeys. One young woman recounted how an accident she heard of influenced her to wear a seat belt for a while, but that once the memory of the accident faded she reverted to not wearing one. Younger teenagers also said that they felt uncomfortable wearing a seat belt. Even knowledge of road safety campaigns did not persuade them to wear a seat belt in the back of a car. Some thought the whole back seat-belt campaign advert was fake and therefore not to be taken seriously. One young man, who did not drive, told us how he had to constantly remind his father to wear his seat belt when he took his son out in the car. This, he said, was due to forgetfulness. From discussions with the young people, it is arguable whether it may have also been because the young man's family was from a different country and his father may not have had to wear a seat belt where he came from originally.

Although car insurance and MOTs were considered very important to have if driving, many young people acknowledged how expensive it was to insure their cars and, consequently, how important it was to drive a small car. Nissan Micras were most frequently mentioned as a car that would be affordable for insurance purposes in both Bradford and Wolverhampton. However, unlike Bradford, the young people in Wolverhampton also said that they would not buy a new car because of the extent of vandalism in the area. There was, they felt, no point getting a newer and expensive car, even if they could afford it, as it would soon become damaged.

3.4.5 Children and young people's pedestrian behaviour and attitudes

Many of the young people aged 16–21 told us how they felt that there were not enough pedestrian crossings enabling them to get across directly in front of a college. They were able to reach road crossings further along from the college, but it involved walking up to the top of the road, crossing to the other side and coming back down again. This added extra time to their trips and caused them unnecessary inconvenience. However, they took significant and dangerous risks with their safety in order to cross the road directly in front of the building they needed to reach, such as moving into the middle of a very busy dual-carriageway with their hands up and arms outstretched in order to slow up the traffic for them to get across. It was interesting to note that they had not thought that their behaviour was dangerous until they recounted it during the discussion.

The secondary school age-group (11–15-year-olds) we spoke with were, again, very well versed in what they should and should not do with regard to road safety. They knew they were supposed to:

- stop, look and listen;
- not mess around at the side of the road; and
- cross roads at zebra and pelican crossings.

However, this particular group of young people were highly visible within their community and spent a lot of time out on the streets with their friends. Four of the boys also rode bicycles and were often out and about in the community on them. One recounted an incident where they had been knocked from their bike by a car driver opening the door. They also told us how they liked to hang out and 'chill' with friends within the area in the evenings, often not getting home until late at night. Some of the older young people did not get in until 11.30 pm. They often hung out on the streets and at the back of one specific public house in the community. However, the youth worker felt that they were a very close-knit Black community, where everyone knew each other. This she said meant that adults would know and contact children's parents if they thought they were in danger. As mentioned earlier, these young people were more concerned about violence than road safety. They knew that they had to remain within their own territory in order to stay safe. They told us that their parents repeatedly warned them to avoid a certain area (known locally by postcode) for fear of being shot or stabbed. It was renowned locally for gun and knife crime, and was regarded as another group of young people's 'patch'. This territoriality restricted their movements to one main area and focused their attention away from the more seemingly mundane issue of road safety. This, coupled with young people's impatience to get where they needed to go with the minimum inconvenience, and taking short cuts, could increase the likelihood of road accidents.

Younger children, especially the boys, also played out on the streets, meeting friends, playing football and racing games. The girls, on the other hand, were not allowed to play out or to go to the park unaccompanied by an adult. Most of the younger children were generally accompanied to and from school by adults or older sisters and brothers. Generally they did not perceive there to be anything dangerous about their journeys to school, mainly because their parents and other adults assessed any risks for them when crossing the roads.

Parents highlighted the issue of allowing their children some independence and talked about the need to let children go so far on their own and to set down boundaries and guidance for their behaviour. Some parents shadowed their 10-year-olds, for example, down to the nearest crossing so that they could keep an eye on them without being overtly restrictive. However, they also noted that many older children, especially teenagers, were influenced by the behaviour of their peers and one told us how they had witnessed such behaviour:

W: My daughters have walked back from secondary school. Like you say, I am confident that they will look out for the traffic and that, but I still think all it takes is a couple of troublesome friends and it could go mad. When I go to pick them up, they go to [name of secondary school] which is like quite a distance from us, and on that little road where the school is they are silly, they are very, very silly the kids. The day I catch my daughters. They run across the road, they will run sort of

like in the middle, run in to the middle and then back again, they will sort of like try and beat the car before it gets there. All sorts of silly things like that. But once they have cleared that road everybody starts going home and the bravado finishes there.

INT: So do you think a lot of it is bravado?

W: It is, it is, it is showing off to your friends.

Parents also highlighted the difficulties of getting off the bus and getting to their houses along with several children, including toddlers. The youngest children do not understand the need to remain still at the side of the road while their mother sorts out the buggy and the shopping.

3.4.6 Types of accidents in the area

Most of the residents we spoke with did not cite many examples of accidents that had occurred in the area, which possibly reflected the lack of priority afforded to road safety within the community. However, key actors did say that new pedestrian crossings and speed bumps in residential areas had made a difference in terms of there being fewer accidents over the past few years. Where road accidents were discussed, they tended to be concerned with highlighting potential dangers, such as a lack of crossings or risky behaviours. One particular residential road was identified as being very dangerous owing to a bad bend, numerous cars parked along the bend and obscuring the view of drivers. This had led to five accidents in the previous year which involved drivers crashing into parked cars.

3.5 Conclusions

Road safety was not a key priority for any of the residents within the community. They were far more concerned with keeping themselves safe from crime and violence. However, it was evident that aspects of their environment, home circumstances and behaviour influenced how safe people were on the roads and streets in the community. Structurally, having narrow, densely populated roads that carry a large volume of cars poses a danger to residents in and of itself. However, again, it is when this is combined with other factors, such as a lack of safe road crossings, a lack of play space and activities for young people, that risks to safety increase. Furthermore, the presence of a significant and diverse immigrant population, who may be unfamiliar with, or unaware of, road and car safety laws and procedures in the UK, could further increase the likelihood of dangerous road situations in the community. Again, having large families, as in Bradford, can affect the acquisition and use of items such as car and booster seats, which can compound the risk of accidents and injuries.

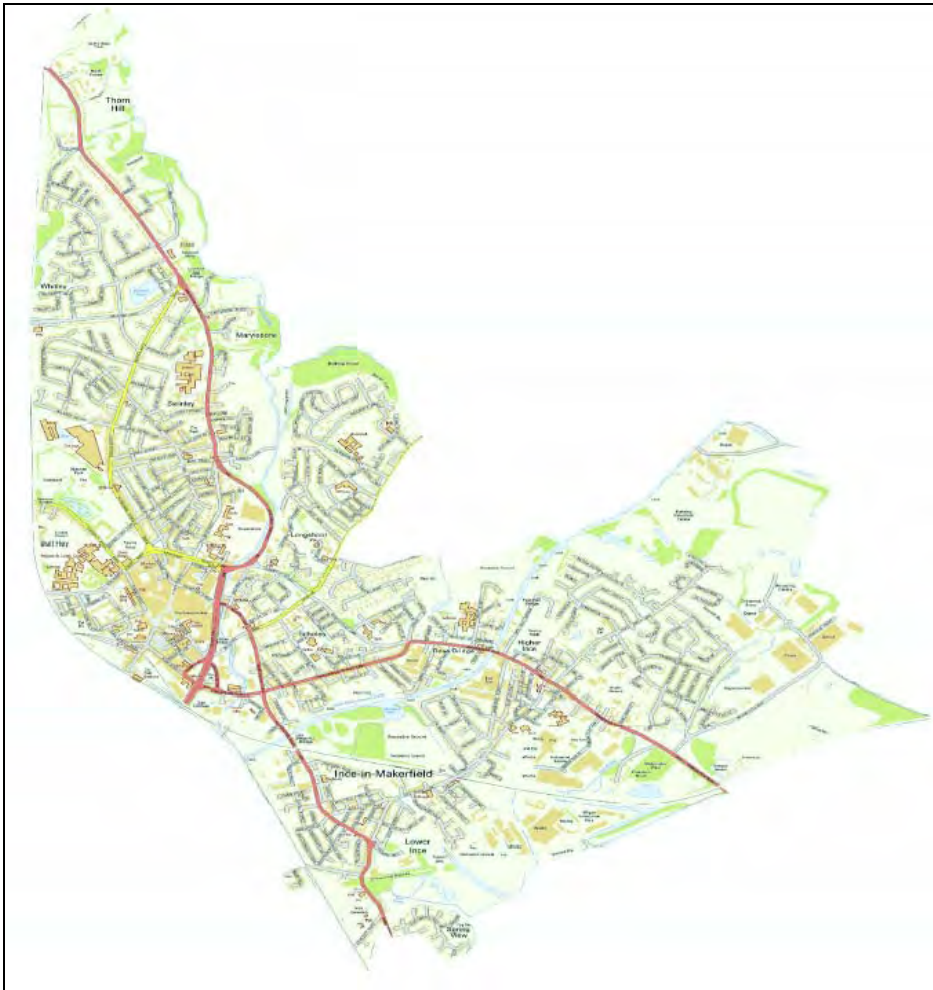
4 Wigan case study

4.1 Area profile

Ince and Swinley wards in Wigan were selected as a case study area on the basis of the high level of deprivation and high level of pedestrian casualties (15,873 1–17-year-olds per 100,000 population in Swinley and 6,962 in Ince). The local authority participated in the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI) and is currently receiving Department for Transport Road Safety Partnership Grant Scheme funding for their Road Safety Champions initiative targeted at disadvantaged areas.

The area was subject to ward boundary changes in 2004 and now covers parts of Ince and Whelley and Wigan Central wards.⁴ The case study has focused on the Ince area. The area is characterised by older terraced housing, as well as more recent terraced and semi-detached dwellings and areas of derelict land which are, in part, a legacy of the area's industrial past where coal mining and the cotton industry played a major role. A heavily trafficked arterial road (A577 Manchester Road) cuts through the area from Wigan town centre to the motorway network and Manchester to the east. Additionally, the A49 is a major route running north–south through the area. The A573 (Warrington Lane) and B5258 (Scholes Lane) are also important connections from the town centre to northwest of Wigan (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1: Ince and Central wards, Wigan

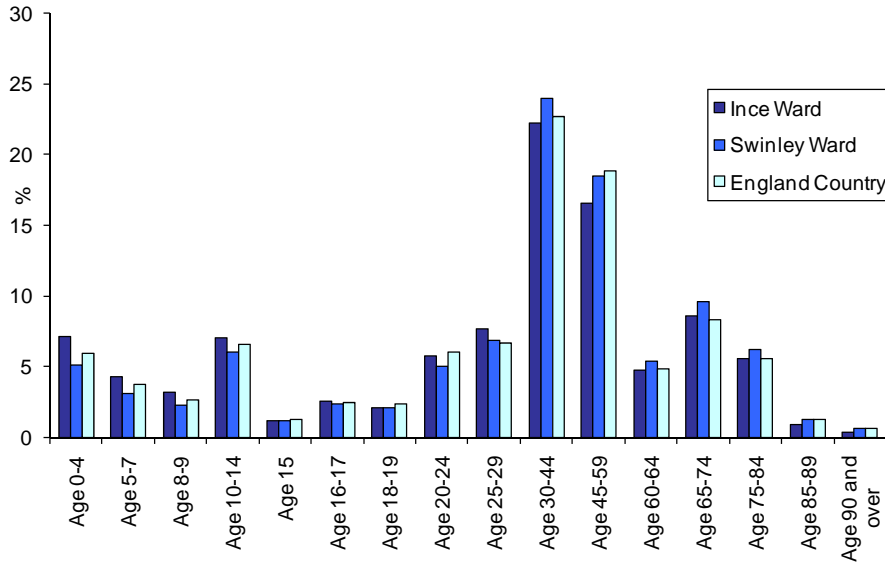


Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2008

⁴ The 2001 Census data used in this report are based on the Swinley and Ince wards.

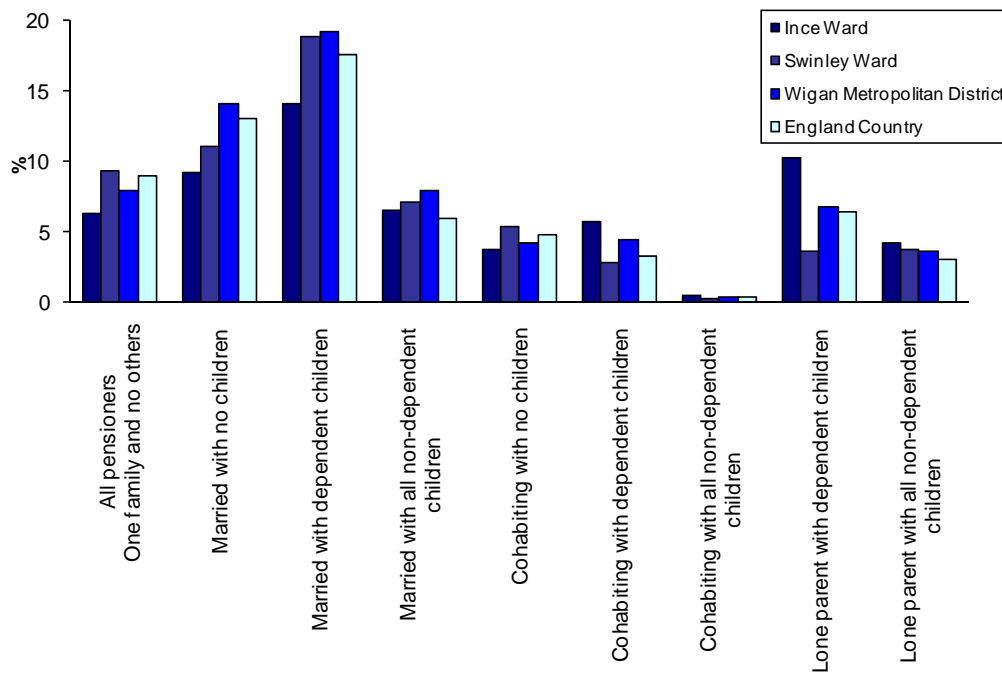
The age profile shown in Figure 4.2 indicates that Ince had a higher proportion of children than in England as a whole. Swinley had a lower proportion of children compared with England and a larger elderly population.

Figure 4.2: Age



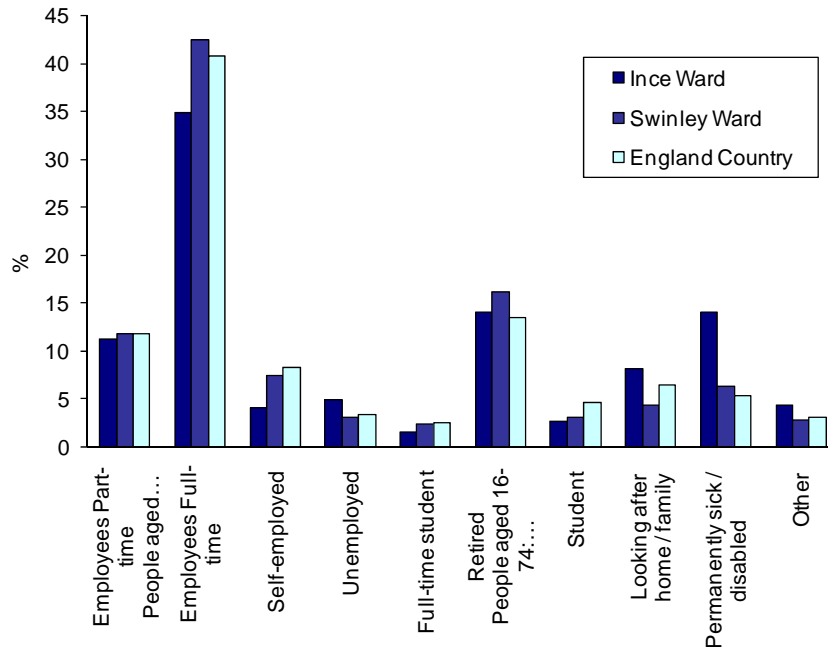
The Ince ward area has a significantly lower rate of residents married with dependent children when compared with Swinley ward, Wigan Metropolitan District and England as a whole. In addition, there are also considerably more lone parents with dependent children in this area (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Household composition



When compared with the national average, the Swinley ward area has higher proportions of unemployed, retired, and permanently sick/disabled residents as well as residents looking after the home/family (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4: Economic activity



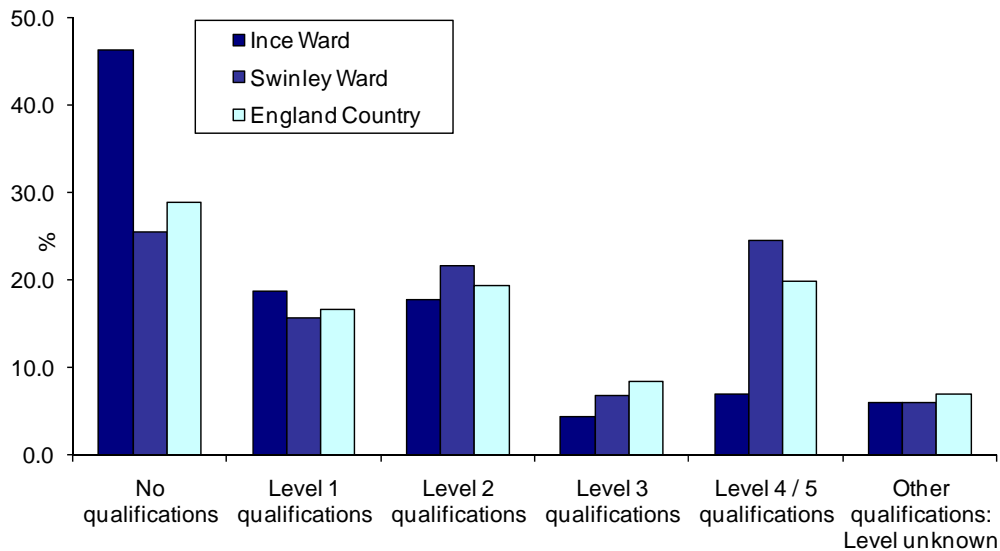
The average weekly income for those living in Ince is considerably less than Swinley and the North West Region as a whole, with an estimated weekly household income of £370 (Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5: Income



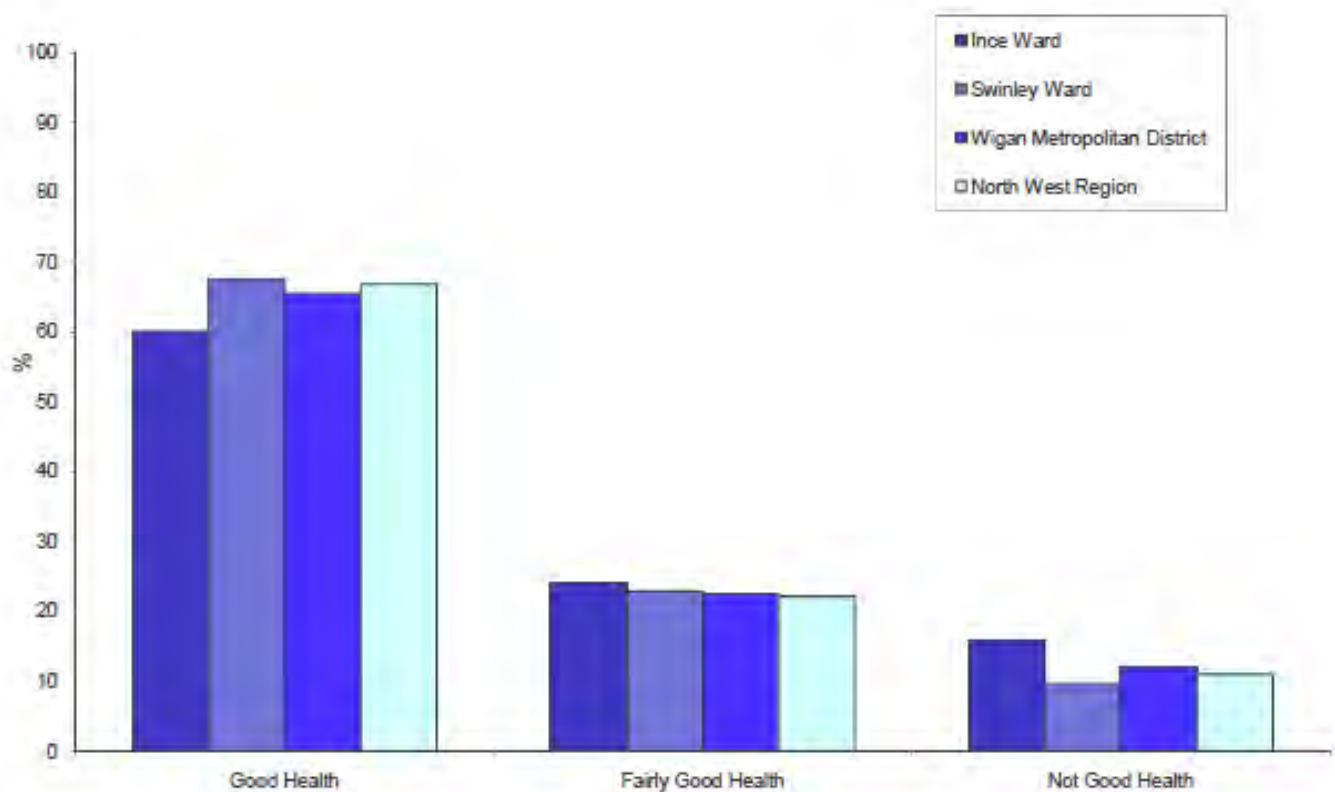
Around 46% of the Ince ward population have no qualifications compared with 25% and 29% for Swinley ward and the country as a whole. Residents in this area also have a higher than average rate of Level 1 qualifications (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6: Qualifications



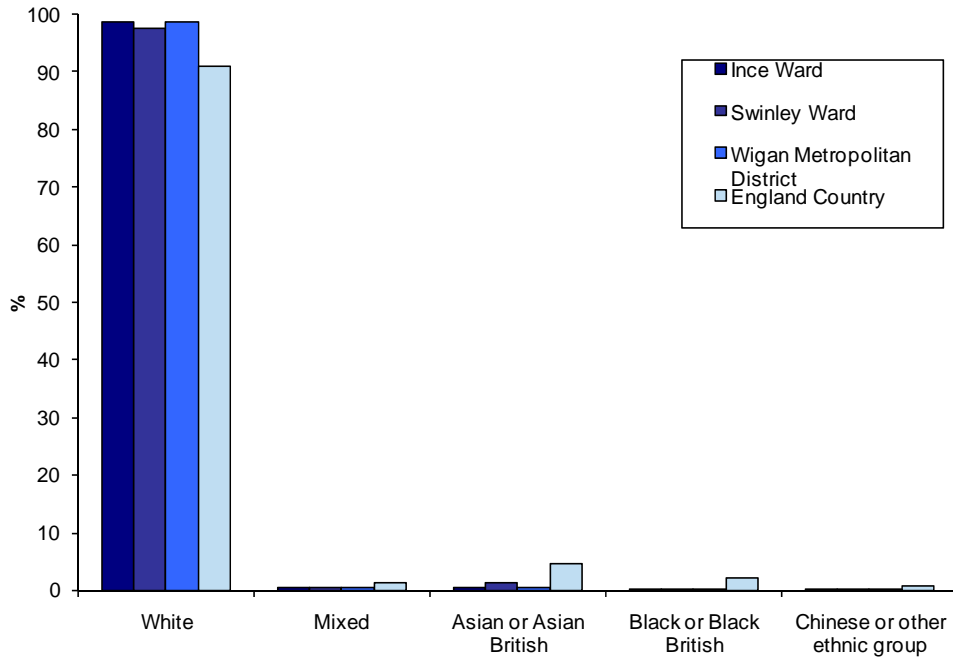
Ince ward has a slightly higher proportion of residents whose health is 'not good' compared with the North West Region as a whole (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7: Health



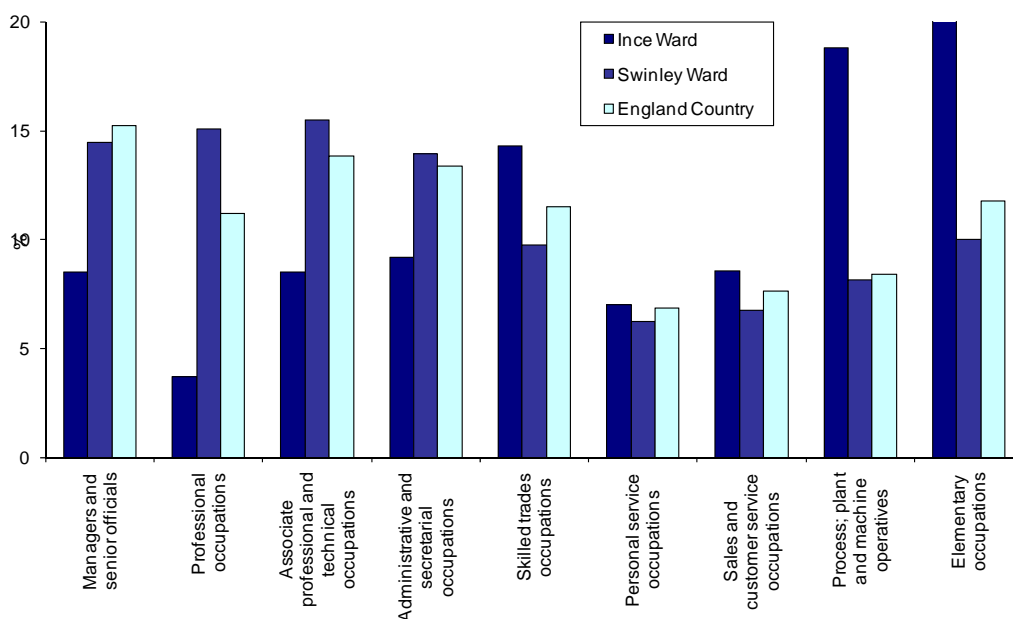
Wigan as a whole has a predominantly White population and this is the case in both Ince and Swinley wards. They have significantly lower minority ethnic populations compared with England as a whole (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8: Ethnic group



Ince has significantly lower proportions of people employed in professional, managerial, administrative and secretarial occupations. At the same time there are greater proportions employed in other occupations, particularly elementary and operative positions and skilled trades (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9: Occupation group



In line with the occupational analysis described in Figure 4.9, it is apparent that Ince has a significantly lower proportion of residents in social grade AB and C1 compared with Wigan and England, and more residents who are grades D and E (Figure 4.10).

Figure 4.10: Social grade

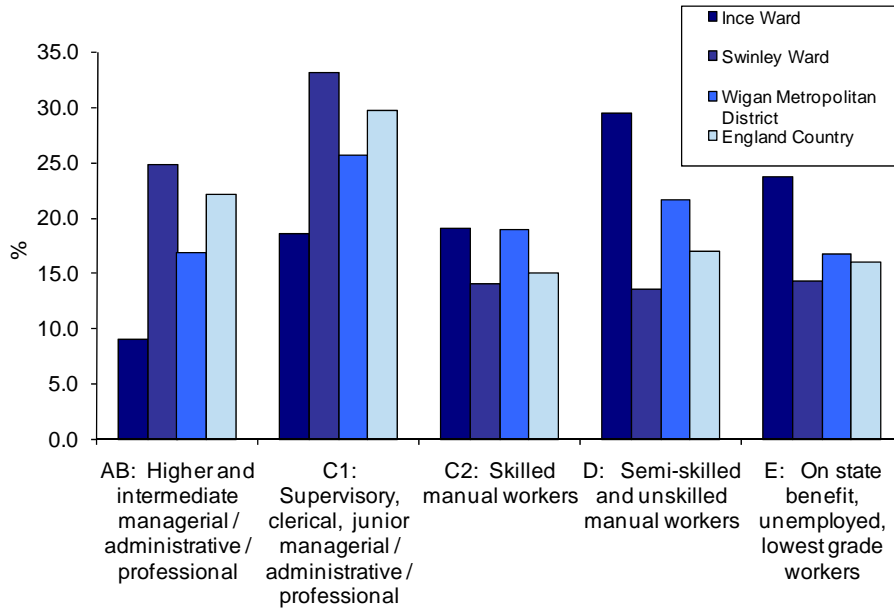
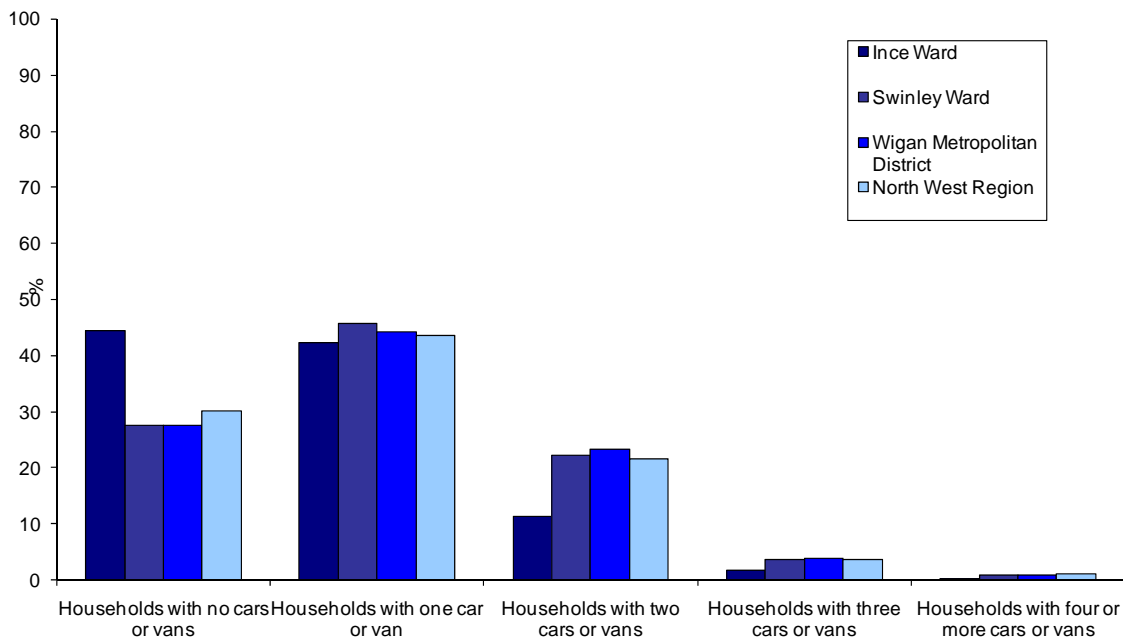


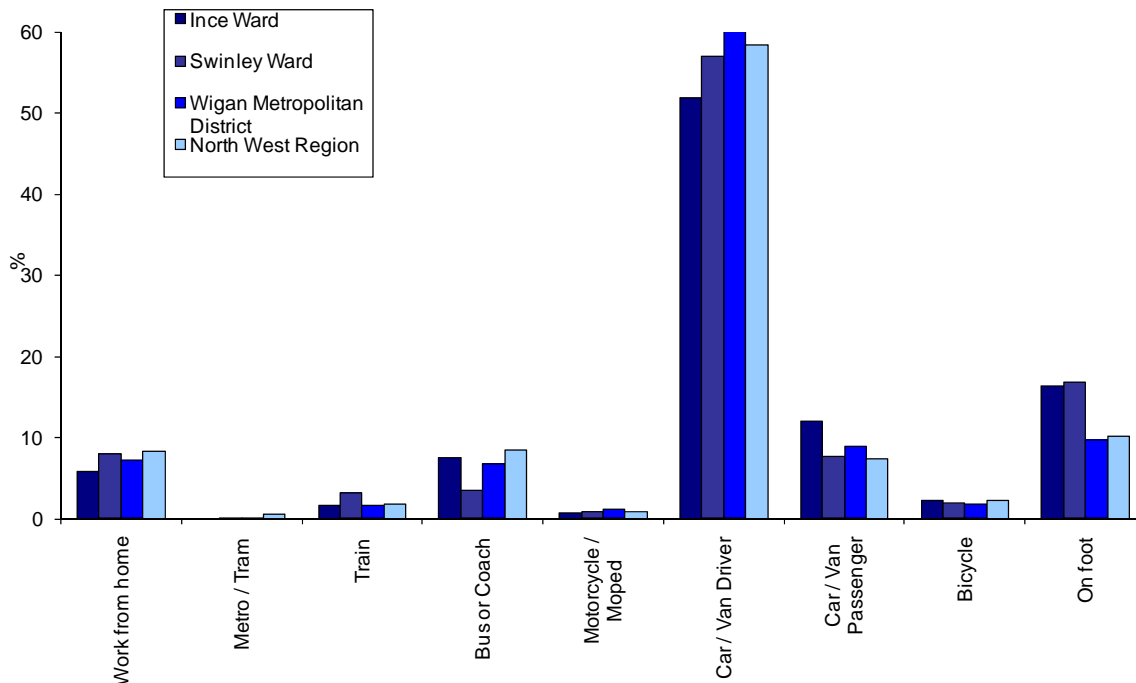
Figure 4.11 demonstrates that car ownership in Ince is significantly lower than elsewhere, but this is not the same for Swinley where car ownership is broadly similar to Wigan and the region (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11: Car/van ownership



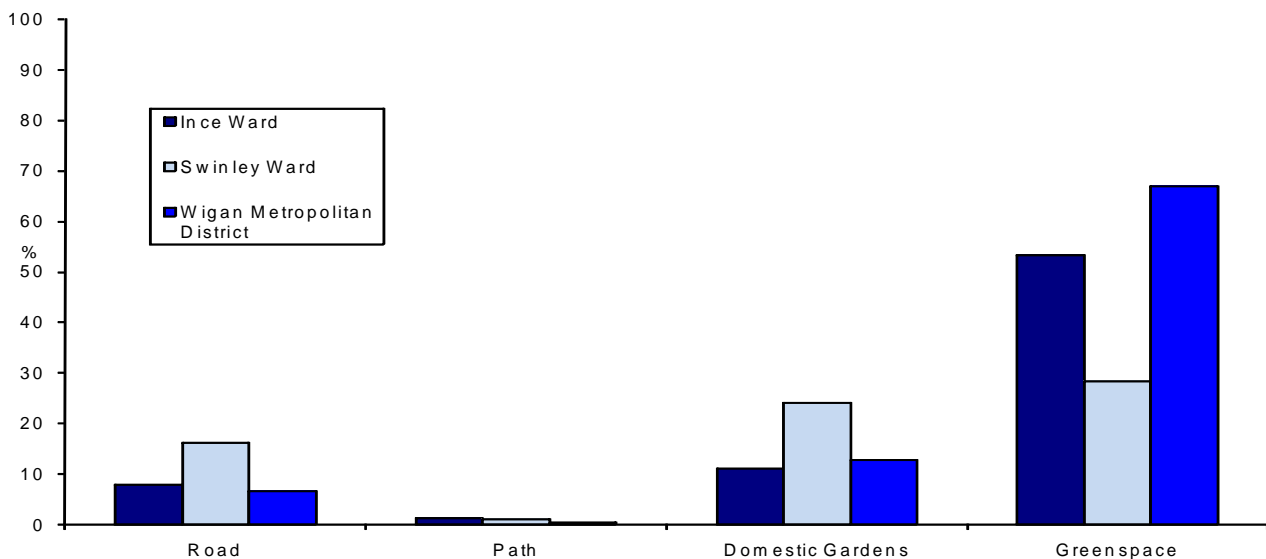
Fewer people from Swinley and Ince drive to work compared with Wigan and the North West Region. However, a higher proportion from Ince travels to work as a car passenger. Both Swinley and Ince have much greater proportions of residents travelling to work on foot (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12: Travel to work



Swinley ward has a considerably higher proportion of land dedicated to roads compared with the borough as a whole. Ince has a lower proportion dedicated to roads compared with Swinley, but is still higher than Wigan. Ince has a lower proportion of land taken up by domestic gardens than Wigan, whereas in Swinley a significantly higher proportion of land is gardens. Both Ince and Swinley have lower proportions of green space, but this is particularly low in Swinley (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13: Land use



4.2 Policy and strategy

Road safety activity locally is guided by the *Wigan Road Safety Strategy 2006–2010* (Wigan Road Safety Forum, 2006). This strategy was produced by the Road Safety Forum which has a broad membership. The principles guiding the strategy are the casualty reduction targets for the area. Linkages with other strategies are recognised, particularly the Local Transport Plan (LTP2), the Community Plan and the Road Safety Best Value Review undertaken in 2005. The latter resulted in the development of a Road Safety Improvement Plan and the establishment of the Road Safety Forum. There is an emphasis on partnership working and the collaborative arrangements that are in place are documented in the strategy.

The strategy identifies a comprehensive range of activities and interventions that were in place, or planned, including universal ETP activities; local safety schemes, developed on the basis of the known strong correlation between low cost remedial measures and accident reduction; and piloting of an urban safety management approach with an emphasis on community involvement and transport assessments (including safety) through the planning application process. It may be assumed that all activities will contribute to the overall strategy, aiming at casualty reduction, but priorities or the reasons for inclusion of different activities and interventions are not detailed within the strategy. The concept of an Urban Safety Management Strategy is noted and a pilot planned for 2007–08, although not in the case study area. A notable aspect of this strategy was the intention to involve the local community in its development.

The Wigan Road Safety Strategy recognises the association between deprivation and road casualties, and that this is part of an overall health inequality. It is noted that children who live in such areas, in particular, are at greater risk of being injured. Reference is made to the NRSI which ran in Wigan, and reports that valuable lessons have been learnt and useful contacts made with other agencies and bodies working in the field of road safety, which will continue to be of benefit in future years. However, these lessons, and how they will be taken forward, are not documented in the strategy.

Wigan Road Safety sits within the Environmental Services Department of the council. A goal identified in the *Environmental Services Draft Departmental Plan 2008/09 – 2010/11* (Wigan Council, 2009) is to improve the efficiency of the transport network, to reduce congestion and improve road safety. The casualty reduction targets agreed in the Local Area Agreement are also reiterated in the departmental plan.

The overarching strategy for road safety in Wigan is contained within the regional Local Transport Plan (*Greater Manchester LTP2 Progress Report*). The plan recognises the link between road casualties and areas of disadvantage, and reports that authorities have built on the work of the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI) and have continued to emphasise the targeting of road safety education, training and publicity (ETP) at areas of social deprivation, particularly where there is evidence of higher casualty rates. It was felt that further work is required on how the nature of road traffic collisions and casualties can vary for different areas and levels of deprivation, and proposed to co-ordinate research by Greater Manchester Transportation Unit (GMTU) to determine effective interventions, which will change attitudes and bring about corrective behaviour. The plan recognises the need to exchange information through groups such as the Greater Manchester Group of Road Safety Officers and Greater Manchester Road Accident Prevention Group.

There is also an emphasis on encouraging community based road safety projects which empower and engage young people, and continue the close working relationship with Children and Young People's Services, Connexions and SureStart, as it is recognised that road safety is a significant contributor to the socio-economic well-being of children and young people. LTP2 reports that the partnership will encourage local authorities to recognise that road safety is a social issue and has close links with deprivation, crime and anti-social behaviour. It will also ensure that road safety is incorporated into its Community Safety Strategy and is an integral component within the Crime Reduction Strategy and the Strategic Assessment. It is not clear whether this is the case for the Greater Manchester region, but road safety is not discussed in the crime strategy at a local level (Wigan and Leigh Crime, Disorder and Drugs Strategy).

Wigan's *Draft Environmental Education Strategy 2009–2012* is concerned with behavioural change to make Wigan a cleaner, safer and greener borough. The strategy's objectives are to raise the profile of environmental education; establish co-ordinated and measurable environmental education programmes across the service providers within the council's Environment Department; and to engage with stakeholders and partners to deliver the strategy. The road safety programmes identified in the Road Safety Plan are embedded within this Strategy.

Road injury prevention is not generally recognised in other public strategy documents in Wigan. The overall aim stated in the *Wigan Safeguarding Children Business Plan 2006–09* (Wigan Safeguarding Children Board, 2006) is to

keep all children and young people safe in the community. The focus is on safety from abuse and there is no reference to accidental road injury or death. Similarly, *Living Well in Wigan Borough: Joint Public Health Strategy 2007* (Wigan Borough Partnership, 2007) is based on reducing health inequalities, but there is no reference to the inequalities in road casualties or to road injury prevention. The same is evident in *Wigan Children and Young People's Plan 2008-11* (Wigan Council, 2008). The plan, based on consultation, includes a Staying Safe theme, but this is concerned with personal rather than road safety.

For the Fire and Rescue Service, *The Greater Manchester Integrated Risk Management Plan 2007–2010* (Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Authority, 2008) recognises the Audit Commission's advice in *Changing Lanes: Evolving Roles in Road Safety* (Audit Commission, 2007) that Fire and Rescue Services should work with local authorities to improve road safety. The plan also recognises that involvement in road traffic accident casualty reduction targets is part of the National Framework. To this end, the plan states that the fire and emergency service is looking to increase activities in helping local authorities to meet road casualty reduction targets, but the report notes that internal concerns were raised about the service's ability to deliver this message. There is an emphasis on partnership, community engagement and prevention throughout the strategy as well as discussion on inequalities, but the focus throughout is on fire risk. The same is evident in Greater Manchester's *Children and Young People's Strategy*, which only discusses fire crime prevention and safety.

4.3 Services and interventions

4.3.1 Wigan Council – Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity

There has been considerable expansion in the delivery of road safety education in Wigan over the last seven years. The council now has an integrated education programme in place with a lesson developed for each year group. Prior to 2002 road safety education only consisted of pedestrian training to Year 2 pupils. The programme is offered to all schools in Wigan and it is up to each school whether they take it up. The lessons are linked to the National Curriculum in recognition that schools have to show the contribution that lessons will make to the curriculum. Reducing road casualties underpins the programme and there is an emphasis on pedestrian safety, hazard perception and assessing risk. Communications are generally based on four key themes: drink/drug driving, pedestrians, motorcyclists and in-car safety, based on evidence that there are disproportionately high numbers of casualties in Wigan associated with these factors.

The programme incorporates a range of both in-house and external resources delivered through a range of media to the different year groups. It is delivered by different staff at primary and secondary level and covers the following:

Nursery	<i>Look out on the Road</i>	Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) story time resource
R	<i>People who help us</i>	Wigan resource involving discussion and dressing up
	<i>Teddy takes a Tumble</i>	Story book developed by NW Authorities
Y1	<i>What is Traffic?</i>	A bespoke fuzzy felt street scene developed for Greater Manchester authorities
	<i>Teddy takes a Walk</i>	A new story book resource developed by Wigan
Y2	Pedestrian training	One session of training in the road environment involving risk assessing
	Memory	Memory game with a think, stop, listen message
Y3	Communication	Discussion of road signs, etc.
	Cycling skills	Cycle training in playground
Y4	Pedestrian training	Further on-street training also using speed gun to think about traffic speed
Y5	Drama workshops	Drama and discussion on road safety scenarios
Y6	Cycling drama workshop	To explore how road safety situations impact on their lives
	Making Choices	Discussion on choices to be made when moving to secondary school
	Cycling training courses	Practical cycle training – priority is given to disadvantaged areas

Y7	Visibility issues	Presentation and discussion around being seen and distractions
Y8	Seat-belt issues	The consequences of not wearing a seat belt
Y9	Drug/driving	The effects of drugs on driving
Y10	Drink/drug driving and seat belts	The consequences of injury
Y11	<i>Missing Matthew</i>	DVD produced by Lancashire Speed Camera Partnership on safe driving
Y12/13	Image courses	Targeted at girls on image courses with consequences of injury messages

The programme is evaluated by monitoring the numbers of presentations delivered and pupils trained, and by asking staff and pupils their opinion of the activities. There were, for example, just over 800 primary age children in four schools in Ince in 2008, three-quarters of whom received training through 28 presentations at three of the four schools. At the secondary level, almost all of the 655 students at Rose Bridge High School had received training through the delivery of 19 presentations in 2007/08, although training at The Deanery was much lower, with three presentations to 300 students out of more than 1,600 in total. The school staff questionnaire determines satisfaction with the activity; how they felt it had been delivered; whether it has been a worthwhile use of council funds; and whether it has impressed the knowledge of their pupils and increased their own awareness of child road safety issues. There are reportedly very high levels of satisfaction with the programme and it is regarded positively. The programme is not evaluated with regard to outcomes, such as whether children retain road safety messages, but, anecdotally, based on the return visits of road safety assistants from one year to another, recall is considered good.

The road safety education programme does not deliberately target more deprived areas in the borough, but is instead based on offering the service to all. They are, however, aware of areas where deprivation indices are higher and they will aim to follow up more pro-actively with schools in these areas, such as Ince.

The team also deliver road safety awareness initiatives, such as the 'Mock Crash', in partnership with the police, fire service and ambulance/St John's Ambulance/Red Cross, where they all provide support as they re-enact the rescue of a road traffic collision, with performing art students from a local college. This is staged in Wigan and Leigh town centres, as well as the 'Truck Fest' event.

Wigan has been successful in winning Department for Transport Road Safety Partnership Grant funding for Community Safety Champions for areas with higher child casualty rates in the three most deprived wards in the borough, including Ince, where there are two volunteer champions, and Central, where there are five. Funding has been used for surveys, promotional material, events and evaluation. They have been given training in community profiling and can use the council to discuss their ideas. The champion initiative has led to a community led 'Be Safe, Be Seen' fun day event in Ince, focusing on wearing high-visibility materials, which has been identified as problem in the area. The event is reported to have achieved good attendance and positive feedback. In Central there have been weeks of fun road safety activities during half term through the community champion scheme as well as a 'See No Traffic, Hear No Traffic' campaign with local secondary schools. This involved photography students in developing the campaign materials.

The road safety team are also engaged in developing 'Active Travel' and rolling out personalised travel planning. They are working with the PCT in promoting active travel, which recognises both health and road safety benefits. For example, a Calorie Map to promote walking is being launched and plans were in place to set up a working group, including community volunteers, to promote active travel.

4.3.2 Wigan Council – Road Safety Engineering

Capital funded road safety engineering measures in Wigan form part of the Greater Manchester LTP. The Local Safety Programme (LSP) is evidence based, primarily from injury statistics, and involves the following:

- Mass action – £100,000 per year is allocated to minor engineering improvements for local collision hot spots relating to trends in collisions. In 2008/09 trend analysis indicated that motorcycle, dark and rear-end shunt collisions should be prioritised.
- Route action – £100,000 is also allocated to this programme for engineering improvements to lengths of carriageway where there has been a trend in killed and seriously injured casualties. Pedestrian and turning problems, for example, are also taken into account as KSIs can be sporadic.

- Single site – this is a programme of works such as anti-skid measures at single junctions where there has been more than five accidents
- Traffic-calming measure – area-wide traffic calming, which is determined through the Calming Assessment Prioritisation System (CAPS). This tool provides weighted values for a number of important factors, including collisions, casualties, housing density, socio-economic factors, pedestrian generators and vehicular speeds. Traffic-calming measures are fairly widely installed in Ince.

In addition to these four main programmes, engineering measures can be installed through the Safer Routes to School Programme. Their inclusion in the programme is determined from the impact the engineering programme will have on improving safety on the school journey for the maximum number of pupils and reducing car use. 20 mph zones around schools are also funded through the Highways Capital Programme. These 20 mph zones have been introduced or are in progress in three schools in Ince. A mandatory 20mph zone and traffic-calming features are proposed for Britannia Bridge School, which is in close proximity to the main A573 Warrington Road. Advisory 20 mph limits are also included in the programme for Ince at St Mary's Primary school, which is also just off this main arterial road, and for Rose Bridge High School, located just off the Manchester Road (A577).

Engineering measures are evaluated in broad terms through post-scheme monitoring of collision patterns.

4.3.3 Youth offending

The Youth Offending Team is involved in one-to-one work with young offenders to provide support and engagement to try and reduce re-offending. The interventions for this work include area-based reparation work, good behaviour agreements, youth restorative orders (Wigan has been involved in a pilot scheme that is based on the acceptance of responsibility for the crime, apology to the victim and no criminal record); youth crime action plan workers who work with young people to educate them about the impacts and implications of anti-social behaviour and crime. Off-road motor-biking is reported to be a particular problem in Wigan, which they tackle with the police through anti-social behaviour measures.

The team is represented on Safer Partnership meetings which has, for example, made them aware of safe driving behaviour educational initiatives which they propose to use with youths at the centre.

Youth offending therefore plays a role in reducing anti-social behaviour and crime. No road safety initiatives were reported or activities specific to the Ince area.

4.3.4 Policing

Greater Manchester Police has a Casualty Reduction Unit (CRU) which has adopted the National Intelligence Model (NIM) to achieve casualty reduction.⁵ They work with the local authority to identify engineering solutions to casualty hot spots. The model is also based on reducing offences through enforcement activity and making pedestrian and passenger behaviours safer. The focus is on speeding, drink/drug driving, vulnerable road users, and driver/rider inattention and behaviour, including seat-belt and mobile phone enforcement. Since the introduction of performance management in these areas, there have been significant increases in prosecutions for driver offences and driving without insurance.

4.3.5 Fire and emergency services

The fire crew managers work with the Youth Offending Team to deliver talks to young offenders about the impact and consequences of car crime. They undertake a seat-belt and mobile phone campaign four times a year, where offenders are offered the choice of a fine or safety presentation by the fire crew at Wigan and Leigh fire station. This initiative is monitored and around 140 offenders receive the presentation each quarter. The fire service is also involved in Christmas and summer drink-driving campaigns, and they participate in the 'mock crash' events which are staged twice yearly in Wigan and Leigh town centres to raise awareness of the impacts of road accidents.

4.3.6 Neighbourhood Services

Neighbourhood Services (formerly the Anti-Social Behaviour Unit) operate at a local neighbourhood level with a remit to reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and environmental crime. The focus of action in Ince and Whelley, in partnership with the Road Safety team, is tackling off-road and nuisance vehicles. The strategy involves engineering solutions to limit vehicle access off-road; warning signs at key sites; enforcement activity with the police; and education in schools and 'hot spot' areas to persuade against off-road and nuisance riding and driving, and to

⁵ Identified in the Road Safety Strategy

reassure residents of the actions being taken. The intention was to evaluate the off-road and nuisance vehicle strategy based on indicators such as numbers of nuisance calls and reported injuries. However, the initiative was relatively new and too early to determine its impact at the time of the interview.

4.3.7 Health improvement

The PCT health improvement agenda focuses on disease and lifestyle issues, including coronary heart disease, obesity and alcohol-related disease. They do not have any specific remit to address injury from road accidents. The Health Improvement Team plays a preventative role aimed at reaching health targets. They support the promotion of more active lifestyles, which overlaps with the active travel agenda. In addition to providing publicity and information, they support Health Trainers (a Department of Health scheme), who are intended to be people who live or work in the local community and who understand the difficulties people may face in changing to a healthy, more active lifestyle.

4.3.8 Housing

Wigan and Leigh Housing is responsible for the management, maintenance and tenancy matters for 23,000 social housing properties in the borough. Properties in Ince are managed by area officers in addition to the Neighbourhood Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (NASBU), who operate throughout Wigan. Tackling anti-social behaviour is a priority, including off-road biking (see Neighbourhood Services (Section 4.3.6)). The housing authority aims to involve the community through their tenant participation structure. It was noted that available funding for one-off projects can be under spent as ideas for initiatives are not identified by tenants. However, examples of initiatives that have been funded through this money include traffic-calming schemes, diversionary activities for young people, parking clamping and play areas.

4.3.9 SureStart

The SureStart Children's Centre provides an interface through which road safety providers can engage with parents and pre-school children in disadvantaged areas, such as Ince. Safety information and services such as car-seat checks, car-seat hire, parent-craft classes (including a car-seat safety element and pre-school education) are delivered via the centre.

4.3.10 Environment

Environmental education work in Wigan Council is focused on influencing behavioural change for delivering a cleaner, safer and more sustainable environment. Road safety education and Safer Schools have been integrated into the environmental education agenda.

4.3.11 Community Safety

The Wigan and Leigh Community Safety Partnership aims to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour at a local level by engaging with the community through the Partners and Communities Together (PACT) structure. This is a relatively new initiative that is being rolled out across the borough. In each PACT area there is an officer, and other community and service development workers, responsible for community engagement and delivery of the local action plan based on community priorities. These are defined by consulting with residents through a questionnaire-based survey. The PACT team are trying to involve people in action planning and are starting to build a volunteer bank of people from the community who want to be involved. Community improvement and diversionary activities such as the Safe4Summer scheme have been implemented through the PACT programme.

4.3.12 Partnership working

The Building Stronger Communities Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) comprises seven groups: the Business Group, Violent Crime, Re-offending, Drugs and Alcohol, Neighbourhood Management, Cohesion Engagement Equality, and Young People and Families. These drive the local area agreement targets and address local priorities.

The Wigan Road Safety Forum has a broad remit to improve road safety and a wide membership, including local authority services, emergency services, the health sector and the community. In some cases participation by some agencies has been inconsistent. The forum meets four times a year and this is held in the evening to promote community participation, including that of the Road Safety Champions. A number of off-shoot projects have developed through the forum, such as mature driver training with the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) and the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM), and seat-belt checks with the fire and police services.

There is evidence of strong partnership working led by the housing department in partnership with the police, neighbourhood services, youth services, youth offending, Connexions, fire service, education and health departments. They meet on a monthly basis and form tasking groups which have led to the development of specific interventions for addressing anti-social behaviour

Greater Manchester has a number of groups set up for sharing good practice, exchanging information and ensuring a consistency of approach between member authorities within the region. They include the Greater Manchester Road Safety Officers (GMRSO), with local authority and police road safety officer representation, as well as the safety camera partnership (Drivesafe). Joint publicity and training campaigns have been delivered through this group. The Greater Manchester Road Accident Prevention Group (GMRAP) also operates at a regional level. The group is concerned with accident investigation and the analysis of accident data across the region. A sub-group of GMRAP are involved in work for Drivesafe. There are also groups for knowledge sharing across the North West for road safety education and training (the North West Local Authority Road Safety Officers Association (NWLARSOA) and, for road safety engineering, the North West Safety Engineers Group (NWSEG)).

4.4 Community views of local road safety

Most people we spoke with in Ince were proud of their community. They expressed a sense of belonging and a sense of shared history, which resulted from the bonds formed through being a former coal mining area. People expressed a concern to protect the community from outside criticism, which was felt because of its high levels of deprivation. Unlike the other case study areas, it is predominantly a White British community, and people who are born there tend to remain there. It is a community consisting of many people on unemployment and disability benefits, and people working in manual occupations. It also has high levels of poor health among adults and a significant number of lone parents. Car ownership in the ward is very low and, consequently, most local people travel around the local area on foot or by public transport.

The key actors consisted of residents, a community worker and a ward councillor. The adults in parents' groups were mostly single mothers who had large families and all had at least one child with learning and behavioural difficulties. The young adults in the group were aged between 16 and 21, were in education, unemployed or in part-time work. We also spoke with groups of primary and secondary school children from local schools.

4.4.1 Relative importance of road safety within the community

The people in Wigan were concerned about road safety, but it was often obscured by their overarching concern with (mainly young people's) anti-social behaviour. The key actors, for example, were much more concerned about social deprivation and its effects on the opportunities available to, and the behaviour of, young people. They highlighted the issue of young people's risk-taking and bravado, which they considered to be a particular problem throughout the community and which were expressed by young people themselves. Many parents were also concerned about young people's anti-social and risk-taking behaviour and the impact that this had on their and their children's lives. Road safety issues that were considered important were discussed in relation to the main arterial road that bisected the community, and the issues of speeding and motorbike use were considered as particular road safety problems in the residential areas.

4.4.2 The environment

The main problems highlighted within the community were:

- narrow footpaths and bridges in a few parts of the ward;
- congestion on the main road running through the ward; and
- streets being used as 'rat runs' to bypass some of the congestion.

Ince ward, which is very close to Wigan town centre, is made up of two main communities (Higher and Lower Ince). It is divided by the main Manchester road running through it. This is a very heavily congested road all day, but is particularly problematic during the rush hour. The main cause of congestion is related to traffic coming out of Wigan and heading in the direction of Manchester, and this congestion often causes considerable frustration for local drivers and pedestrians. This was observed and reported to be because drivers, who are sitting in traffic, ignore those local residents who are trying to get out of side streets to join the main road.

The local area consists of various residential estates which are accessed through side streets leading from the main road and people who know the area use some of the side roads as 'rat runs' in order to avoid some of the

congestion and to save time on their journeys. This resulted in parents being anxious about the safety of their children when walking to and from school with their children. There are large council estates on both sides of the main road and one side also consists of streets of terraced housing. The council estates have wider roads leading onto new developments and several roundabouts, while the terraced housing has narrower streets with few places to park. What was unique about the Ince area among the case study areas was the large amount of open space and park land. Much of this is reclaimed industrial or former coal mining land. However, much of it was reported to be unsafe by residents for the reasons discussed below.

Running through the community in the other direction to the road is the Liverpool and Leeds canal, which contains a series of locks through Ince. There is also a railway line running through the ward. The geography and landscape therefore makes having a bypass to address traffic congestion in the area very difficult. The key actors here highlight the problems that their local environment poses in not being able to relieve traffic congestion:

M1: *You see the other thing we have looked at, we have looked at it as the authority, for bus lanes. We can't put one in.*

M2: *There is nowhere along this road, nowhere with congestion that we could ease public transport, because we would end up with some of the smallest in length bus lanes in the bleeding country. Because there are always certain areas. Because to get in or out of Ince you either have to go under a bridge or over a bridge. And they are all bridges that were built a couple of 100 years ago. So predominantly they are narrow. If you think you have got Rose Bridge here which is narrow, where we have had a number of close incidents where kids coming to school have been caught by cars going over.*

(Key actor group, Wigan)

One of these bridges was a particular cause for concern to both key actors and parents, indeed it was commonly identified as a danger hot spot. It was a narrow single-lane bridge controlled by traffic lights at either end, which ran over the railway line and linked lower and upper Ince. However, parents and key actors noted that they had often witnessed cars jumping the lights. If a car was coming in the opposite direction, drivers would have to mount the kerb to get past each other. This was of particular concern to parents and school children, given the narrow pathways that ran across the bridge. In addition to the direct risk from cars, it was also noted that people could not always easily get past others walking in the opposite direction, and parents told us that older children at the local comprehensive often pushed younger smaller children out of the way and into the road to get past.

On the main Manchester road going out towards Manchester, there is a fast food outlet which is located at the corner of a busy crossroads. This is a very popular and busy fast food outlet, particularly with children and young people who were observed going there after school, on bikes or on foot. The children and young people and parents with children were frequently observed crossing over the road in-between cars waiting at the traffic lights, despite there being a pedestrian crossing directly outside the fast food shop, located at the junction's traffic lights. The danger here is that, while the traffic in one direction is stationary, flows come in the opposite direction from three other points. It would therefore only take a moment's inattention for an accident to occur.

4.4.3 Behaviour and attitudes – children and young people's pedestrian behaviour

Many people recounted incidents of children and young people's apparent 'bravado' in the face of oncoming traffic. For example, the key actors cited examples of children deliberately walking out in front of cars to cross roads, which they said was conducted with an air of invincibility, with little concern for the potential consequences of their actions. This kind of behaviour was also described during discussions with young adults who told us about friends who had pretended to fall off their bikes and had laid down in the road in order to make cars stop. Similarly, children's role play, undertaken as part of this research, also highlighted the issue of playing 'chicken'⁶ across main roads, and we were also told by others that this was a common occurrence within the area.

This risk taking was believed, by both adults and young people alike, to be due to boredom and a lack of suitable local facilities. Young people aged 16–21 reported that there was nothing for them to do in the local area, especially in the evenings, as the youth club had recently closed (see below). This meant that they often congregated in public spaces on the estate, such as at bus stops or behind residents' houses or on the streets. This often resulted in them engaging in risk-taking behaviour, often in front of their peers and after drinking alcohol. In one instance, for example, two girls had taken a parent's car and driven it into a cemetery wall after getting drunk.

⁶ 'Chicken' is a game usually involving a group of children and young people, where one child is 'dared' to cross the road in front of oncoming traffic.

The young people themselves talked about how they 'egged each other on' to take risks and to pretend to fall off bikes or play games such as 'saved your life'. This was where they came up behind a friend, grabbed their clothing, pushed them outwards in the direction of the road, and rapidly pulled them back towards the pavement again. The young people suggested that they needed facilities for their own use and noted that another local area had a youth club with an Xbox and a Wii. There were no such facilities available locally for them. Those activities that were available tended to be based on sport and rugby, in particular; these being activities that they did not want to participate in.

The risks that young people took may be accentuated as a consequence of congregating outside, which may not have occurred had they been in an indoor and off-street facility.

The key actors also believed that young people in the area had considerable freedom to go out on their own from an early age and knew their neighbourhood so well that they might take more chances crossing roads than, for example, those who were unfamiliar with the area.

The key actors also felt that this kind of risk taking by young people was tied up with thrill seeking or, at the very least, on finding some fun in the absence of other opportunities. This was reinforced further in discussions with young people and parents who highlighted the absence of anything other than sport facilities available locally at a reasonable expense:

The children, they have not got a lot of places to go have they and the places to go are very limited. If you have got no money you hang around a street corner, do you know what I mean? The only fun that you get is in a bus shelter, having a bottle of cider and that is it, or playing chicken across the road, because they have got nothing else to do, there are no other places to go.

(Woman resident, key actors group)

The young people aged 11–16 also told us how friends were a significant influence as to whether, and the extent to which, they took risks. This raises the issue of the extent to which parents' and schools' attempts to educate children to cross roads safely can be undermined by the effects of peer pressure. The influence of friends can result in increased risk-taking among some young people, even when they are aware of the potential dangers. For example, as these girls explained:

INT: So when do you think it is that people your age would take a risk and cross a road, when do you think they might?

G1: When they are with their friends.

G2: When they are showing off.

INT: ... Why do you think that they do that?

G2 Make them themselves look tough.

G1: If you go, like go to a crossing or something where you can be seen they think if you wait there until the green man comes on, they think you are a bit childish or a bit of a baby.

(Wigan, young people aged 11–16)

As noted earlier, people in Ince were not only concerned about young people's behaviour in relation to road safety, but they were also concerned about the safety of young people in general. For example, key actors and others also highlighted the issue of children jumping into the canal or just going there to swim during the holidays. This was regarded by adults as dangerous, mainly because the canal consisted of a series of locks which could result in children easily getting into difficulties in the water.

Young people themselves talked about the difficulties of getting across some roads in their areas. They mentioned the way that they often felt drivers appeared to want to 'take them on' when they were trying to get across the busy main road after school in order to see who would give way to the other. This may well have been associated with the frustration felt by drivers stuck in traffic for long periods. However, it also highlights the fact that the risk to children and young people cannot necessarily be ascribed solely to their own behaviour and attitudes. This issue is discussed further below.

Discussions with the younger children revealed that there was a general culture of street play in the area. Many children said that they mostly played in their local streets because that was where all their friends congregated. Parents in the area tolerated this mainly because the local parks had been vandalised. These parks were considered dangerous because they had been taken over by teenagers who used them as a place to congregate.

Parents also told us that burnt-out cars were frequently found within them, as was drug-taking equipment. In some cases, the parks and open spaces were also too far away for them and their children to get to easily. Going to the park unsupervised was therefore not an option owing to the risks involved from traffic, and for most families it would have taken a significant effort to get there. In addition, we were told that other, often more suitable, open green space had been appropriated by young people on speeding motorbikes or quad bikes, making them too dangerous for younger children to access on their own. In particular, parents mentioned that these open spaces were unsafe because of the uncertainty of not knowing when a speeding bike would appear. This made them dangerous places for their young children to play and for others more generally.

INT: Did someone mention the park, is that where your children go?

W1: Yes.

W2: In the summer they do.

W3: They want to go there, but I won't let them.

INT: Why?

W3: Because it is too far, I don't trust them to walk all the way, because of the traffic and ...

W1: There is no end of kids outside causing trouble all the time.

W2: It is always motorbikes.

W3: They used to have, it was a massive big field and they had a park and they burned it down.

(Wigan, parents' group)

The parents that we spoke with had large families, with the majority having three or more children to care for. The streets on the council estate were seen by parents as the safest place to play because they were able to keep an eye on their children while they played outside, while simultaneously being able to care for their younger children indoors. Parents were, however, concerned about their children's safety while they were out playing – although this was expressed in relation to their general safety, rather than specifically about road safety. As a result, many parents gave their children rules about where they were allowed to go and explained how they dealt with letting their children out. However, some parents commented that these rules were not always followed:

INT: ... you know you talked about letting your children play out, do you give them any rules or not, how do you manage that with everything going on?

W1: Mine is only on estate.

W2: If he is playing out, I see he pops in every 20 minutes.

W3: [Name of child] ... if I let him stay out to like 8.00 pm, our [name of child] when them lights come on he has to come back. He never listens to it though, you have to go finding him.

(Wigan, parents' group)

While parents said that they accompanied their younger children to activities such as Brownies, many activities were considered too expensive or they were unable to get to them owing to a lack of transport. For example, accompanying children to a local swimming pool was problematic for some lone mothers, especially those who have other children to care for. Some children were allowed to go to the shops and into town unaccompanied by adults from a young age. This was reported to be of concern, given the influence of peers on the roadside behaviour of children, and one child in particular reported how she had nearly been run over after 'messaging about' with a friend.

4.4.4 Speeding and driver behaviour

A further issue pointed out by many of the residents was the extent of speeding, which was felt to primarily involve young drivers, on the residential streets in their neighbourhood. Interestingly, although the young people that we spoke with said that they did not drive and that they could not afford to, they too thought that there was an issue with speeding in the vicinity. The young people also talked about how young 'boy and girl racers' from different areas around the ward congregated at a local off-road landmark and raced each other primarily on a Sunday evening. They believed this to be dangerous and reported a need for more enforcement to prevent it happening.

With regard to speeding more generally, parents believed that local people also used the roads on the estates as short-cuts in order to avoid the traffic on the main road. The parents felt that the police, or community police, could be more visible in order to prevent and control these potentially dangerous situations:

I think we should have more community police on streets, to stop the joy riders. Because we used to have them like on our estate, we don't get nothing now.

(Wigan, parents' group)

It was the young people who suggested the need for their estate to have speed bumps installed to prevent further accidents and injuries. They perceived this to be particularly important, given the number of children who played outside in the local streets. The parents, on the other hand, did not raise traffic-calming measures as an issue.

The young adults we spoke with also believed that the driving test age should be raised to 21. This was because they believed that younger people could be considered immature, and take unnecessary risks while driving. They felt that being older would mean that young people would be more likely to be in employment, and therefore also more likely to afford better maintained cars and car or motorbike insurance.

A further issue raised by the majority of the residents was the number of motorbikes that raced around the local estate and out onto local green land. It was generally thought that the young people involved tended not to wear crash helmets and there were incidents with teenagers riding very small motorised vehicles who were not visible to car drivers on the roads around the estate and on open spaces. The issue made people in the area anxious and spoilt the tranquillity of the local green land. It made parents feel that the green spaces, which ought to be areas in which children could play without worrying about coming into contact with vehicles, were too dangerous for them to allow their children to play on.

4.4.5 In-car safety

Parents that drove told us that they routinely used car restraints for their children. However, as few of them in the group did drive, it was difficult to ascertain whether other non-driving parents also used car restraints. Car seats for younger children were considered expensive, but booster seats were felt to be reasonably priced. One issue that emerged was the need for taxi drivers to routinely carry car and booster seats for those families that did not have a car. The young adults we spoke with also generally did not wear seat belts in the back of the car they were travelling in. They argued that they were not always necessary as they tended not to go far and that seat belts in the rear of a car were uncomfortable. To them, the back seat was perceived to be a place that they should be comfortable in.

4.4.6 Types of accidents in the area

The young adults group told us that they had witnessed a bad crash involving a collision between a car and a lamp post on a bend in the area. The driver was a young man aged 19 or 20 who was apparently doing 60 mph in a 30 mph area.

Parents told us that a little boy had been killed near a local paper shop, after a speeding car hit the kerb on a bend and lost control. This was witnessed by some of the relatives of parents within the group and speed was felt to be the main factor. Another boy had died after giving up on waiting at the crossing for the lights to change. Contributory factors to this accident were: a van parked on the corner, which obscured the child's view of oncoming traffic and also hid him from the driver's vision; and the length of time that he had to wait for the lights to change. As this mother explained:

He pressed the button and you have to wait for them to come on green, they take a bit and he has run thinking he can get before, and the car hit him.

A little girl had also been injured after being hit by a car as she had come over the bridge identified earlier as being a dangerous place. The main problem appeared to be that the bridge is flanked by a long brick wall, which leaves no room for people to escape onto if cars speed past and hit the kerb.

4.5 Conclusions

The impact of the traffic on the main road that bisected the whole area was considerable. The geography and infrastructure of the ward made it difficult for local people to imagine how the congestion caused by traffic passing through the area might be relieved or overcome. In addition, drivers used smaller residential streets to avoid the congestion and, in some cases, to relieve their boredom.

The visibility of young people and some of their anti-social behaviour appears to be a particularly salient issue for residents in the Ince ward. As a result, road safety issues were often obscured by resident's overarching anxiety about dealing with this behaviour. The main reason for the extent of the risk taking involving young people was a

need for more easily accessible and affordable facilities, in order to prevent boredom and the occurrence of risk-taking behaviour in the local environment.

Despite having a number of large, open, green spaces and children's play areas in the local area, families were clear that they did not feel that there was anywhere safe in the area for their children to play. Local parks were not felt to be safe environments and local roads (in which children played) were also not necessarily safe. Also, large families, often headed by lone parents, meant that there were limited opportunities to be taken to other places. Child road casualties appear to be linked to these wider social issues. To overcome some of these difficulties, parents said they wanted somewhere safe, within easy reach and where there were affordable activities for their children to participate in.

5 Sunderland case study

5.1 Area profile

Thornholme and Central wards in Sunderland were selected as a case study area due to their high levels of pedestrian casualties among young people (28,125 per 100,000 in Central and 9,182 in Thornholme) and they have high Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) scores. This local authority did not participate in the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI) or the Kerbraft scheme; nor does it have Department for Transport grant funding for road safety and deprivation initiatives.

This area is close to the city centre. It is predominantly older terraced and single-storey 'cottage' properties, with narrow streets and on-street parking. The city hospital is located in the area. It has a number of major arterial roads running east–west and north–south through the area (Figure 5.1).

The wards have been subject to boundary changes since 2001 and the case study area now covers Millfield and Hendon wards.⁷

Figure 5.1: Millfield and Hendon, Sunderland

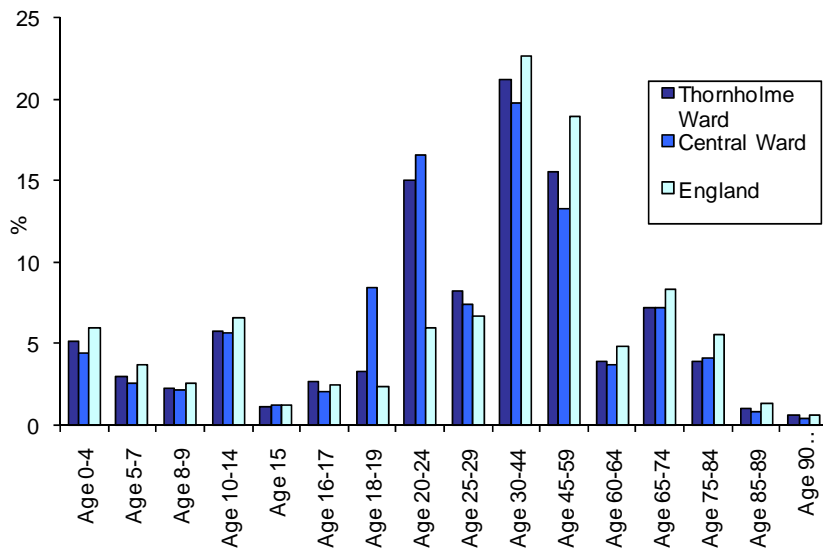


Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2008

⁷ The 2001 Census data reported are based on the Central and Thornholme wards.

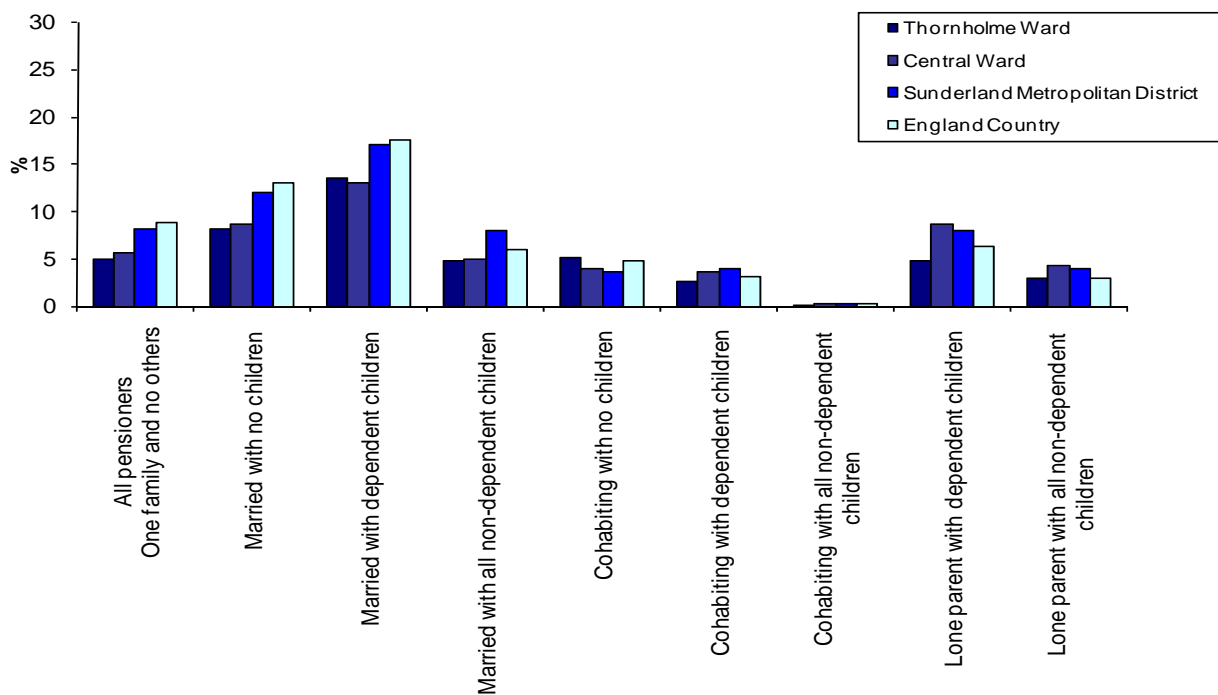
Both Thornholme and Central wards have lower proportions of children in their populations compared with England as a whole, but they have higher proportions of young adults (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Age



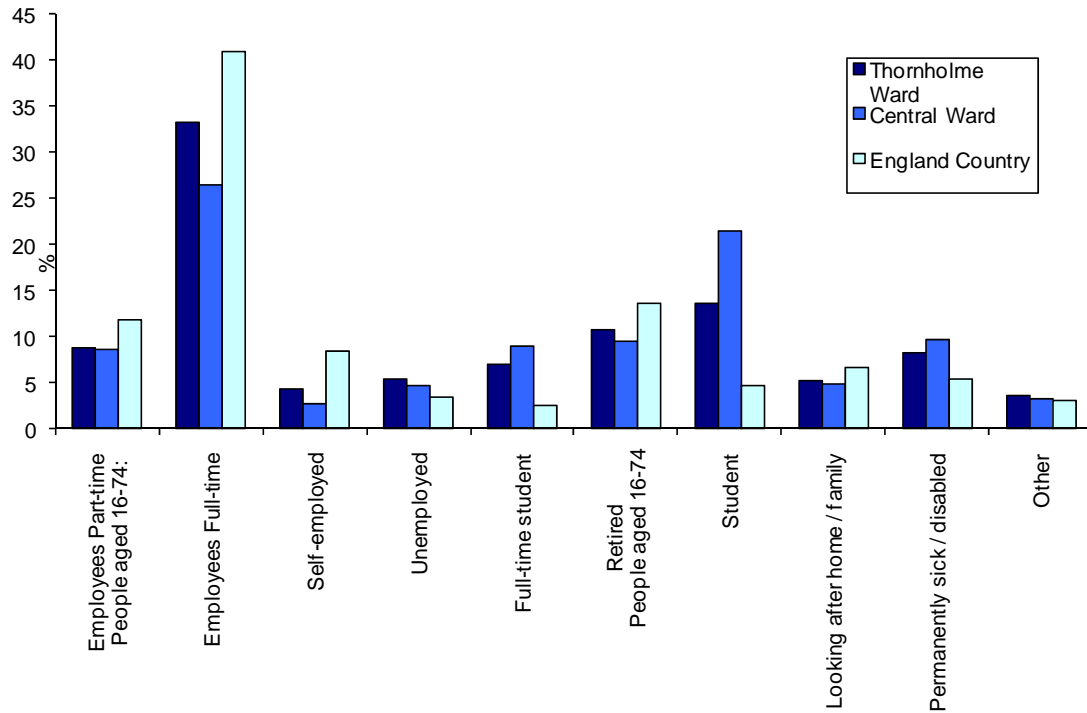
Central ward has a higher proportion of lone parent families among its population (Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: Household composition



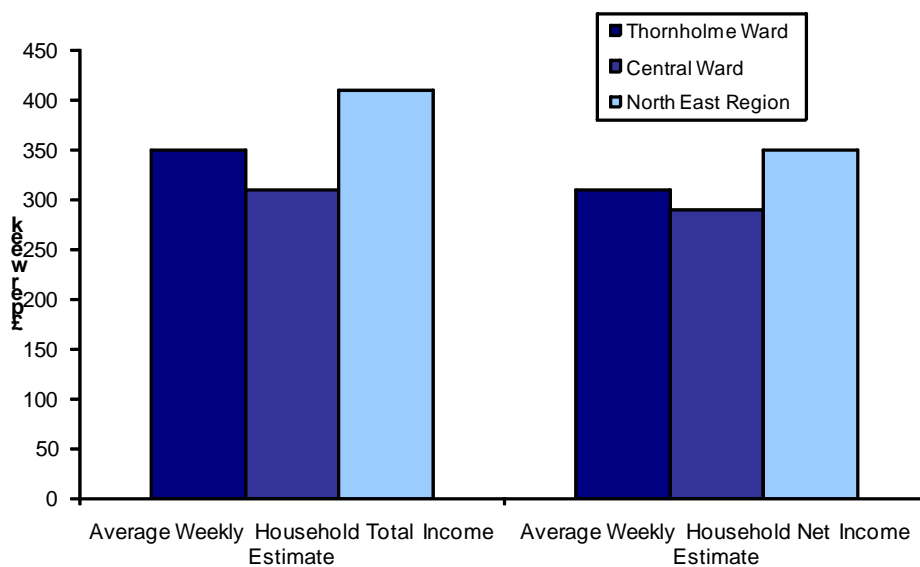
Both Central and Thornholme have lower proportions of residents in employment when compared with the national average, and higher than average student populations as well as permanently sick or disabled (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4: Economic activity



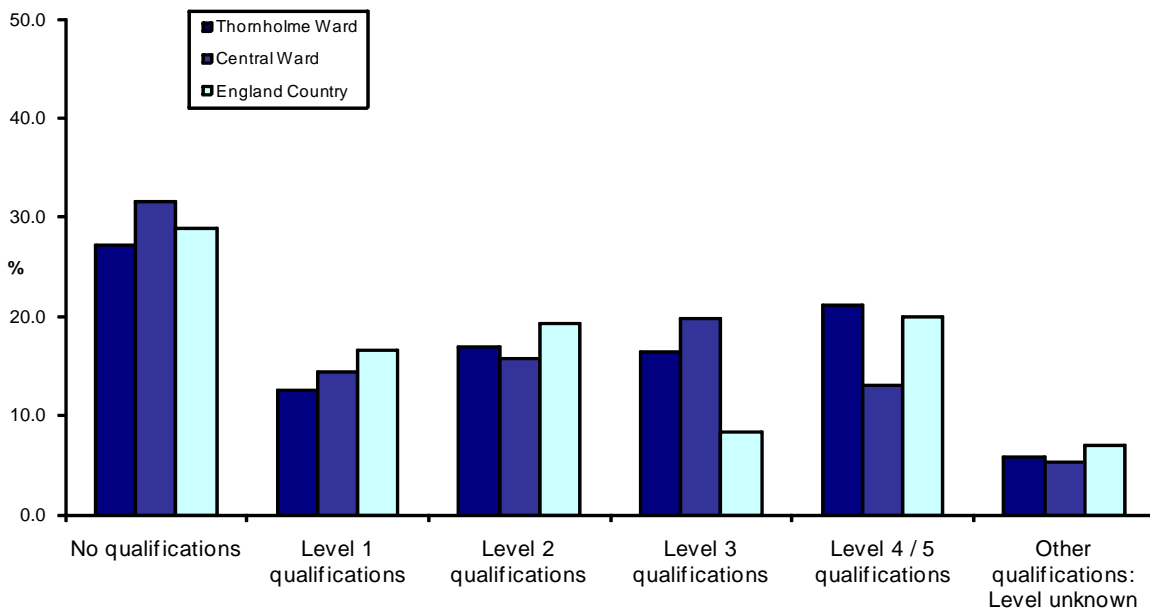
Both the case study wards have lower than average incomes among their populations when compared with the North East Region as a whole (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5: Income



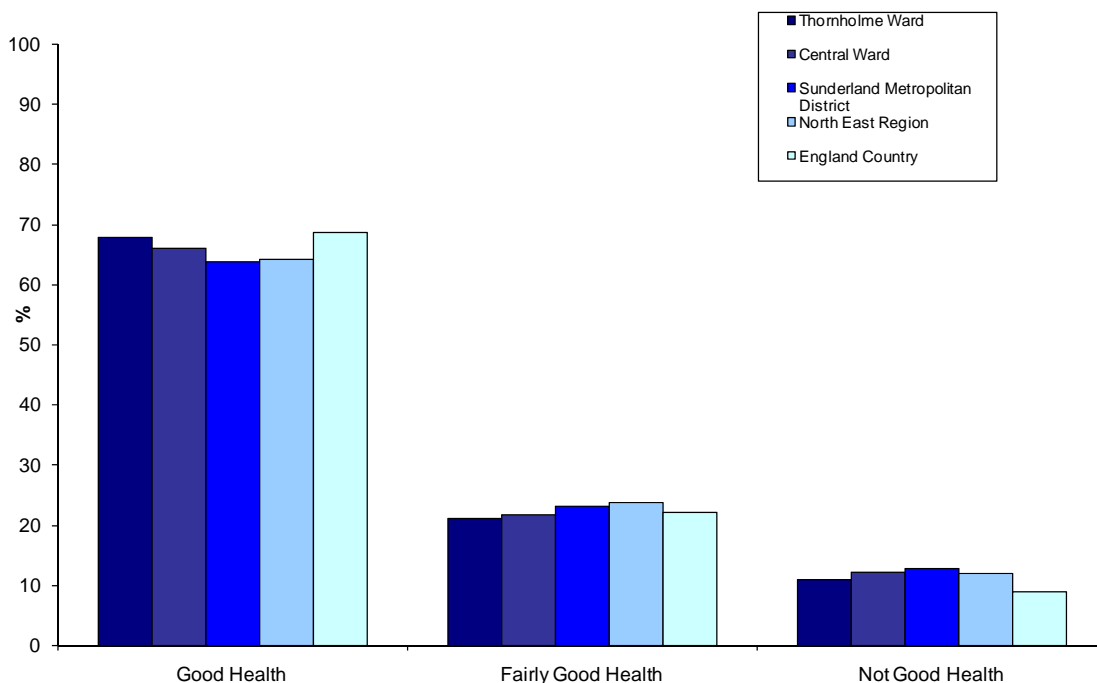
Central ward has a higher proportion of residents without any qualifications compared with the national average. However, this is not the case in Thornholme, where the proportion of residents without qualifications is lower (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Qualifications



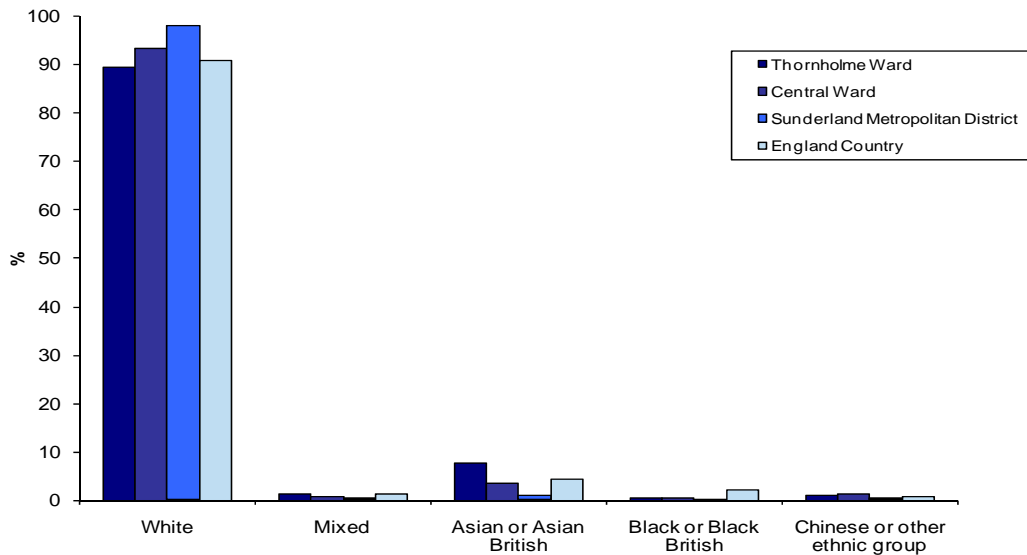
The proportion of residents in good health is marginally below that of England as a whole in the two case study wards, but a higher proportion of residents here have good health when compared with Sunderland as a whole and the region (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7: Health



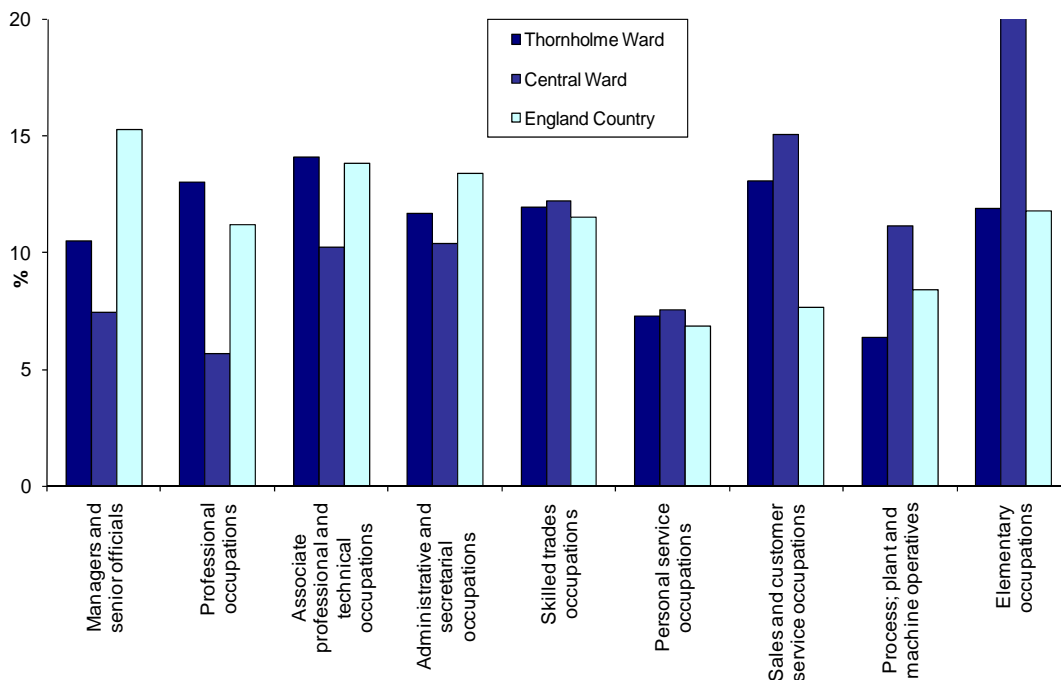
The majority of the population are White in Central and Thornholme, but both wards have larger ethnic minority populations than Sunderland generally. Thornholme, in particular, has a sizeable Asian population (Figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8: Ethnic group



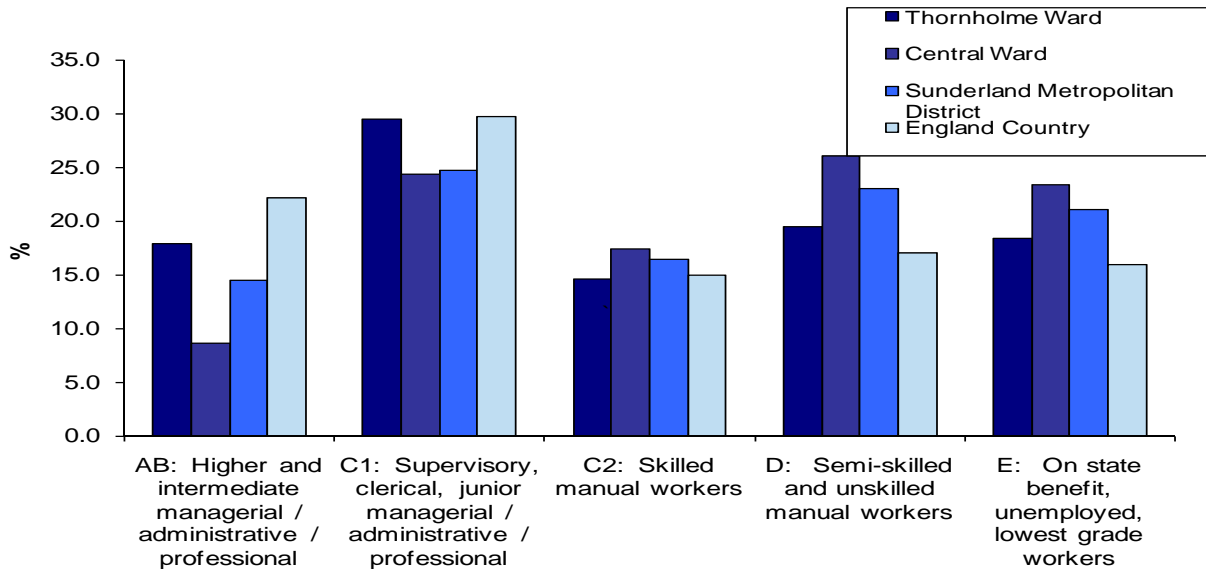
Thornholme and Central wards have significantly lower proportions of residents employed in managerial positions than England, and the same is true for professionals in Central. However, Thornholme has a higher proportion of people in professional occupations than the country as a whole. A significantly higher proportion of Central residents are employed in elementary positions (Figure 5.9).

Figure 5.9: Occupation group



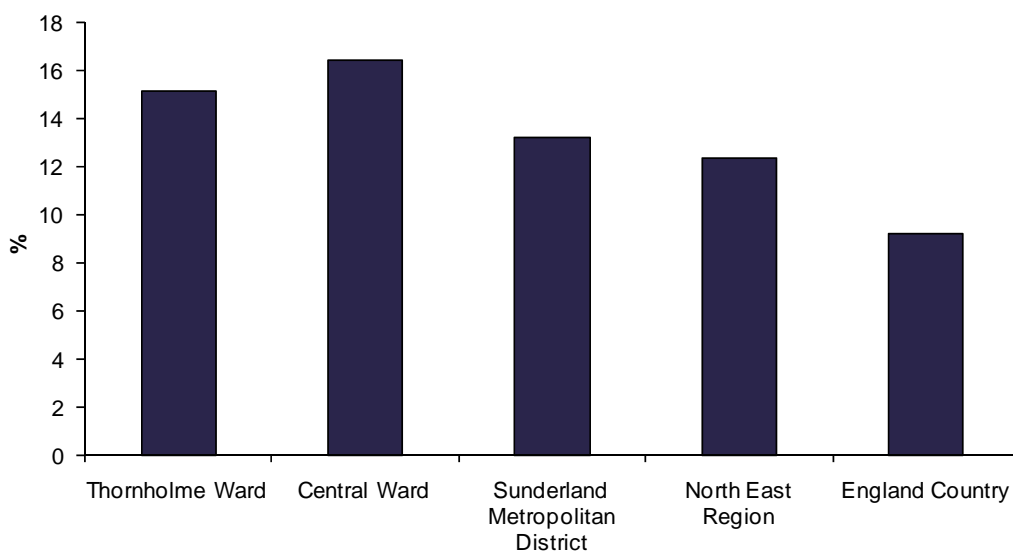
Both Thornholme and Central have a lower proportion of residents from social grade AB when compared with Sunderland and England, but this is particularly the case for Central ward. Thornholme has around the same proportion of residents from grade C1 as the national picture, but the proportion is lower, and in line with Sunderland as a whole in Central. Both Thornholme and Central have significantly higher proportions of residents from social grades D and E, compared with England (Figure 5.10).

Figure 5.10: Social grade



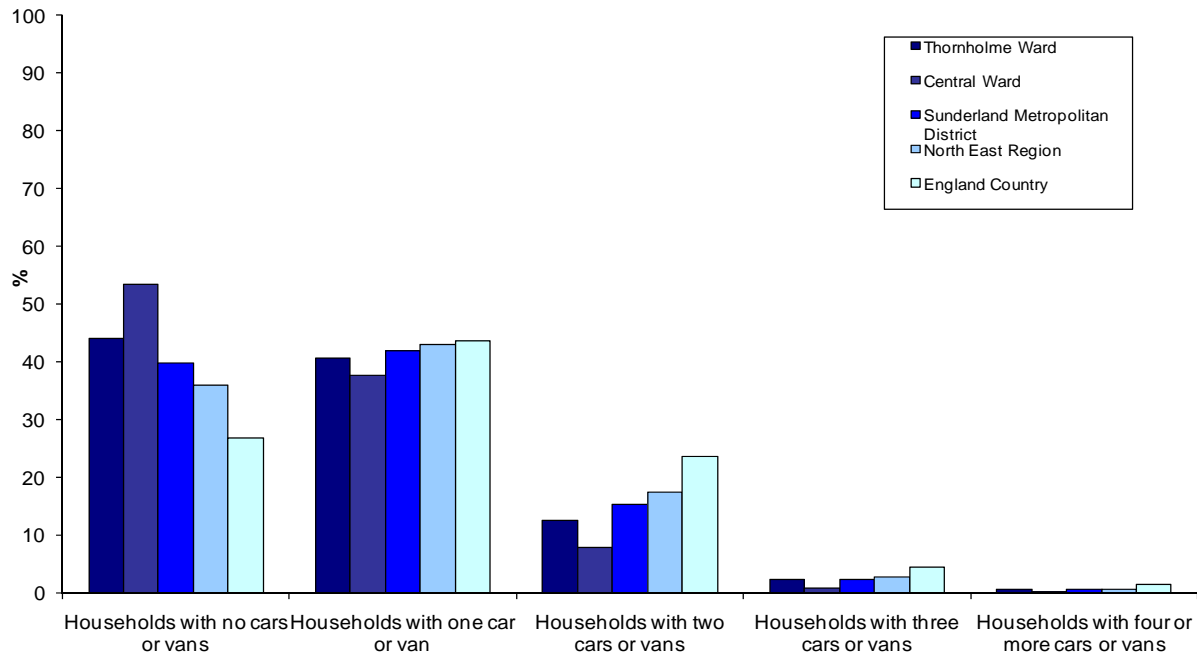
Both the case study wards have a higher proportion of residents on housing benefit when compared with the city, regional or national totals (Figure 5.11).

Figure 5.11: Housing benefit



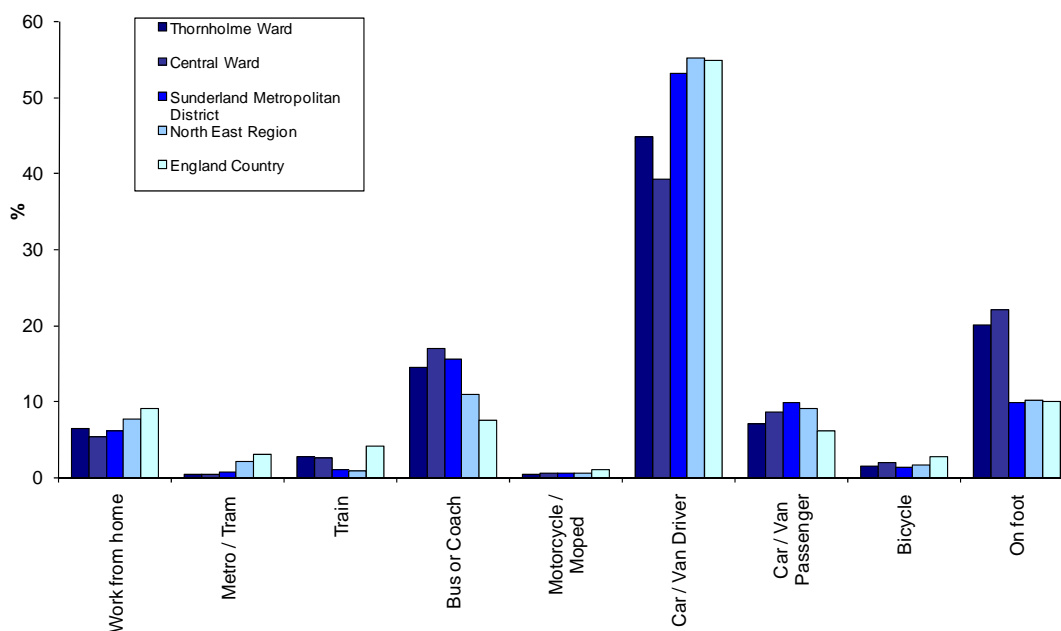
There are significantly more households without a car in the case study wards, particularly Central, where more than half of all households do not have a car (Figure 5.12).

Figure 5.12: Car/van ownership



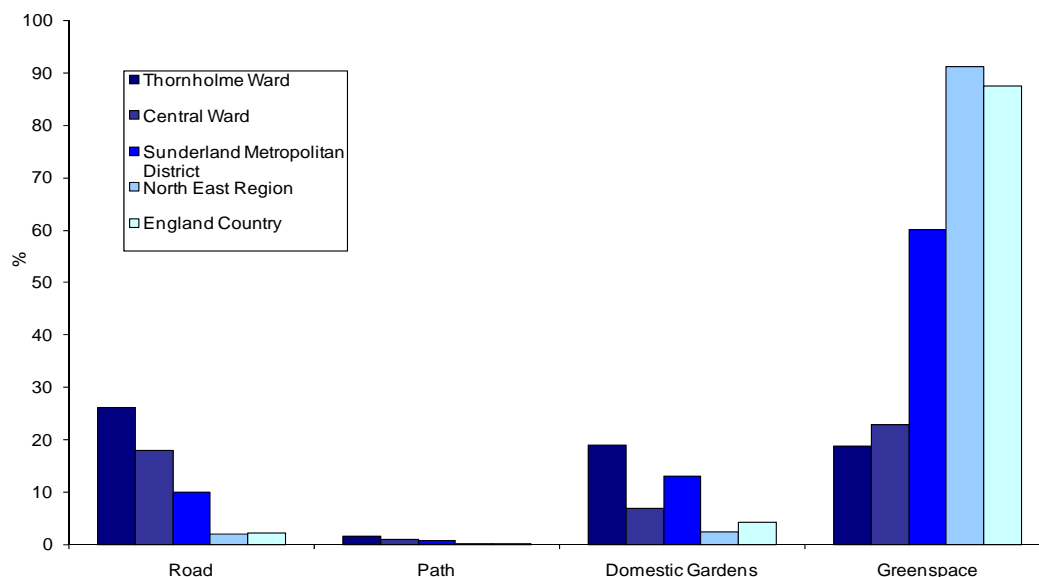
The proportion of people living in Central and Thornholme wards going to work on foot is more than twice as high as that for Sunderland, the North East Region and the country as a whole, and fewer go by car (Figure 5.13).

Figure 5.13: Travel to work



A higher proportion of land is taken up by roads in both Thornholme and Central when compared with the city as a whole, and Thornholme has considerably more road space than Central. Conversely, both areas have significantly less green space. Thornholme has more land taken up by private gardens compared with Sunderland as a whole, but this is not the case in Central, where the proportion of land use allocated to gardens is lower (Figure 5.14).

Figure 5.14: Land use



5.2 Policy and strategy

The road safety strategy for Sunderland is part of the wider regional strategy reported in the *Tyne and Wear LTP2 2006–2011* (Gateshead Council, 2005). The strategy adopts a casualty reduction approach based on detailed analysis of the types and locations of collisions in the area. The Local Transport Plan (LTP) notes Government research suggesting that casualty risk is associated with deprived areas, and states that contributory factors are: poor environment dominated by roads, lack of play facilities, truancy, lack of understanding or appreciation of road safety issues, lack of community facilities easily accessible on foot, and excessive levels of through traffic. However, their own earlier analysis of IMD and collision data for the region found that there was **not** a strong association between IMD scores and collision risk. The LTP did not, therefore, propose direct interventions specifically aimed at reducing this inequality, but nevertheless to prioritise tackling social exclusion by improving the accessibility and affordability of transport.

Road casualties and the approach to tackling this issue are identified at a broad and long-term level in the strategic plan for Sunderland. The Strategic Partnership Strategy – *Sunderland for a Better Future: The Sunderland Strategy 2008–2025* (Sunderland Partnership, 2008a) – notes a small increase in serious casualties and endorses the continuation of road safety education and cycle training, high-quality school travel plans and safer routes to school by improving the road layout within an ‘attractive and inclusive City’ theme. However, the shorter-term plan, as identified in the *Sunderland Local Area Agreement 2008–2011* (Sunderland Partnership, 2008b), does not identify any specific actions or indicators such as road casualty reduction.

A partnership strategy has been produced by the Children’s Trust in Sunderland, with the aim of delivering positive outcomes for children in line with identified priorities. The strategy is documented in *The Sunderland Children and Young People’s Plan 2009–10* (Sunderland Children’s Trust, 2009) and includes among its priorities for children and young people to be safe in the community, at school and at home. The plan commits to reducing the rate of accidental injury to children and young people, and to produce a multi-agency accident and injury prevention strategy for 2008–11. The plan incorporates the local road casualty reduction targets for children as well as the targets for the number of schools with a Travel Plan (100% by 2010). Most importantly, the plan identifies a new

action to 'Identify the link between rate of road traffic accidents and areas of high deprivation and use results in planning targeted actions and preventative measures.' It is notable that deprivation is recognised and incorporated into the Children's Services strategy. The plan also notes an action to strengthen the arrangements for joint working between the council, schools, health and police to achieve a co-ordinated approach to strategic planning. An action for road safety issues to be embedded and sustained through the **Building Schools for the Future** programme is also included, recognising the role that design has to play in reducing risk.

The broad strategies for police activities that directly or indirectly have road safety implications are included in the *Northumberland Policing Plan 2009–2012* (Northumberland Police Authority, 2008). Priorities within the plan include reducing alcohol and youth-related crime and disorder in partnership with other agencies through education, reinforcing parental responsibility and targeted diversionary work. A further priority is to provide effective local policing around local neighbourhood concerns, such as anti-social behaviour. The plan also prioritises the provision of protective services, including roads policing to protect vulnerable people through the use of targeted patrols and technology to combat high-risk drivers who should not be on the roads (such as disqualified and uninsured drivers). The roads policing strategy is to focus education and enforcement activity on high-risk groups such as motorcyclists and inexperienced drivers.

The principles for road safety activity by the Tyne and Wear Fire Service are identified in the Community Safety Delivery Framework, which aims to target the most vulnerable in the community. They advocate a partnership approach to improving safety on the roads as well as working with young people to improve their lives.

Moving Forward: Sunderland's Play and Urban Games Strategy (Sunderland City Council, 2007) identifies the council's broad approach to play provision. It notes that fear of traffic is one factor in children playing out as much as they might like and advocates the provision of good play projects to support outside play and, at the same time, reduce unacceptable levels of danger. The strategy incorporates a specific objective to create, improve and develop children and young people's free local spaces in the south of the city, including the case study area. This includes encouraging open access to a local facility (Hendon Young People's Project Multiuse games area). The broad target is to increase the number of children and young people with access to dedicated high-quality play space within one kilometre of their home.

5.3 Services and interventions

5.3.1 Sunderland City Council – Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity

There has been more emphasis on education, training and publicity (ETP) in Sunderland in the last two years prior to which there has been a focus on engineering measures with limited resources allocated to ETP. This change in emphasis was thought to be associated with having done most of the road safety engineering measures required and recognising a need for diversification. However, overall Sunderland appears to have quite limited resources dedicated to road safety ETP.

ETP provide in-school education and make use of the *Stepping Out Together* resource produced by the Tyne and Wear region for pre-school children and their parents or carers. This has recently been translated into Urdu and Bangladeshi to engage with these minority ethnic communities. They are also just launching a road safety board game. For Year 6, *Moving on Up*, a magazine resource is used to convey road safety messages associated with transferring to secondary school. They also work in partnership with Nexus on a bus to school initiative to promote bus use and good behaviour on the bus. Safe independent travel forms part of the message associated with this initiative.

The authority delivers a six-week programme of child pedestrian training to Years 1 and 2 children. The scheme follows some of the principles of Kerbcraft, including using volunteers, but has been condensed into a shorter time period as Kerbcraft is felt to be over too long a period and they are able to deliver to more children in a cost-effective way with a shorter programme. The child pedestrian training is offered to all schools in Sunderland with no priority given to disadvantaged areas.

ETP also provide the *Right Track* programme for road cycle training to Years 5 and 6. They do not yet work to national standards. Most schools participate in this programme, including those in Millfield. The training is used to convey the importance of wearing cycle helmets and these are provided if children do not have their own.

ETP would like to fund the *Smart Risk* programme taken up by the fire service, which is currently only delivered in a limited number of schools. It is considered to be a good programme that delivers a risk-assessing message to an

age group that they are currently not approaching. They have not compared this with other initiatives, but it was felt to be well delivered and would 'fill a gap'.

5.3.2 Police service

The police implement a number of interventions on a force-wide (Northumbria) basis. Additionally, local traffic police actions are determined by the local tasking group and the Neighbourhood Policing Team will identify specific traffic issues which will feed into this. Interventions include:

- **operation weekend** – aimed to tackle the dangerous and anti-social riding of motorbikes causing a nuisance to local people;
- **automatic number plate recognition (ANPR)** – Sunderland has an extensive ANPR system which is used to identify uninsured vehicles;
- **joint initiative** with the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) to target uninsured or unlicensed vehicles;
- **school lectures** – the traffic police deliver lectures in schools on request – neighbourhood police also deliver presentations to children on safety issues, but there are limited resources dedicated to this (four to five officers); and
- **collision investigation** – detailed collision investigations are carried out which can highlight engineering issues which are taken up with the council. In the study area this has led to improvements at Chester Road/St Michael's Way junction, where pedestrian desire lines were not compatible with safe crossing behaviour, and at the A1231/A182 junction street lighting improvements were made to improve the visibility of pedestrians to motorists, for example.

With regard to neighbourhood policing, local priorities have been identified by the public concerned with reducing alcohol-related disorder and youth disorder in two specific areas, and the safety and security of staff and the public at Sunderland Hospital. Measures to address these issues include working with off licences, enforcement and diversionary youth work and 'zero tolerance' regarding threatening behaviour at the hospital.

5.3.3 Fire service

The fire and rescue service undertakes a range of activities with local communities. They hold fire station open days with mock road traffic collisions and demonstrate the use of cutting equipment to get people out of a vehicle. This aims to highlight the consequences of traffic collisions. In north Sunderland, a pilot project has been launched which involves bringing young people to the road traffic collision compound in order to raise awareness of the consequences of stealing a car.

They have partnered with **SmartRisk**, a charitable organisation concerned with injury prevention, to educate teenagers about risk management. The five core messages associated with this programme are: get trained, buckle up, look first, wear the gear, and drive sober. This has only been undertaken in a limited number of secondary schools across the Tyne and Wear region and not in the study area.

The Phoenix Project is a partnership with the Youth Offending Services. It is a week long work experience course for young offenders and those at risk of offending. All the participants volunteer to go on the course, which seeks to foster the benefits of working within a disciplined uniformed team. The project has been extended to incorporate two follow-up sessions after six and twelve months. A one-day course is also offered to parents to promote their engagement with the initiative. The project has been subject to external evaluation and is considered successful in reducing re-offending rates.

The service runs a weekly **Young Fire Fighters Association** which involves young people in learning a range of fire service skills. They also work with the **Prince's Trust** through the provision of practical support, training and mentoring to help 14–30-year-olds realise their potential and transform their lives. This focuses on people with particular needs, such as those who have had difficulties at school, young people in care, those who suffer from behavioural problems or who are long-term unemployed.

The local fire service has just started to work as a partner in the mobile **Youth Village** initiative, funded by the council. This is designed to provide diversionary activities for young people aimed at reducing anti-social behaviour. All projects undertaken by the fire service are reported to be evaluated.

5.3.4 Community safety

The community safety agenda focuses on youth anti-social behaviour, crime and domestic violence. This is co-ordinated by the Sunderland Partnership and delivered through eight LMAP groups across the city. They have, for example, funded an initiative in Millfield with shopkeepers to tackle shoplifting. Road safety is not specifically identified in the work of this partnership.

5.3.5 Leisure

There are three sports/leisure centres in or near the study area. They provide facilities for a range of sport and leisure activities, including swimming and gym facilities. They run programmes of activity courses, including children's holiday courses, and a number of clubs operate from these centres. Additionally, they undertake outreach work, such as tennis programmes in schools. The authority has introduced a pricing policy recently which aims to recognise people's ability to pay and to make activities affordable to those on low incomes. A life card is available which entitles holders to discounts and special promotions to all Sunderland leisure facilities. For all activities those aged eight or over can use the facilities without being accompanied by an adult. The area also has a park with play equipment and pitch facilities (Backhouse Park).

Since April 2009 they have been implementing a Government grant funded free swimming initiative – **Swim4life** – for under 17-year-olds (and those over 60) for a two-year period. There has been a high take-up and there was concern that the budget allocated to under 17-year-olds would be fully spent before the end of the period. This scheme may be reducing the amount of time young people spend playing or passing time on the street, but, at the same time, leisure services were concerned about reducing the quality of service offered to paying customers now experiencing busier pools.

5.3.6 Youth offending

Youth Offending Services provide a range of services including preventative work for those at risk of offending. Projects they deliver include a **Volunteer Mentoring Service**, which aims to provide advice and support to vulnerable young people from an older, more experienced person, aiming to reduce peer pressure towards involvement in crime. They also deliver the **Phoenix Community Fire Safety Project**, as detailed above (see Section 5.2.3). The **Barnardo's SunGate Parenting Project** aims to provide support and assistance to parents of young people at risk of offending. **Wear Kids** provides support for children and young people and their families, with the aim of avoiding crime and anti-social behaviour. Youth Offending also run a diversionary football training programme for young people, **Tackle It**, in partnership with Sunderland FC.

5.3.7 Safeguarding children

Sunderland, in common with many other areas, clearly prioritises non-accidental injury and death in their work and safeguarding children from abuse. Road safety is not, therefore, an integral part of the safeguarding strategy.

5.3.8 Partnerships

There is some evidence of partnership working between agencies in the case study area. The fire service and Youth Offending work together for the delivery of specific interventions. The area is part of a New Deal for Communities regeneration programme and this team works with other partners on a range of initiatives concerned with improving housing, the environment, community safety, health and employment opportunities for local residents. Sunderland also implements joint working through their Local Multi-Agency Problem Solving (LMAPS) groups. These groups operate at a local level, including the case study area, and meet to discuss strategy around particular problems occurring in the local area and are felt to be useful.

5.4 Community views of local road safety

The majority of people we spoke with in Millfield were White British, although some of the primary school children were from Black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds. The key actors were all local residents and had lived in the area for a long time, and had therefore witnessed many changes to the ward over the years. Several were pensioners and two were disabled, with one person being a mobility scooter user. All were passionate about the area and were vocal campaigners on road safety issues.

As with the other case study areas, they too expressed pride in their community. However, they had witnessed what they felt to be a decline in the area over the last few years. They believed this was due to the large numbers of 'buy

to let' properties available for students and recent immigrants to the area. They believed that this had contributed to a decline in 'community spirit' because of the frequent changes to the population.

The majority of parents we spoke with had two or more children and a few were single parents. A couple of the parents also had children with learning or behavioural difficulties. The majority of the primary school age children in these groups lived in lone parent families and all had one or more sibling. The young men we spoke with (aged 18–21) had all passed their driving test within the last year.

5.4.1 Relative importance of road safety within the community

Road safety was an important issue within the community, particularly for the key actors. They pointed out that the roads in the ward were generally narrow, and because of the location of a large hospital in the area, they had to regularly deal with double parked cars leading to poor visibility and hazardous situations. Parents, on the other hand, began by stating that the area was generally quiet, but during discussions expressed their anxiety about particular parts of the community around the school that they considered to be unsafe. They were particularly concerned about their older children, who were now becoming more independent, and they also had concerns about their children's ability to cross the roads safely.

On the other hand, the young people's group's main concern was the lack of facilities and activities for young people within the area. They did not think that Sunderland was a particularly dangerous place with regard to roads, at least to begin with. However, during discussions it became apparent that they did have a problem with certain elements of the environment and aspects of driving behaviour.

5.4.2 The environment

Issues highlighted during discussions with different groups within the community included:

- a ward bisected by two narrow main arterial roads bringing through traffic from other towns and nearby cities;
- densely populated areas with very narrow streets;
- a shortage of parking space which was related to the density of housing and the number of cars per household;
- large public venues – local hospital, nearby football ground and a metro station, which increased the amount of traffic and caused parking difficulties;
- road crossings situated on bends or considered as being wrongly placed;
- one particular very busy, poorly signed and designed roundabout; and
- very little open play space for children.

The Millfield ward has a large hospital located within it, which attracts cars from all over the area. Moreover, hospital expansion has created a demand for parking that has spilled over into the local area. Hospital car park fees are generally believed to encourage people using the hospital to park on residential streets, which do not have designated residential parking. For those who live locally, this causes clashes for space and also impacts on the safety of the surrounding streets and junctions. The double parking also caused problems for motorists and pedestrians trying to negotiate the streets to get to the school and nursery in particular. As these parents noted:

W1: At the other end of the street there is a nursery and they get a lot of problems parking wise, round that corner, because they get overspill from the hospital, the hospital staff have to pay to park in the hospital grounds whereas if they get onto that road they don't have to. And there is a fairly major problem with double parking.

W2: They have put zigzag lines down there but they are still parking on them. You take your life in your hands when you are driving along there, to be honest ... It is blind, you can't get round when they are double parked.

(Sunderland, parents' group)

Sunderland's football ground is located close by and the metro station is also within the ward, and both are also accessed by traffic from far and wide. The ward also contains several junior schools and a nursery school, and there

is also a university campus situated nearby. People we spoke with mentioned many incidents of double, or dangerously parked, cars within the ward, and that the traffic was particularly busy and hazardous around the schools at picking up and dropping off times. Housing is predominantly terraced around the school and, given that the roads are narrow, there is little parking space. This is made more problematic as a result of many households in the area having more than one car. It was noted that this had got worse in recent years as more properties had become multiple occupancy lets.

The ward is bisected by two main arterial roads which take traffic to and from nearby cities and towns. At the time of conducting the research, one of these main roads had been blocked due to road works which had caused congestion on the other main road and had also caused traffic to take short cuts through residential streets. The main through roads also have shops running along them which are not easily accessible by cars and many of the shops along one of the main roads are boarded up or closing down, adding an air of neglect to the whole thoroughfare. Observations suggested that this may have contributed to the general carelessness of how some drivers parked along the main road.

Further along this main road, on the approach to a major roundabout, there were a number of 'take aways' and sandwich shops, where drivers were observed to pull up on double yellow lines in order to buy their lunch in the morning. This was potentially dangerous for other motorists on the approach to the roundabout and for drivers coming in the other direction, as it obscured the motorists' vision and potentially hid children from view.

There was also a local car dealership on this road, which was noted as a particular problem by the key actors. This was mainly because the cars for sale were observed to be parked on the pavements. This meant that pedestrians had to step onto the roads to get by and, again, this made obtaining a clear view of the streets more difficult.

There was a general consensus of opinion between the key actors, the parents and the primary school children that some of the road crossings were in the wrong place. Parents' and children's groups, independently, suggested that the zebra crossings they used to get to/from school should be directly in front of the school rather than on the streets leading up to it, and the key actors also felt that some of the crossings were in dangerous places as they were located on corners, thus making visibility difficult. Many noted that local planners had not consulted local people properly – commenting that they were only asked their views when decisions had been made. Some of the examples of badly placed crossings that people noted were on the main shopping streets, and this resulted in people crossing the busy road in places where there were no crossings.

In addition, some of the young drivers we spoke with had cycled before passing their driving test and told us of the difficulties they had faced in being able to cycle confidently within the city. The proximity to cars that were believed to encroach upon their territory made them anxious. They told us that there was little room to introduce more cycle lanes in the area and that, even if they did, not many people appeared to want to cycle, as even when a new cycle path had recently opened, very few cyclists had been seen using it. They also pointed out that, while they felt the cycle proficiency training they had been given had been useful in terms of learning the skills to ride a bike safely, it had not taught them about the rules of the road.

Now they were drivers, they commented about a number of issues in respect of the design and layout of local roads. For example, they mentioned the traffic flow of a main roundabout on the edge of the ward. This they felt was too narrow to accommodate three lanes of traffic when approaching it and had been the cause of a number of incidents (see Section 5.3.6). They also reported problems with traffic lights at a junction where the sequencing had been altered several times and resulted in drivers being confused and making often last minute and dangerous manoeuvres.

There was only one green space known as 'pocket park' within the ward and this was a very small open space with no play equipment or facilities for children. There were a few children who said that they played out in the streets. but many also said that their parents would only let them play out if they were accompanied by older siblings or friends. The parents we spoke with were reluctant to let their children out to play, despite their children requesting to and they admitted that they might appear overprotective. This reflects the findings that admitting to letting children play out constitutes 'bad parenting' in wider society (see Sutton, 2008) and also some wider concerns about the safety of children and young people more generally. As this mother says:

My son actually said the other week 'Mum you are frightening me with some of the things you say'. He is of an age ... I didn't really have a problem with my daughter at nine, but at nine he wants to be out with his friends. His friends are riding about on bikes ... when it is dark, and I wouldn't let him out. And he says 'All my friends do ride about on bikes'. On a road safety point they are not careful, they whizz backwards and forwards across the road. And I won't let him do that.

5.4.3 Driving behaviour and attitudes

There was some concern among the key actors about how well equipped young people were for driving throughout their lives, and they believed that there is a real need to see driving as a lifelong skill.

This was reflected in discussions with the newly qualified young drivers within the area, who acknowledged that their driving behaviour changed once they had passed their driving test, as they perceived some behaviours to be unnecessary and impractical. These included checking rear-view mirrors when changing gear and 'pushing and pulling', rather than crossing their hands, when steering the car. However, a few had either recently completed or were taking part in the Pass Plus scheme in order to improve certain driving skills, but also to qualify for cheaper car insurance (some in this group argued that Pass Plus was a waste of money as it did not guarantee a reduction in their high insurance premiums and that, in some cases, the discount was less than the cost of the course itself).

The young drivers thought that there were many incidents within the area of aggressive driving and, in particular, of tailgating and this, in turn, caused them (and other drivers) anxiety and distracted them from keeping their eyes on the road.

The key actors were concerned that drivers ignored certain speed limits on main roads, and they felt that there should be greater enforcement of the speed limit. Parents, though, did not generally think that speeding was too problematic on the main roads in the area. However, the majority of parents we spoke with did not drive and based their view on their experience of living in the area. Their main concern with regard to this was the number of people who sped in-between speed bumps around the local primary schools, which were sometimes used as short cuts between the main roads nearby.

The young drivers we spoke with told us how they very often texted other people while driving, some while stationary, at traffic lights or in queues, but others while they were moving. Only one young person in this group had any awareness of the road safety campaign about not texting while driving. They did tell us though that having their peers as passengers could act as a major distraction to them while driving. This included passengers in the back seats changing the music or, in some cases, changing gear, or just generally making a noise. This was a very different driving experience from having their parents with them in the car and, ultimately, affected their driving styles:

- M1: *All the time when they [friends] are in the back seat and trying to change the music in the front. You can't concentrate on driving because you don't know what they are doing. They are right in your face 'sit down'.*
- M2: *You are about to turn right and you see a car coming up and you know it is coming, and then they say watch out and start distracting you.*
- INT: *Sometimes having people in your car with you is a bit of a distraction?*
- M2: *It depends who really. If it is family then they don't distract you. It is usually friends.*
- M3: *They are picking on you, the way you drive. The way you drive with both hands on the wheel. And so you are trying to change your habits and drive a lot cooler.*

(Sunderland, young people, 16–21)

5.4.4 In-car safety

Non-seat-belt wearing behaviour did not appear to be as much of a problem within this community as in other case study areas. Young drivers told us that they always wore a seat belt and they believed strongly that not wearing one would be foolish as it would primarily impact only on their own safety rather than anyone else's safety. Parents also told us that.

5.4.5 Pedestrian behaviour and attitudes

The key actors in Sunderland expressed concern about the number of young people they saw deliberately walking into the road in front of oncoming traffic. They thought that this was arrogant and undertaken in order to make cars slow down 'for a laugh'. They cited, for example, the incidents of young people who walked out in front of cars, especially when leaving the metro station in the area. This was also an issue among the young drivers, who highlighted how some young people would walk down roads and, when challenged, would thump their car bonnets in return. They expressed this in terms of saying that they (pedestrians) 'think they own the road'.

In contrast, the children's groups highlighted the difficulty of getting across roads near the school. A few of the children felt that the crossing patrol person was in the wrong place, as the patrolling place already had a pelican crossing in place. There was also an acknowledgement among the children that they may sometimes not be concentrating on the roads, thinking about other things and being 'in your own dream world', which they felt contributed to incidents of accidents.

In addition, both children and parents mentioned the issue of being able to negotiate streets and people. The children told us how they often had to step out into the road around the school because of the numbers of mothers with pushchairs who blocked off pavements. Parents also told us how hazardous parking affected their routes around the school and wider neighbourhood, and how they had to go out of their way when cars had parked on the pavements, leaving them no room to get their pushchair through the gap. Observations confirmed this and it was common to see cars and vans parked half on the pavement and half on the road, thereby leaving little space for pedestrians. This mainly affected parents with children, and this was happening in the vicinity of schools and a nursery.

5.4.6 Types of accidents within the area

Residents in the key actor group told us about some of the accidents that had occurred in the area. One accident involved a car turning into a junction which hit a young boy as he was crossing the road. The key actors said that this was mainly because cars were parked along double yellow lines, causing poor visibility around junctions and this was also noted during observations.

A more serious accident involved a 12-year-old boy who had been knocked down and killed while playing outside on the street on his bike. It was unclear what caused the accident. The young drivers also told us about some friends that had been killed after the driver had crashed her car. It was believed that she had been drinking alcohol.

Someone had also been killed while crossing on a zebra crossing. This crossing is located immediately before a roundabout – identified as a hot spot – as it has three lanes on its approach which stem from a narrower road. It was also regarded as having unclear traffic exit signs. The driver involved was thought to have been speeding.

Another serious accident had occurred along the main through road in the ward and the key actors described what happened as follows:

M1: We have got to come out, you have got to keep nosing out until you can see. Well by the time you can see your car is sticking out.

W1: I think John Candlish Road as well, there have been quite a lot of accidents there, when they have come out of John Candlish Road into Hilton Road.

W2: Next to the bank.

M1: But I have seen a guy knocked down there, was it last year, he came out the bookies. He survived but he was very badly hurt. You have got like a few shops, a pub, a bookies, the location there.

(Key actor group)

There had also been two incidents of cars running into houses. This was thought to be because cars had been speeding around a bend near what residents termed an 'illegal mosque'. This was where three former shops had been knocked together to create a mosque without planning permission. It was reported as being common for the people running this mosque to put cones into the road to create parking. This was deemed to be particularly problematic because it is a narrow and busy main road with existing double yellow lines along it.

The key actors believed that some of the parking problems could be eased by better enforcement as there was a perception that action was needed to discourage people from parking their cars on pavements, double yellow lines or at junctions. However, they also recounted how traffic wardens no longer regularly patrolled without police escorts in the area as a result of an assault on a traffic warden, which added to the overall traffic chaos in the area:

W1: Put it this way, the traffic wardens have to be escorted.

M1: The traffic wardens won't come up unless they have got a police escort. Well you know the police could be busy, we can spare a guy next week ... Because a traffic warden there, went to ticket a car parked outside there [along Hilton road] and the guy in the shop lamped him and then he got his car out and tried to run him down.

W1: Yes.

M1: So what do the council do, we will not send traffic wardens out. And everybody knows you will not get them come in your street, they will not come up unless there is a police escort.

(Key actor group)

5.5 Conclusions

Sunderland's Millfield ward shares many similarities with the other case study areas, primarily the amount of traffic coming into and through the area to access the hospital, football ground and metro.

The area is densely populated and is used primarily by those who do not have independent access to private transport, leaving them more exposed to risks as pedestrians. The area has very little open space for children to run around and play in the absence of traffic. Hazardous parking encroaches on pedestrian territory, causing difficulties for parents and children alike, and obscuring visibility along junctions for drivers negotiating the vicinity.

The key actors felt that they had little say in the decisions affecting their roads and streets, and they thought that planners and engineers could learn from the research team about how to consult local residents more effectively.

6 Newham case study

6.1 Area profile

Stratford and New Town ward in the London Borough of Newham (Figure 6.1) was selected as a case study area on the basis of its high level of deprivation and high level of child pedestrian casualties (9,734 1–17-year-olds per 100,000 population). It provided an example of a London authority that has not participated in the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative (NRSI), Kerbcraft or the Road Safety Partnership Grant Scheme (RSPGS).

Figure 6.1: Stratford ward

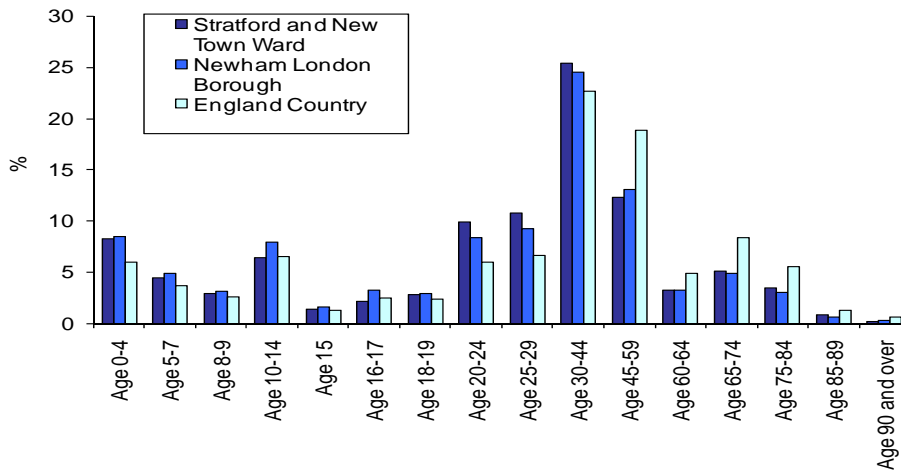


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The Stratford area is a densely populated area in London that includes is a major transport interchange and commercial shopping centre. The ward is also adjacent to the 2012 Olympic site, and currently subject to significant redevelopment. The residential areas are predominantly Victorian terraced properties. The A13 (High Street/Broadway) runs through the ward – a major route into Central London. Other main roads running north–south are the A115 (Carpenter’s Road) and A112 (Leyton Road).

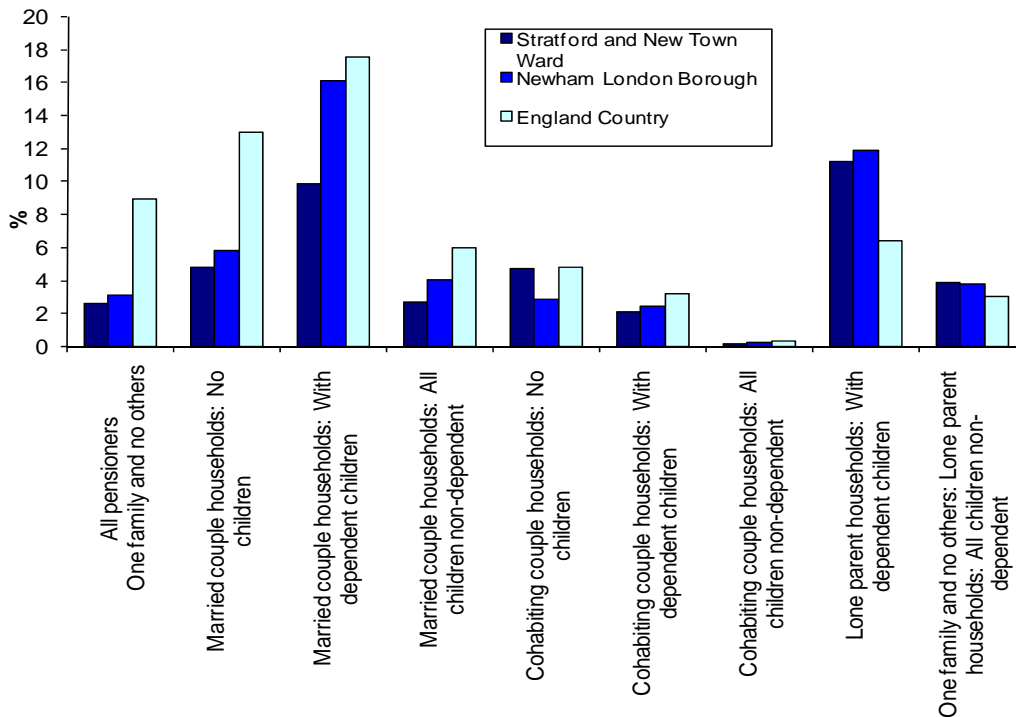
Stratford has a higher proportion of young children (under 10) and younger adults (20-44) compared with England and a smaller elderly population (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Age



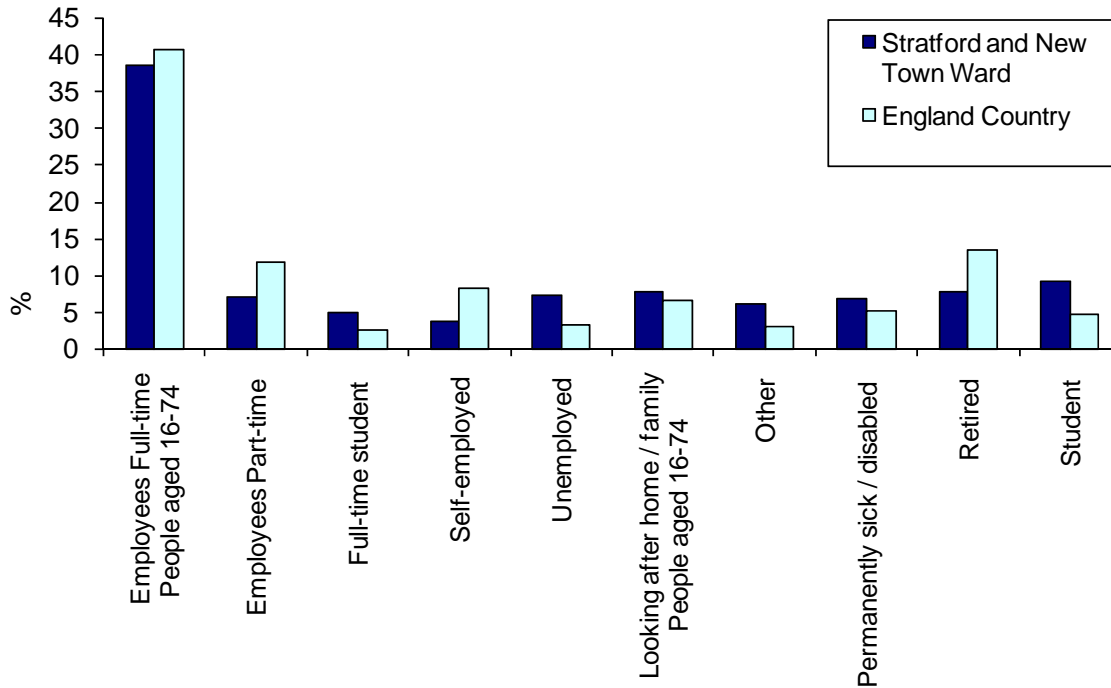
The case study ward has fewer married and pensioner households and more lone parent households when compared with England (Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3: Household composition



With regard to economic activity, the case study area has a lower proportion of economically active residents and more who are unemployed, students, looking after the home or permanently sick or disabled when compared with England (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4: Economic activity



Incomes in Stratford are significantly lower than in London as a whole (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Income

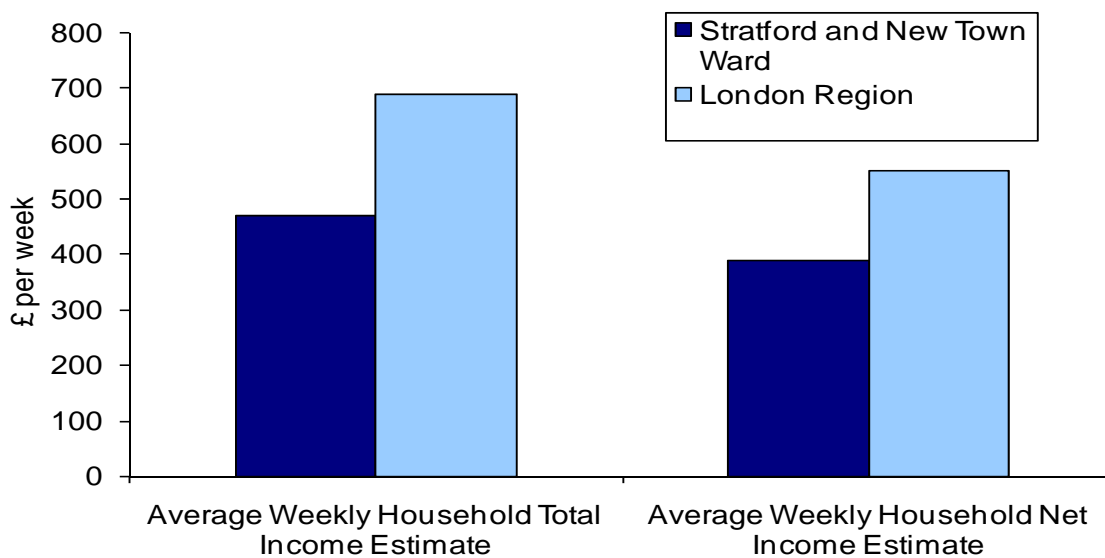
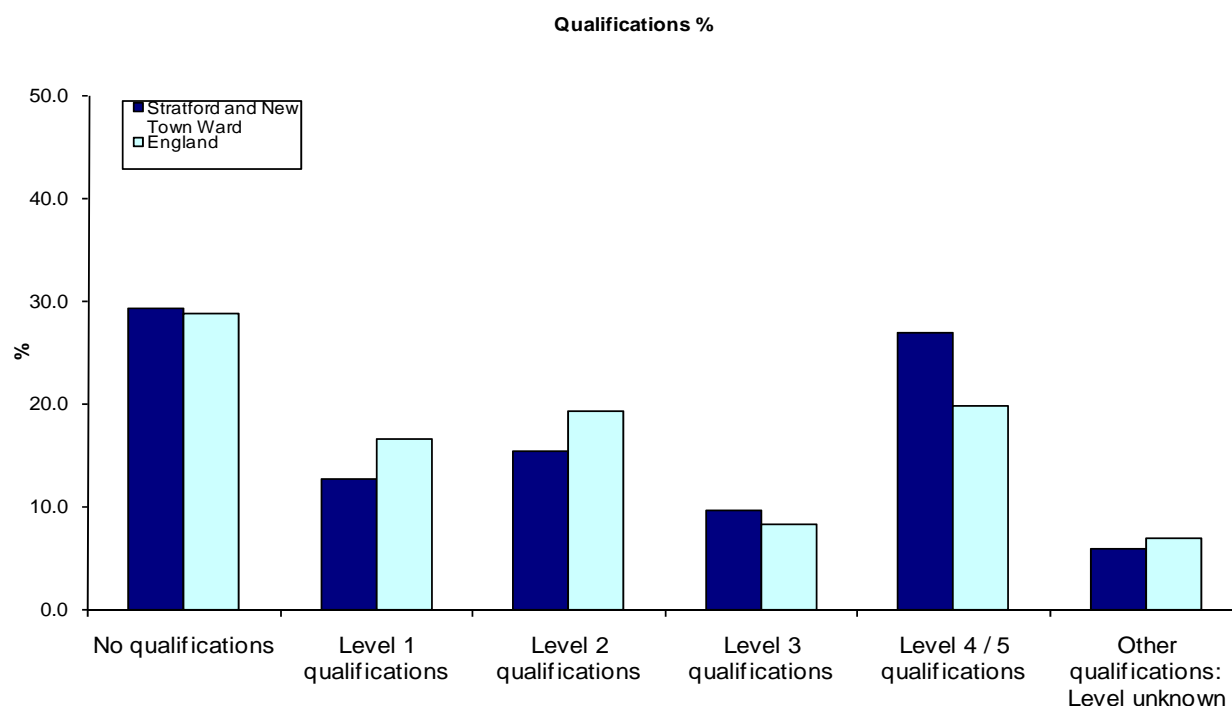


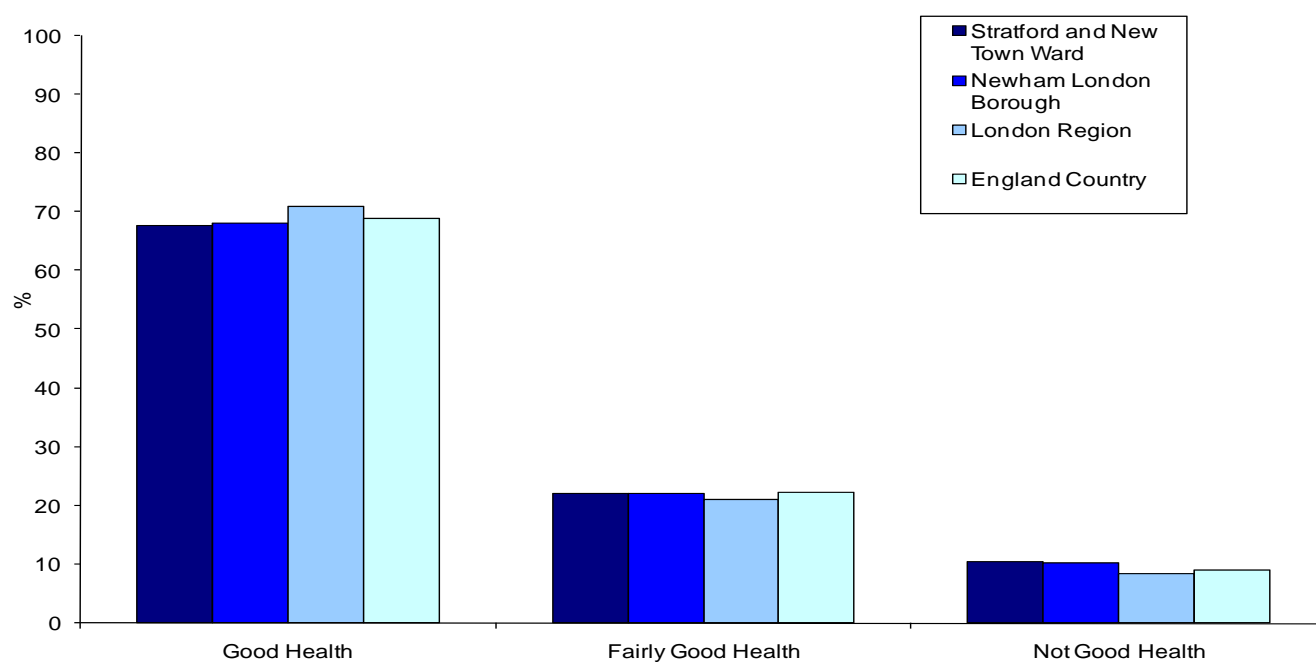
Figure 6.6 shows that the proportion of residents without any qualifications is around the same as the national average. The ward has more people with higher Level 4/5 qualifications.

Figure 6.6: Qualifications



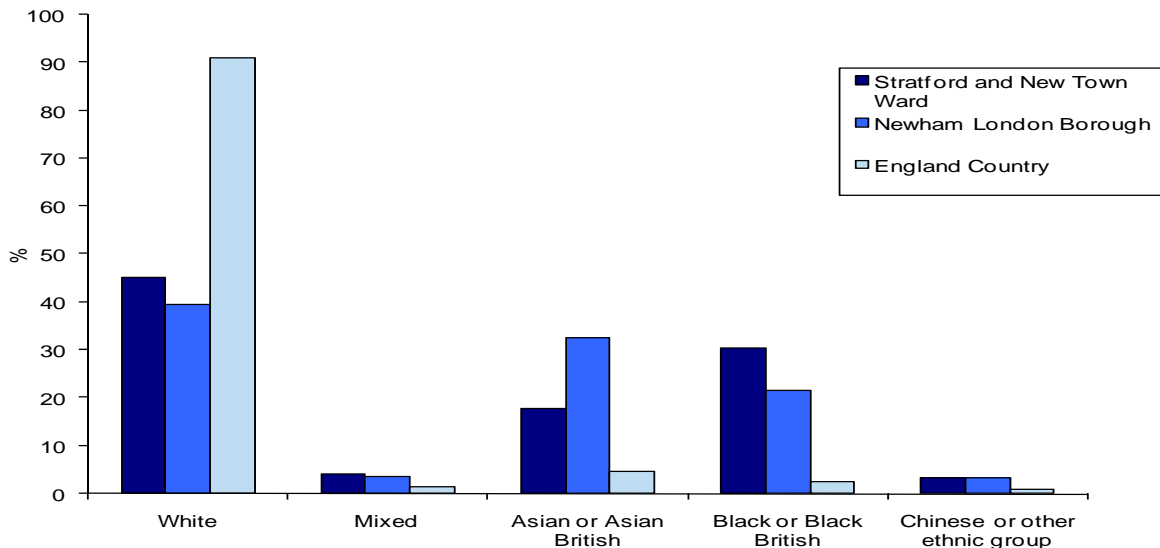
Health indices are marginally worse in Stratford, with a lower proportion of residents in good health compared with London and England (Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7: Health



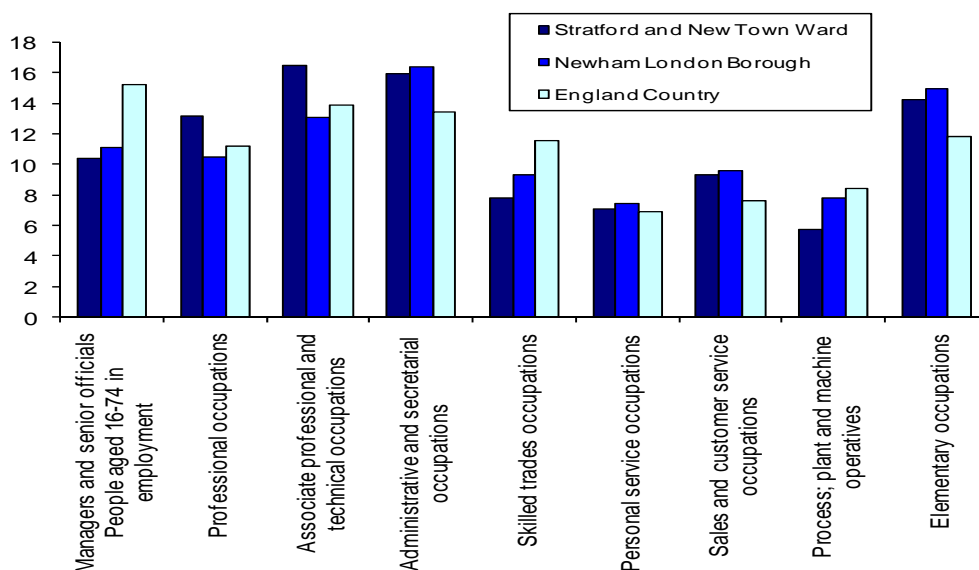
Stratford and Newham generally have a diverse population. The case study area has a significantly higher Asian/Asian British population compared with England, but lower than Newham as a whole. It also has a much higher proportion of Black or Black British residents than nationally and this is also higher than for the borough (Figure 6.8).

Figure 6.8: Ethnic group



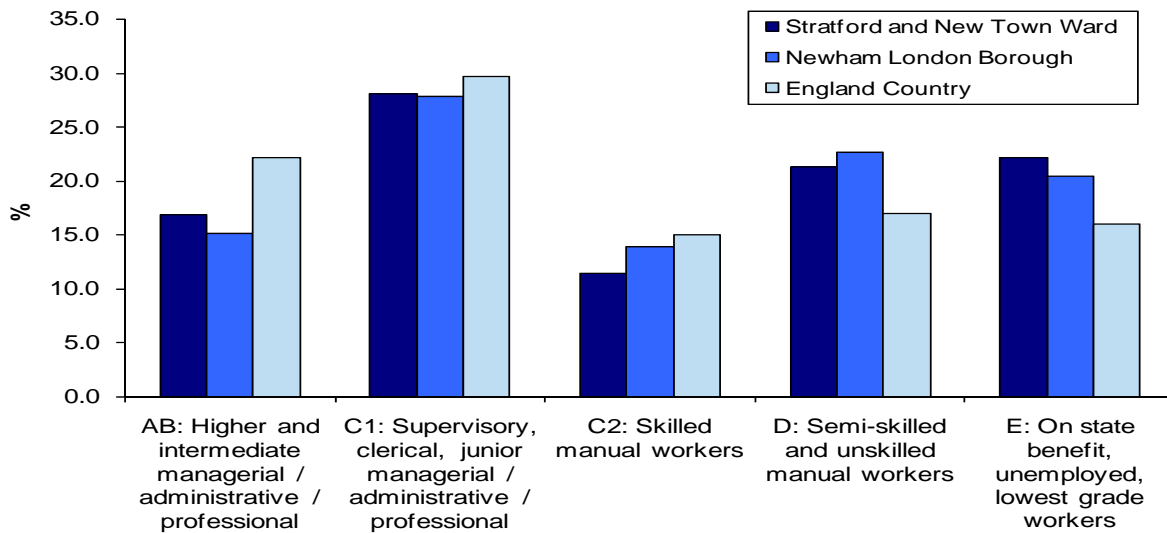
Occupational groups are diverse in Stratford. The ward has a higher proportion of people in professional occupations compared with the borough as a whole and with the country. There are fewer people employed in skilled occupations and operatives. There are also more people in elementary occupations compared with the country, but a lower proportion than in Newham (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9: Occupation group



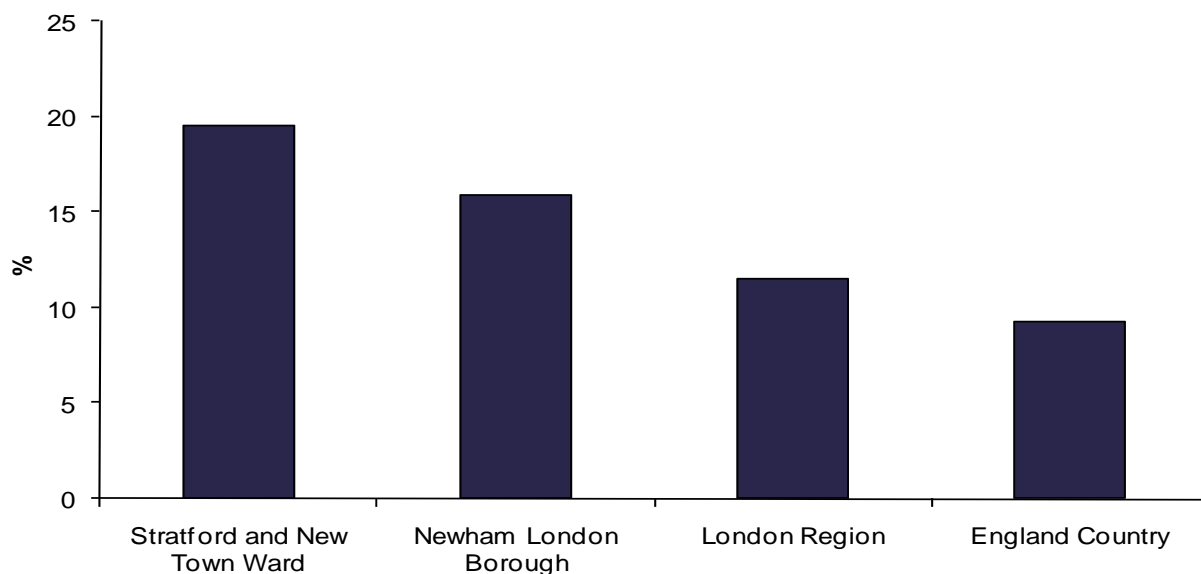
Overall the ward has a lower proportion from social grade AB compared with England and a higher proportion from grade E (Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10: Social grade



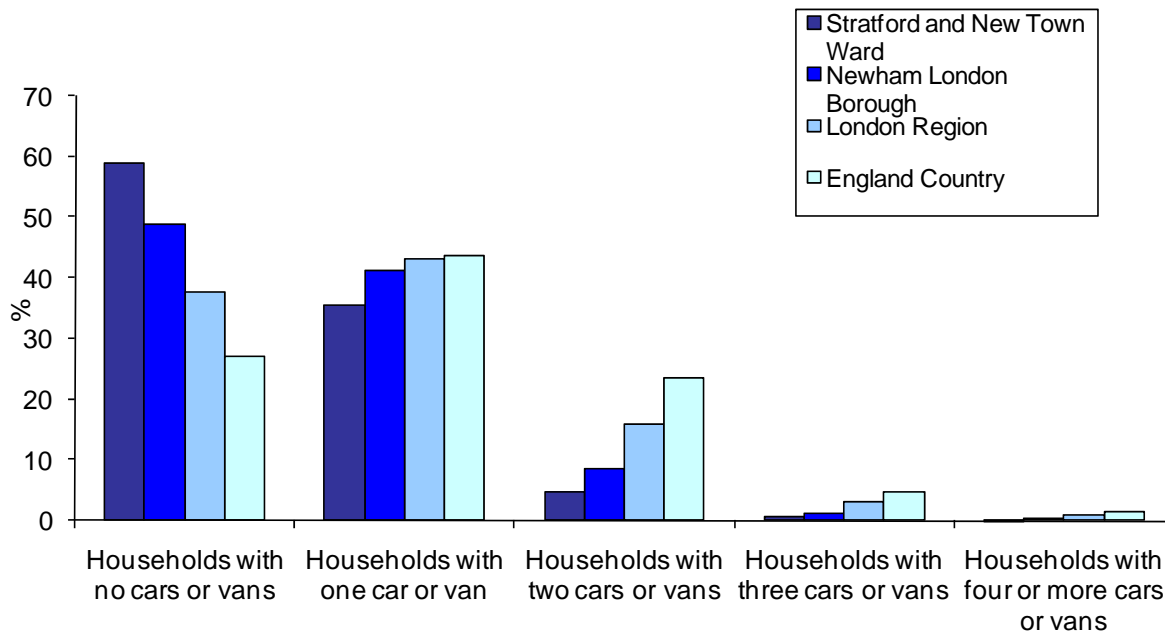
There is a significantly higher proportion of residents on housing benefit in Stratford compared with the borough, London region and the country as a whole (Figure 6.11).

Figure 6.11: Housing benefit



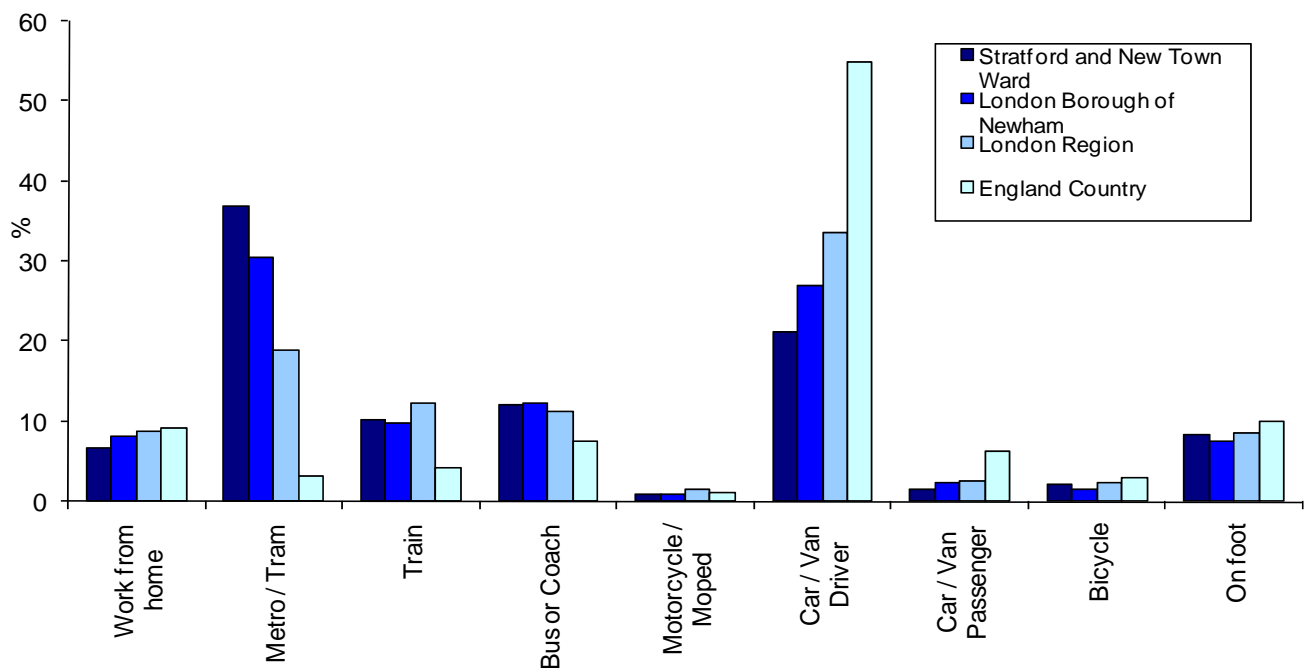
Car ownership levels are significantly lower in Stratford compared with the borough, London and England. Almost 60% of households in the ward do not have a car (Figure 6.12).

Figure 6.12: Car/van ownership



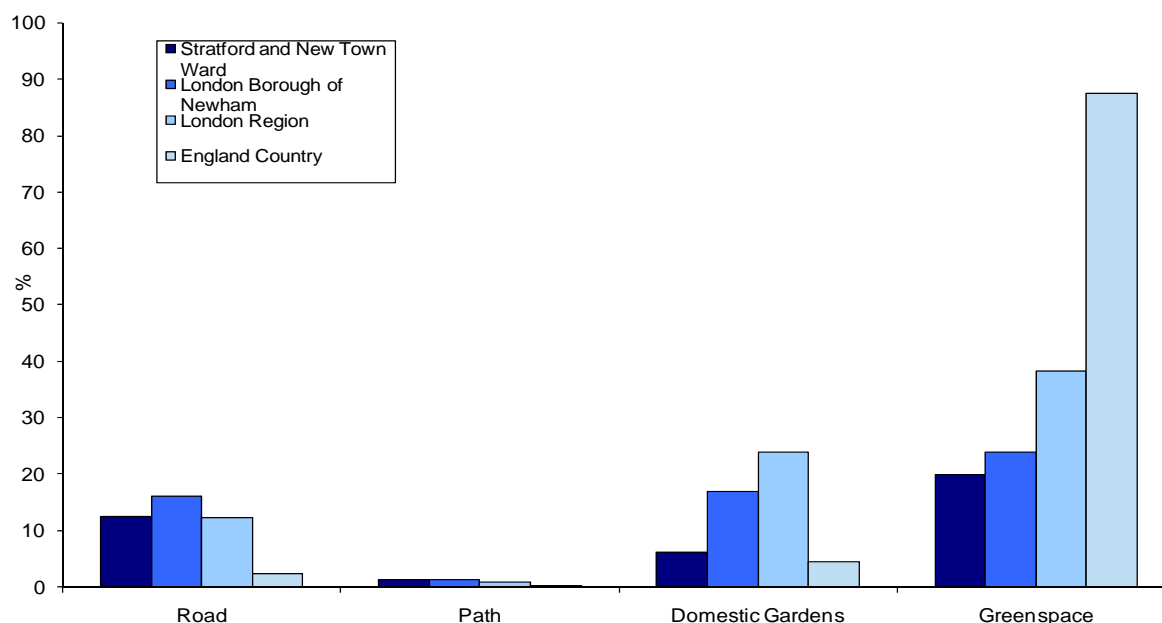
Stratford residents are significantly less likely to go to work by car and more likely to use the metro/tram (underground) (Figure 6.13).

Figure 6.13: Travel to work



The proportion of land taken up by roads is less for Stratford than the borough as a whole, but significantly more than England. The ward has less land dedicated to gardens and green space when compared with Newham and London (Figure 6.14).

Figure 6.14: Land use



6.2 Policy and strategy

Newham's Road Safety Plan forms part of the council's Local Implementation Plan (LIP) 2005/06 to 2010/11, which was developed in the context of the wider strategy for London presented in the Mayor's Transport Strategy. The plan is driven by casualty reduction targets set nationally and, additionally for London, where targets were established for vulnerable road users, covering pedestrians, cyclists and powered two-wheeler riders. The plan identifies a '4 Es' programme of interventions – engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement – aimed at preventing crashes and reducing casualties. The plan does not specifically identify the link between road casualties and disadvantage or identify strategy targeted at disadvantaged areas or communities. Instead the casualty reduction approach is either universally available throughout the borough or targeted at locations of higher road casualties and at vulnerable road users, an approach that may, in part, focus on areas of disadvantage, but which is not explicit.

A new draft *Transport Strategy for London* was published in October 2009 (Greater London Authority, 2009)). The strategy recognises the issue of injury inequalities and states: 'Those who live in the most deprived areas of London and ethnic minority groups suffer a disproportionately high number of road casualties'. The strategy continues to promote a casualty reduction approach with revised targets and endorses a continued mixture of engineering, education and enforcement measures for reducing casualties. The strategy also proposes measures associated with speed management, including trialling in-car voluntary 'intelligent speed adaptation', trialling new time-distance cameras on main roads and enforcing speed in 20 mph zones. It argues that safety initiatives should be targeted, based on sound data and research evidence, and should be monitored to evaluate the scheme and inform future practice.

Transport for London also funds demonstration projects for community engagement projects to reduce economic and ethnic inequalities in road traffic injuries. It is notable that Newham was unable to bid for this funding due to a lack of resources and expertise in community engagement.

Road safety issues and measures are not specifically identified at a corporate planning level in the *Newham Corporate Plan 2009/10* (Newham Council, 2009). They are, however, included in the *Local Area Agreement 2007–2010* (Newham Council, 2007), which includes a Staying Safe theme in line with the Every Child Matters agenda. To

this end, the agreement identifies a casualty reduction target for children under 16 as one of the performance indicators. The Local Area Agreement (LAA) notes that a child safety strategy is to be developed for the borough and responsibility for this is assigned to the Safeguarding Board and the PCT. The LAA also recognises the role of the LIP and its role in improving safety in neighbourhoods, providing programmes of road safety education, working with schools to develop school travel plans, reducing speed, redirecting traffic to main roads, and promoting walking and cycling.

The fire service's approach to road safety is documented in the *Draft London Safety Plan 2010–2013* (London Fire Brigade, 2009). Here they note that Transport for London and the London boroughs are responsible for reducing road accidents and their casualties, and they feel that they have more resources, data and experience in prevention work than the fire service. They therefore confine their role to responding to, and monitoring attendance at, road traffic accidents and to being a co-operative partner; where it is felt that the fire service's involvement in road traffic prevention schemes will provide obvious benefits.

The Newham LSCB *Children and Young People Safety Plan* (Newham Council, 2008) recognises the greater risk of injury to children from disadvantaged areas, including on the road. It states that 'child pedestrian death is five times greater for children from disadvantaged sectors compared with those who are from wealthier backgrounds'. It is significant that at a strategic level the Newham LSCB recognises that child road accident prevention is part of its remit and recognises the inequalities in risk. Their objective is to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of the borough's member agencies in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including the identification of road safety issues and actions.

6.3 Services and interventions

6.3.1 Newham Council – Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity

Newham Road Safety implements a centralised programme of interventions, relying on a programme of activities developed and supported by Transport for London. They do not need, or do not have the resources, to develop local interventions. The road safety team delivers the following programmes to all six schools in Stratford:

- **Children's Traffic Club** – a series of six books and activities on road safety for parents of three- to five-year-olds. Newham approach all schools and Children's Centres in the borough to take part in this scheme. The intervention was first introduced in Scandinavia and has since been implemented in a number of countries, including recently in London. Previous evaluations suggest that the intervention contributes to the delivery of successful outcomes in terms of reducing road casualties among children (12% lower casualties than non-Traffic-Club members) and in promoting safe behaviours, such as holding hands, being strapped in the car, and knowing how and where to cross the road safely. It is also reported to reduce the number of children who play in the street and run across the road.
- **Junior Road Safety Officers (JRSOs)** – schools in Stratford are active in the JRSO scheme. This involves the recruitment of road safety champions aged nine to eleven to lead on promoting road safety issues among their peers, through initiatives such as games, competitions and special assemblies to prepare them for independent travel prior to the transition to secondary school. The scheme aims to engage and empower children, and they are provided with Transport for London resources and support from their teachers and the council. The evaluation of JRSO schemes elsewhere has been largely qualitative and has found some safer attitudes among pupils in JRSO schools and increased levels of knowledge. It has also been found that JRSOs themselves have increased knowledge, safer attitudes, and have developed organisational and leadership skills, and increased self-esteem.
- **School Travel Plans (STPs)** – ETP encourages and supports the development of STPs and just 11 schools in the borough do not have a plan. However, the STP post was vacant at the time of the case study investigation. Through the STP programme, Newham also implements the **Walk on Wednesday** initiative. Again, this is a Transport for London scheme to encourage children to walk to school at least once a week. Around 60% of schools in Newham participate.
- **Junior Citizens** – the road safety education team participate twice a year in a partnership event led by the police, and also involving the fire service and the healthy schools team, to deliver the junior citizens initiative which incorporates a road safety scenario.

6.3.2 Road Safety Engineering

Road safety engineering treatments are identified in the area by plotting accident histories to identify locations and then the treatments that are appropriate. These are primarily LIP funded. There is a focus on 20 mph zones. Specific measures introduced in Stratford include 'residential haven' traffic calming (Chobham Road (A112), The Grove and surrounding streets, an area to the east of Stratford Market depot and around schools).

6.3.3 Health partnership

The aim of the health partnership is to encourage partnership working between the council, PCT, hospitals, mental health and the voluntary sector. The project manager is involved in the research and development of programmes on health lifestyle issues associated with defined priorities – heart disease, smoking cessation, childhood obesity and men's health. The programme includes the promotion of physical activity through working with the four leisure centres in the borough, none of which are in the immediate case study area. The health partnership is not specifically involved with the health aspects of road injury or mortality, but does have a role in promoting healthy activities through the leisure centres, which also represent diversionary activities which may contribute to reducing road injury risk.

6.3.4 Police

The Metropolitan Police play a role in road safety through their Safer Neighbourhoods Team and traffic management officers (TMOs). The Safer Neighbourhoods Team is concerned with responding to issues of local concern and providing a presence and reassurance to the public. London-wide, TMOs work with the Safer Neighbourhoods Team to provide advice and support on road safety issues. At a local level, the key issues of concern for the Safer Neighbourhoods Team are anti-social behaviour and offensive weapons. They do not get involved in road safety education delivery at a primary level.

6.3.5 Children's Services

The Early Start programme incorporates road safety into their programmes for children under five. This includes learning about road safety through play at Early Start parent and toddler sessions and visits from the Children's Traffic Club, an independent initiative targeted at three- to four-year-olds for teaching road safety behaviours.

6.3.6 Youth offending

The work of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) in Newham is directed by the objectives of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and is focused on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour among young people. The interventions provided include prevention services involving work with young people who are considered vulnerable to entering the criminal justice system. These interventions are voluntary and needs led, and include activities such as parenting support, working with a YOT officer on strategies to change behaviours or involvement in activities such as the Kickz football training programme, part funded by the Metropolitan Police and delivered through West Ham Football Club. The YOT also work with young people around the consequences of driving without insurance. Taking without consent is not felt to be a particular problem in Newham, so there is no specific programme of activities around car crime.

6.3.7 Partnerships

There is limited joint working in Newham between key players, such as the local road safety department and the police and road safety and the fire service. This is in part due to a difference of approach, such that the materials and interventions from one agency do not fit well with the other. In other regards, single agencies appear to feel that the service is already delivered effectively by the incumbent provider so there is no need to be involved. Road safety do engage with the Children's Safeguarding Board and, where applicable, are involved in serious case reviews.

6.4 Community views of local road safety

The community research was conducted in the Stratford ward, which was selected owing to the large number of child road accidents and because it has one of the highest levels of deprivation within London. At the time of reporting, group discussions had been completed with key actors (some of whom were also parents) and all were residents of the ward – a group of young adults, all aged between 18 and 21, and a group of secondary school children (all boys and all aged between 11 and 15). Groups with primary aged children and parents were very difficult to arrange, but have now been confirmed for January 2010.

Not all of the schoolchildren and young adults we spoke to lived in the ward of Stratford itself. Indeed, reflecting the characteristics of the local area, some of them lived in nearby areas of East London (including Plaistow, Beckton, Forest Gate and Leytonstone) and travelled into Stratford to go to school, shop or go to other leisure facilities.

A particular issue of note is that the local area is undergoing major building and road works in preparation for the 2012 Olympic Games and in respect of wider modernisation. As such, this case study area provides an opportunity to consider the impact of ongoing regeneration and development on the local community, something that makes it different to the other areas.

6.4.1 Relative importance of road safety within the community

Road safety appeared to be of importance to all those we spoke with. However, road safety was often placed in the context of personal safety as being uppermost in people's minds – this was particularly the case among those young people aged from 11 to 15.

The importance attached to road safety may, in part, be due to (or reflecting) the major building and road projects currently under way in preparation for the 2012 Olympics. Some of the roads in Stratford have been permanently closed, others have temporary barriers in place and, in some cases, regular changes to road layouts and rights of way have taken place. In one area, the key actors suggested that the closure of some roads had made life easier for pedestrians in the local area, but generally the changes were considered to have magnified the problems associated with an already busy and congested town centre with a major road bisecting it in the London area.

Those taking part in the groups appeared concerned that the current development was making the area less safe and that there will be many more visitors once the Olympics are under way, meaning that it may be the case that there will be more incidents in years to come. People then reported an overall sense of frustration, which, in turn, could contribute to increased risk taking. One of the young adults commented:

I am a fan of the Olympics because we're getting nice things and stuff, but then, they are changing everything and it is bad for us who live around the area. It is good for other people who are coming, but we are the ones who are taking the brunt of it. For example, roads; they start one thing and if they don't finish it they move on to another bit, closing more roads. You have to take longer ways to get round and people are getting more angry.

Road safety may also have been a prominent issue for local people as a consequence of the characteristics of the local area, with the residential areas being on one side of the A11 road, bisecting the ward, and the retail and transport facilities, which were on the other side. The amount of traffic on this road and the numerous issues that were reported about crossing it, in particular (this in addition to concerns more generally), seems to underpin many of the issues that were of most concern about living in and travelling around in the local area.

6.4.2 The environment

The key issues for Stratford ward residents and those travelling into the area were as follows:

- The multiple lane, very busy, main arterial roads bringing a large volume of through traffic to the area. It was mentioned that many drivers were unfamiliar with the local area, in particular routes through, rights of way and local restrictions such as 'any time' bus lanes, and that they often became confused by the layout and/or irritated at the number of crossings.
- Few, or poorly placed, road crossings, which were perceived as causing frustration and thoughtlessness, and encouraging risk-taking. We were often told that the lights at pedestrian crossings took too long to change, meaning that pedestrians would often not wait for them to change. This was a particular issue where pedestrians had to use multiple crossings to cross the road.
- The 'culture of the car' within the main town centre – local people felt strongly that priority in terms of planning appeared to have been given to cars rather than pedestrians or cyclists. This was felt to be particularly hazardous, given the number of people who needed to cross to the shopping centre and transport facilities.
- Regeneration and building works leading to road closures and diversions which could cause confusion for drivers and inconvenience for pedestrians.
- Narrow or joint bus and cycle lanes, which were perceived to be dangerous by cyclists.
- Parking near schools, despite many walking, which obscured children from view and encouraged congestion on already narrow streets.

The centre of Stratford has two very busy roads going through it, the main shopping centre being between the roads. A new shopping centre is also being developed nearby in time for the Olympics. The roads leading into and out of the centre of the ward are multi-carriageway arterial roads – stemming from and travelling to the motorway, and bringing with it large volumes of traffic on a daily basis, the majority of which appears to pass straight through the ward, heading towards other areas of London.

The key actors described Stratford as a good place to live with plenty of amenities and good transport links, including the underground, railway and buses, in addition to the roads. They saw the community centre (where the group was held) as a beneficial addition, providing a safe environment for children and young people. Several of them had children who used the centre. They described the area around the community centre as quiet, especially during the day. Although the community centre is not too far from the centre of Stratford, the area is much less busy than the centre itself. While the quiet was welcome during daylight hours, at night people felt less safe as there were few people around – interestingly, this quiet was a result of road safety/traffic-calming infrastructure changes, meaning the local roads were no longer through roads.

The key actors who were parents were concerned about their children playing on the street because of the amount of cars parked on the narrow streets and potential ‘joy riders’. They also mentioned how these dangers were exacerbated by young people using mini-motorbikes. Nevertheless, many of the older schoolchildren played outside and the young adults had done so when they were younger. Some of these young people said that they were aware of the risks and potential for injury, but, in many respects, believed that because the local situation was all they knew, they were in some ways able to go about their lives safely in the local environment. Interestingly, one of the reported advantages of the regeneration is that some of the roads closed to traffic resulted in them being traffic-free and thus enabling the younger children to play outside. As one of them said: ‘It is more safer when they do road works’. Of course, the downside is that when one road is closed, others become even more congested, and parked cars reduce visibility for both drivers and pedestrians.

The young adults saw Stratford as a ‘go to’ place – almost like a local ‘city centre’ – with shops, bars, restaurants, cinema and a theatre. These facilities also bring in visitors from outside the area, increasing traffic and congestion.

6.4.3 Driving behaviour and attitudes

The key actors spoke of young people ‘joy riding’ on motorbikes without helmets or licence plates, causing danger for pedestrians and other motorists, as well as noise. The secondary school children also commented on this. One of them told how a friend was hit by teenagers ‘racing’ in a residential area when the children were playing hide and seek in a street which had lots of parked cars. For this reason, the parents among the key actors were often reluctant to allow their children to play outside. The key actors and young adults also mentioned that the local residential area is a popular place for learner drivers during the day, although less so in the evenings, as a direct consequence of it being less busy. The net result being that the residential areas are considered unsafe for children most of the time and some commented on the particular problem of the concentration of learner drivers in the local area.

There was some concern expressed about the respect afforded to cyclists by motorists. As one young adult stated: ‘You get abuse. You get abused all the time.’ The environment was mostly thought unsuitable by young adults for cycling in, although a few school children did cycle daily to school despite the dangers posed by the proximity and amount of traffic.

Some young adults also expressed frustration at those inconsiderate motorists who parked on the road, obscuring cycle paths which were, in any case, considered too narrow to be safe. Joint bus and cycle lanes were considered by many to be positively lethal as a result of bus drivers not always being able to see cyclists and the particular additional risk of barriers separating the road from the pavement, meaning cyclists could easily become penned in:

My experience with cycle paths; some drivers don't care. They park there, so as a cyclist you have no choice but to go in the middle because your path is blocked.

(Young man, young adults' group)

I disagree with the fact that cyclists should always have to ride in the road because you're more likely to die getting hit by a car if you're on a bike, rather than hitting a pedestrian on a bike.

(Key actor and parent)

This was echoed by the young adults, who reiterated the feelings of secondary school pupils in that, while they generally cycled on the road, they used the pavements when they felt that the road was too dangerous, but worried that they could get into trouble for cycling on the pavements:

Last time I was on a bike the police stopped me, I was on the pavement ... they stopped me because I was riding on the pavement. I don't like riding in the road ...

The secondary schoolchildren had received cycle training in school and felt they were safe cyclists. However, this may be also related to being familiar with the area and perhaps associated with the sense of invincibility that many young people appeared to believe they have. They did, however, report feeling more confident if they were with other cyclists. In this sense, they felt that their local knowledge and the level of traffic was something which they were familiar with, which gave them additional confidence and ability, which children in other areas might not have. This fed into a certain sense of 'this is just the way it is and we have to get on with it', which unfortunately could contribute to the level of casualties among young people in the local area.

Some of the key actors were drivers and some of the young adults were learning to drive. Some of the learner drivers found other drivers impatient with them and talked about how scary it was driving in the heavy traffic that was typical in this area. Those who were drivers admitted to some bad habits, but they felt that, on the whole, they abided by the rules. Some of the young adults admitted to speeding, either themselves or when their friends were driving, but were clear that they did not do so in heavy traffic during the day (this was mentioned by young drivers in other case study areas).

A particularly problematic issue raised by both key actors and young adults was the problem of drivers unfamiliar with the area getting into the wrong traffic lane and then having to change at the last minute to get into the correct lane in order to take the exit they needed. This caused considerable confusion, was often irritating to other drivers and was felt to result in many drivers being less aware (often unaware) of pedestrians, some of whom would be crossing the road impatiently as a result of the reported delays in the light phasing. This problem was also thought to have been exacerbated by the increase in construction traffic, which were mainly large lorries driven by people also unfamiliar with the local area.

All of the groups mentioned similar things in relation to the risk-taking behaviour of drivers. These included using mobile phones (both speaking and texting) while driving, listening to very loud music, driving too fast, 'jumping' traffic lights, and not allowing pedestrians and cyclists sufficient space. For example, one of the older schoolchildren had been a passenger on a bus that hit a car. According to the boy, the driver was going too fast and listening to very loud music and had simply not seen the bus.

As with young adults in other case study areas, the young adults in Stratford were also aware that peer pressure can have a negative impact on driving and road safety:

Whenever a person is part of a crowd, it's always, 'Oh yeah, I'm going to show off'. And a bit of peer pressure, if you're in a crowd in a car, your friend who is driving is always, 'I can do this. I'm a good driver'.

(Young man, Stratford)

Peer pressure was also spoken about in relation to illegal driving – one young man told us about how he came to be involved in this:

Well friends, one of us could drive because he works for a mechanic and passed his test. And then there used to be, or it is still there, there is a road, a quiet road and we all just decided to, he decided to just teach all of us and then we all got confident enough and then just got our own little bangers and then just used to drive those around.

This, however, stopped after he recognised the potential consequences of his actions after being involved in a 'near miss' accident involving a child. He went on:

Yes. But what made me stop was, I was driving a car once without power steering and I was driving and it was really narrow, and this kid ran out and I quickly done an emergency break and then since then I didn't drive illegally anymore ... I couldn't drive anymore, my hands started shaking, I left the car in the road.

The young adults also felt that speed cameras, far from helping to improve safety, made things worse as drivers speeded up and then slowed down, and the drivers paid more attention to cameras than to other road users.

There was also a perception that many drivers ignored traffic lights and that they often speeded up to get through them before they changed and, in some cases, deliberately 'challenged' pedestrians. This boy noted, for example, the impact that this had on him as a pedestrian:

You try to cross the road and there's a car coming, and sometimes people just don't care about the traffic lights, they just go straight through. Like you're half way across the road and a car will just come straight in front of you.

(Boy, secondary school children, Stratford)

6.4.4 In-car safety

While the schoolchildren were all aware that seat belts should be worn in cars, they did not always wear them. As in other case study areas, there appeared to be an issue of non-wearing among some young adults in the rear of vehicles, as one of them said:

But when I'm in the back seat I don't put one on because, like, you don't really need it.

This was also true of one or two of the young adults:

It's a seat belt man! What's a seat belt going to do? If you're going to crash, you're going to crash.

However, others were much more disciplined:

I have to wear a seat belt, I have to have some safety. I wish, honestly, there were seat belts in buses.

(Young woman, Stratford)

6.4.5 Children and young people's pedestrian behaviour and attitudes

Although none of the schoolchildren mentioned playing 'chicken' or similar games, the young adults remembered that either they or their friends had done so. Some also know of children who lay in the road, trying to get cars to stop or jumping out of the way at the last minute. These kinds of deliberately risky games were common among young people across the case study areas and, while it was commonly noted that these games were not really very sensible, this was done with a sense that young people will always do these kinds of things, partly out of boredom, partly as a result of there not being any facilities locally, and partly for the adrenaline rush.

Some people mentioned that the children in the residential areas sometimes played hide and seek in the street which had lots of parked cars. Even though the local streets were generally free of traffic, the parents among the key actors were often reluctant to allow their children to play outside as a result of the kinds of potential risks they faced. However, given the nature of the housing in the area (high rise flats and small terraced houses), there was little alternative play space available. The lack of local parks that parents felt were safe, certainly for unsupervised play, were clearly, in part, one of the reasons why children had little other choice than to play on the street – in many ways, this was part of the reason for local parents being so pleased at the recent opening of the community centre facility (with indoor and secure outside play space).

The major points raised in relation to pedestrian behaviour were the risk taking at crossings and pedestrians not paying attention, either as the result of using mobile phones, listening to music – often with headphones – or chatting to friends.

From our discussions, most people reported a problem with the crossings in the centre of Stratford, with pedestrians waiting a long time to cross and a lack of awareness about when/if traffic would actually stop. This led many people to risk crossing before the 'green man' appears. Many of the people we spoke to, of all age groups, admitted doing this themselves. This problem seemed to be worse at peak travelling times when the roads are very busy and cars are slow-moving, and lots of commuters are crossing at the same time. Both drivers and pedestrians are likely to take risks. Related to this was the problem of where bus stops were located (often on corners with poor visibility and with no crossings) and 'take aways' that children/young people used before and after school.

6.4.6 Types of accidents in the area

One of the older schoolchildren had been involved in an accident when a van clipped his bike. The driver was using a mobile phone and had no tax. The child suffered a fractured leg and the driver was prosecuted. Another of the schoolchildren had witnessed an accident when a pedestrian was hit by a bus while crossing the road.

A friend of some of the young adults had been involved in an accident:

He was in the back seat. Ironically he was the only one in the car with a seat belt on ... his front teeth were knocked out.

At one of the sets of traffic lights that cause confusion, one young man saw a pedestrian clipped by a car as she tried to run across when the red man was showing. This resulted in a further discussion about how many people do just that and how dangerous this crossing is. This crossing, like many others on the south-bound section of the A11, is situated on a multi-lane and fast-moving road, and involves pedestrians having to effectively cross a road in a number of stages and to wait on pedestrian islands. The most hazardous crossings are at the top and bottom of where the main road intersects with the adjoining one-way link that serves both as an access to the transport interchange and as a through road north out of Stratford. Also, in some cases, people cross diagonally between crossings and then climb over the barriers to get to where they want to go.

6.5 Conclusions

Stratford is a very busy, thriving shopping and entertainment centre with a busy arterial road running through it. The local residents and young people who go to school in the area, or socialise there, are aware of most of the 'trouble spots' where road safety is compromised.

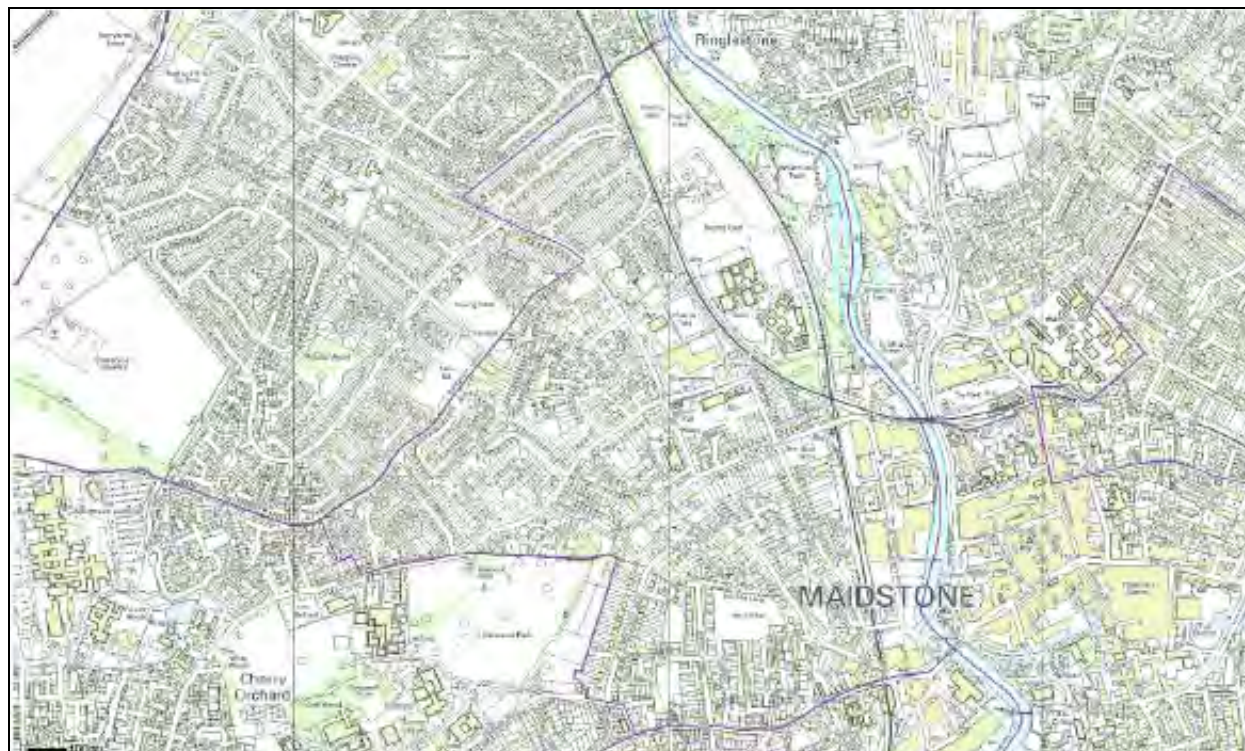
Although the research took place at a very specific period of time when regeneration and improved infrastructure are having a particular impact on traffic flow and road safety, it is perhaps very timely. The Olympic Games will result in many thousands of visitors to the area and will increase both vehicle and pedestrian traffic. In many ways, some of the lessons from Stratford are that it is even more important that road design and signage are clear during periods of regeneration and where a large number of drivers are unfamiliar with the local area – otherwise, the already relatively high levels of risk can easily be added to inadvertently.

Road safety was a priority for many of the people who took part in the research and they all felt that there was definite room for improvement in relation to traffic light sequencing, illegal parking, joy riding and traffic-free public areas.

7 Maidstone case study

7.1 Area profile

Figure 7.1: Bridge ward



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Bridge ward (outlined in Figure 7.1 in purple) in Maidstone was chosen as a comparison, as it has similar numbers of children killed and seriously injured on the roads, but is considerably more affluent than the other areas. Our aim in conducting the community research in Bridge ward was to identify any similarities it shares with the other areas and to highlight differences. We were also interested in whether the personal actions and behaviour of people, particularly in relation to risk, differed from the other areas. Table 7.1 gives an indication of the area's relative affluence. For example, only 2 % of the population there are classed as economically inactive, while the disadvantaged case study areas have generally twice that percentage of their population not in employment. The estimated average household income in Bridge ward is also double, or nearly double, that of the more disadvantaged communities included in this research.

Table 7.1: Bridge ward indicators

	Bridge ward, Maidstone
No qualifications	19%
Economically inactive, unemployed	2%
Claiming housing benefit	8%
Lone parent families with dependent children	3%
White	95%
No car/van in household	19%
Walk to work	12%
Estimated average weekly household income	£710

7.2 Community research

Five focus groups were conducted, two with children of primary school age (one of the schools being a fee-paying school), one with young people of secondary school age, one with students at the further education college, and one with local residents who are parents of primary school-aged children. In addition, we spoke to the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and a (non-parent) local resident. Observations were also conducted within the ward and within the town centre.

7.3 The environment

The ward in question has similarities with other case study areas; it is dissected by a large arterial road, in this case the A20, which leads from the motorway to the town centre. This road has a speed limit of 40 mph, reducing to 30 mph as the road becomes more built up. Shortly after the speed limit reduces there is a speed camera. In contrast to other areas, this road is wide and the houses on the road are set back, with gardens and parking/drives. Generally the area is much greener than the others and much of the housing is less dense, with more parking facilities for residents. Near to the schools we visited, roads are restricted for residents' parking only. Many more of the houses have gardens than the other case study areas. However, some large period houses have been demolished and blocks of flats built in their place. Although the flats do tend to have parking, this tends to be restricted to one parking spot per flat, resulting in more cars than flats. Equally, some of the very large Victorian and Edwardian houses have been converted to multiple occupancy, again increasing the number of cars and placing a strain on parking in the area:

There was a single dwelling opposite us, a year after we moved in that property was sold and they turned it into 10 houses. There are 10 houses with 20 cars, there are no parking spaces.

(Parent/local resident)

On one side of the A20, the further education college shares a campus with part of the university, two schools and a conference centre. Although there is ample parking on site, students leave by two main exits, resulting in congestion of both cars and people. Indeed, when driving around the area on a visit, the research team almost hit a young woman who was crossing the road at the college exit between moving traffic and a stopping bus. The college students felt that this was a particularly dangerous spot. In addition, one of the primary schools we visited was very close to the college and, although the area was for residents' parking only, parents often stopped there to collect their children.

On the other side of the A20, the entrance to the other primary school we visited shares an access road with the secondary school we visited as well as a grammar school. This road was perceived as a major problem by the resident parents, local residents who live on the road and some of the secondary school pupils. The road is a narrow cul-de-sac with only the two secondary schools at the end, and has parking for resident permit holders only. While this is the only access road to the secondary schools, the primary school does have alternative access from a side road off the A20 where there is a small shopping precinct and car park. Although some parents use this route for dropping off their children, many use the other, congested road. This results in disputes between parents and residents, and the week before our visit the police had been called to intervene when a parent who was driving her child to school was involved in an argument with a resident. This particular road was highlighted by the local PCSO as being a problem area for road safety. Indeed, he identified parents driving children to and from school, and their subsequent drop-offs, as the major road safety and traffic hazard in the ward.

Further along this same road is a crossroads that is also perceived to be dangerous. Observation of this point demonstrated the issues raised by local residents, namely that cars giving way do not have a clear view due to the camber of the road and the trees and bushes on the street corner. The cars have to edge forward to gain a clear view, often getting into the middle of the road before drivers can see clearly. For those turning left, this means they often cross into the lane of oncoming traffic.

There is a footbridge over the A20, but the resident parents felt that older secondary school children were less likely to use it, preferring to cross the road:

Another issue on London Road [A20] is right where the bridge is, you know, the footbridge, where you get particularly secondary school – the grammar and Maplesden Noakes [school] children – the majority don't use the footbridge, they just en masse, with their texts, texting, just cross at any particular point and make the cars stop. It is very, very dangerous.

(Parent/local resident)

The young people of secondary school and college age were open about their own 'risky' behaviour, including crossing when it may not be safe. The residents also commented on the congestion on footpaths once schools have closed and children are waiting for buses. This can mean other pedestrians walking on the road to avoid the crowds. While many pedestrians do not use the bridge, those that do find it difficult before and after school:

The volume of pupils as well. Because the footbridge is, you can walk side by side, just about, but they choose to walk three in a row. You have got everyone with their bikes, skateboards, buggies, people trying to go both ways and it is just an absolute nightmare.

(Parent/local resident)

Although the town centre lies outside the ward, the A20 goes directly into town where it joins a one-way system that crosses the river with traffic lights to control the flow of traffic. This area is problematic for both drivers and pedestrians. Cars have to change lanes and for those unfamiliar with the area it is not clear which lane is required. Pedestrians have the choice of using a footpath or underpass. However, if the footpath is used, the sequencing of the traffic lights results in long waits, even when traffic is stationary:

I use the underpass because I find it really difficult that the traffic lights aren't synchronised.

(Parent/local resident)

However, many people do not use the underpass and so take risks crossing when there is no 'green man' due to the sequencing of the traffic lights. Further, many of the women we spoke to were unhappy about using the underpass at night, both younger women and parents. Some of the parents said they would not want their children to use the underpass because there are no cameras and, as one said, 'There are too many unsavoury characters around the river'. This leaves them with a dilemma:

If you press it [the pedestrian operated crossing], then it doesn't synch ... but then the other thing is you send your child down into the subway. Mine [child] wants to go on her own now into town to meet friends and I don't know which is the safest route.

Maidstone town centre has also undergone considerable development over recent years, with a new shopping centre and larger retail stores, such as TK Maxx and Asda Living. This is in addition to the building of new residential flats and a hotel. This development has increased the traffic in the area as people now come from outside the area to shop. In addition, many motorists go through Maidstone on their way elsewhere; it is on the route to Dover and close to the motorway. Many of the residents we spoke to felt that this development had been undertaken without due consideration to locals and pedestrians.

7.4 Importance of road safety within the community

Parents and local residents considered road safety to be very important. Parents were concerned about getting their children to school safely and felt that many drivers made this difficult due to bad driving, inconsiderate parking, and too many cars on the road. Younger children were learning about safety from their parents, schools and from observing what was going on around them. Although the majority of people we spoke to, both adults and children, felt that parents had a major role to play in teaching their children about road safety, they also felt that schools had a

role to play. The college students could not remember having much tuition in road safety when they were in school, but felt it was important. When asked who should be responsible for this, one young man said:

Police maybe. I think schools should influence it a bit more. Maybe put it into lessons or schemes of work.

Other college students suggested that road safety should be taught to primary school children, but then:

I think maybe they should follow it on in secondary schools because there's different things that bother you ... like in secondary school it would be, like, if you're in cars, with your mates, be aware of this, younger kids [be aware] when you're crossing the road.

This final point is important, since the teenagers we spoke to had very different experiences of road safety issues than those of primary school age. Some of them had already started to learn to drive, others intended doing so at some point in the future, and many went out in the evenings in cars with friends who drove. They were aware of and acknowledged their own and others' risk-taking behaviour.

7.5 Behaviour and attitudes

While the area is more affluent and the housing stock less dense than the other case study areas, many of the issues are very similar. For example, the older young people, parents and residents suggested that the major issue with road safety is the sheer volume of traffic, coupled with a general feeling that the roads were constructed with drivers, rather than pedestrians, in mind. Further, they felt that drivers were less aware of pedestrians than the other way round. The common issues raised were:

- drivers braking for speed cameras and then speeding up again once the camera was passed;
- drivers 'jumping' red lights;
- drivers dropping children at schools with little regard for local residents, including stopping on double yellow lines, blocking residents' access and double parking;
- parents driving their children to school unnecessarily rather than walking with them;
- drivers and pedestrians being in a rush; and
- a lack of safe crossing areas or these being in the 'wrong' place, i.e. not where people generally cross the road.

7.5.1 Speeding and driver behaviour

With the exception of the youngest children, most of the people we spoke to were critical of drivers' behaviour and attitudes towards both other drivers and pedestrians. Further, they felt that many people drove far too quickly, especially during busy times when roads were more congested and there were more pedestrians:

I think the difficulty that we have is where we are quite centrally located in Maidstone, I feel sometimes people – because you get such an influx of cars, everybody is in such a hurry, they don't actually think about all the pedestrians ... we have got a pedestrian crossing to cross and I've had incidents where it has changed and people just go 'Oh I can get through there' and the kids are half way across. And you think 'Are you mad?' you know.

(Parent/local resident)

I think on certain days, like market day on Tuesday, it is particularly bad. If it rains you just haven't got a hope in hell really. It is almost as if the cars just swarm out and you just think 'It's a tiny amount of rain!' I mean I walk in all weathers, I just put my wellies on, take the brolly and the rest of it ... when it is wet it's even worse, because the drivers just don't seem to care.

(Parent/local resident)

By far the most common complaint about drivers' behaviour was inconsideration when dropping children at school. This was especially problematic on Buckland Road where there are two secondary schools and the back entrance to a primary school. Local residents felt that little had been done to address their concerns and improve safety on this particular road. The problems stem from the fact that the road is a cul-de-sac with residents' parking, and it is a

narrow road with narrow footpaths – too narrow for a double buggy according to the parents – and parents drive down the road, resulting in the need for them to do a three-point turn to get back out. As one resident said:

The parents drop off their children, they don't care that they are stopping on double yellow lines which means your view is restricted. They don't stop if you're standing on the corner to let you pass ... you see incidents of road rage and they are thinking so much about themselves in their vehicle, but they have no regard for the children.

Indeed, things were considered so bad here that complaints have been made to the local council, the school and the police. Things had worsened since one of the schools had begun opening new playing facilities at weekends. A common view of the residents was that the schools should take some responsibility:

They wouldn't be in the road if they weren't dropping their children off at school. They need to take responsibility for their parents. It is down to the school and they are not doing anything.

All of the residents and older children with whom we spoke blame many of the problems on the sheer volume of traffic and feel that things can only get worse. Parents wanted to encourage their children's independence and felt they should walk to school alone before starting secondary school. However, the problems in this particular area meant they were very reluctant to allow this. As one parent explained:

There are all sorts of dangers, but we have got to a point where we are not letting them out on their own because of the hot spots and the dangers and all the other unsavoury characters. But I personally believe that there are a high number of road accidents amongst children because they never go out on their own. They have no instinct to fall back on.

This really is the crux of the problem. Parents want their children to go out unsupervised and to walk to school at an appropriate age. They want their children to become independent and 'street smart', but they fear for their safety. As a result, many drive their children to school, increasing the volume of traffic and making it less safe for others; while those who walk their children to school experience the problems first hand, increasing their reluctance to allow the children to walk alone.

7.5.2 In-car safety

There was general awareness of the legal requirements with regard to wearing seat belts. However, some of the teenagers admitted to not always doing so if they were back seat passengers or only going on short journeys. The parents, on the other hand, were adamant that they always insisted on their children wearing them. However, one of the problems of dropping off and collecting children during busy times meant that they had often seen children being bundled into cars and driven off before they had time to wear their seat belt. As children learn from parents' examples, some were highly critical of other parents' behaviour.

The adults with whom we spoke had seen drivers using mobile phones in cars despite the change in the law, although none of them admitted doing so themselves. The teenagers, on the other hand, acknowledged that their friends who were drivers often used phones while driving and said how difficult they find it to ignore a ringing phone. Some of them also said that their parents both spoke and sent text messages while driving. Some of the young people were already learning to drive and most intended to do so in the future. They felt that they would try to pull in before using a phone, although some were honest enough to admit that they may not. One of the college students had experienced the danger of this behaviour:

Yes, we had a crash on a motorway on the way to London. He [driver] was on a mobile phone and he was drinking out of a cup. And I didn't want to be in the car and I was panicking and that. It was really scary and he didn't have a seat belt on and he didn't have any hands on the wheel, he was fumbling with the radio and that. I was like 'Get me out of here now' and he turned round and told me to shut up. We crashed into the side of another car.

A friend of one of the students had been caught and fined for using a mobile phone while stationary, but with the keys still in the ignition. This had shocked him as he thought it was legal to use a phone in a stationary car. Another of the students had been a passenger in a car when none of the occupants had been wearing seat belts. The driver was stopped by the police and subsequently fined.

Drink-driving was an issue that the young people had strong feelings about. Several of the college students and some of the secondary school students knew a young man who had ridden a motorcycle while drunk and had crashed, leaving him in a coma. His friends had tried to stop him, but they had not called the police as they did not want to get him into trouble. The severity of this accident led them to say that they would never knowingly go in a car if the driver had been drinking. Not surprisingly the younger children had less awareness of the legislation and were confused about what was and was not allowed. One of the primary school children stated that drivers could have one drink if it was 'only a half', while another thought smoking while driving was illegal.

When discussing safe driving speeds, many of the parents felt that even 30 mph was too fast under certain conditions, while the teenagers thought older people drove too slowly. Those who were learning to drive had mixed feelings about speed. One said that driving faster on country roads, where the speed limit was 50 mph, was quite frightening as these roads were often narrower than main roads, while another felt that this was much easier in the evenings as cars were more visible with their headlights on.

7.6 Young people and risk taking

In addition to the often risky behaviour of drivers, the young people we spoke to, in common with those in the other case study areas, were in the habit of taking risks. The risk-taking behaviour discussed included:

- trying to 'dodge' traffic lights when crossing the road;
- listening to music and using mobile phones while walking and crossing the road;
- not always wearing seat belts when in cars, particularly for shorter journeys or when they were rear-seat passengers;
- not wearing cycle helmets, mainly because they are not 'cool' once they reach a certain age; and
- going in cars with drivers who engage in risky behaviour, for example speeding, using mobile phones, carrying too many passengers and not having the necessary documents.

The young people were very honest about their behaviour and were aware of the potential consequences. They felt that knowing what they ought to do and being aware of the dangers made it acceptable to take risks if they used their judgement. Although they indulged in some risky behaviour, as outlined above, they remained critical of those who put others' lives at risk intentionally.

7.7 Conclusions

Parents' concerns remain similar regardless of location. However, street play was less likely in this area, partially because many of the children live in houses with gardens. Parents restrict the places they allow children to go according to age and experience. So, for example, those children who are not allowed to play out may be allowed to walk to friends' houses depending on the distance. Some are allowed to play on their own drives/in front of their homes, but are not allowed to go further. One of the major problems for parents is how to encourage their children to become safe and street wise, while also protecting them. Parental concerns about road safety lead many to ferry their children around by car, adding to the problem of road congestion and increasing the risks for other pedestrians. Young people's risk-taking behaviour also appears to be similar, wherever they may live.

Although Maidstone is a more affluent area than the other case study areas, many of the road safety issues remain the same or similar. The major issues relate to the increasing volume of traffic on **all** roads regardless of location. When many of these towns were first built, cars were not a prime consideration. Older housing stock has no or limited parking, as multiple car ownership was not envisaged. Many large single-dwellings in all of the case study areas have, in recent years, become multi-occupancy or have been replaced by flats. At the same time, multiple car ownership has become increasingly common. More recently, further urban development appears to have prioritised drivers at the expense of residents and pedestrians. Personal behaviour and attitudes appear to be less of a factor in the likelihood of road accidents than the increasing volumes of traffic and the need to keep commuters mobile.

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