Review of the Evidence Base on Faith Communities

Review

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Preface

This report reviews the evidence base relating to the demographic, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of ‘emerging’ faith communities, specifically the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh populations\(^1\) together with the likely future trends within them. The evidence base that was reviewed was selected according to:

- its relevance to the ODPM’s strategic priorities of Housing Supply and Demand; Decent Places to Live; Tackling Disadvantage; Delivering Better Services; and Promoting the Development of the English Regions, and

- its bearing on the relationship between faith and other equalities strands in terms of ethnicity, gender, sexuality and disability.

This report primarily reviews relevant publications and ‘grey’ literature\(^2\) produced during the past ten years. In some instances, where the work concerned illustrates a more recent development, or where the research concerned was particularly seminal and/or has not been superseded by more up-to-date research, older research and publications are also referred to. In addition, the members of the project team have manipulated and analysed available data sets, also drawing on some of their own primary research. Finally, a number of semi-structured interviews were conducted with key community informants and academic experts in order to inform awareness of the key issues within the evidence base.

The review was conducted between January and July 2005 by a consortium of academics from the Universities of Birmingham, Derby, Oxford, and Warwick, working together for this purpose under the informal name of the ‘Mercia Group’, thus bringing together a range and depth of relevant academic ‘knowledge and skills capital’ gained in research and study of the communities and issues involved.

Dr. David Owen of the University of Warwick (through which the research was contracted and sub-contracted to other members of the team) co-ordinated liaison with the ODPM, while the project team divided up work according to areas of expertise, and a mix of tasks in co-ordination and contribution.

This report includes not only the project’s findings, but also bibliographic details of the literature reviewed.

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1 The three largest religious groups in England, after Christians.
2 The term “grey literature” refers to publications issued by government, academia, business, and industry, where publishing is not the primary business activity of the organization. It comprises newsletters, reports, working papers, theses, government documents, bulletins, fact sheets, conference proceedings and other publications. It covers literature that is not yet formally published and has therefore not been subject to peer review processes.”
Introduction

THE SIGNIFICANCE AND SALIENCE OF RELIGION

The religious landscape of England might most accurately be characterised as ‘three dimensional’ (Weller, 2005): Christian, secular and religiously plural. The results of the 2001 Census show that religion is of some significance for over three-quarters of the population. Of these, as many as 71.7 per cent identified themselves as ‘Christian’ (see Voas 2003; and Voas and Bruce, 2004). At the same time 9,103,727 or 15.5 per cent (14.6 per cent in England) indicated they were of ‘no religion’. A further 6 per cent of the total population of England (2,939,740 people) identified with religions other than Christianity. A substantial proportion of the population that can be considered in terms of religious minorities can also be identified with minority ethnic groups.

There is, of course, an issue about the relationship of Census data on religion to religions as they are lived and practised. This is especially the case in the light of the apparent discrepancy (Francis, 2003) between the Census data and results from the British Social Attitudes Survey and the European Values Survey. In the results of these, for Great Britain, self-identification with religion would seem to be less widespread than indicated in the Census results. In the British Social Attitudes Survey for 2001, 41.5 per cent of respondents reported that they had ‘no religion’. In the European Values Survey, respondents were asked about how important religion is in their life. 12.6 per cent of respondents in Great Britain said ‘very important’ and 24.8 per cent said ‘quite important’, while 33.0 per cent said ‘not important’ and 29.7 per cent said ‘not at all’ (Halman 2001: 33).

In the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey, respondents were asked to choose from a list of fifteen things those which would say something important about them if they were using these words to describe themselves. In order of frequency, ‘religion’ was ranked ninth. However, there was considerable variation of response between different ethnic groups. Thus, among ‘Asians’ it was ranked as high as second, while for ‘whites’ it was as low as tenth in importance (O’Beirne, 2004: 18-19).

The focus of the present report is on the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh components of the religious landscape in England (a total of 2,399,212 people in 2001). Taken together, these comprise the bulk of the minority religious population, a very high percentage of which is from minority ethnic groups. In addition, the significance of religion for their individual and corporate life is relatively high for these groups. Evidence from the fourth Public Studies Institute (PSI) Survey of Ethnic Minorities (Modood et al 1997: 301) indicates that 95 per cent of Muslims, 89 per cent of Hindus and 86 per cent of Sikhs considered religion to be ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ important in their lives. This compares with 46 per cent of White members of the Church of England and 69 per cent of White Roman Catholics. O’Beirne’s (2004) analysis of the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey data broadly confirms this, by showing that while Christians, Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs all agree that ‘family’ was the most important factor in describing themselves,

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3 A further 7.7 per cent of the population of England did not respond to this voluntary question. It is too simplistic simply to assume they should all be added to those who chose to respond that they were of ‘no religion’ as the reasons for non-response may be many and varied.
members of all three emerging faiths placed ‘religion’ as the second most important factor, while Christians ranked this only seventh most important.

In considering any implications of the evidence base on these groups for the ODPM’s policy considerations, an appreciation of all three of the UK’s Christian, secular and religiously plural dimensions, as well as of the relationship of this plurality with factors of ethnicity, is critically important. Thus neither the place of religion, nor the degree of religious plurality should be overestimated, although it is increasingly important that explicit account is taken of both.

In addition, while (and especially among minority groups) there are often clear areas of overlap between aspects of religion and aspects of ethnicity in both the self-understanding of people and in their experience of unfair treatment, disadvantage and discrimination, for an appropriately rounded understanding and approach to policy development and impact assessment it is important that the dimension of ‘religion’ should not be completely collapsed into that of ‘ethnicity’ nor vice versa. Rather, their complex relationship needs to be borne in mind and teased out in each specific context that is under consideration. In some matters (such as housing) it is likely that ethnicity will be to the fore, while in others (such as community participation) it may be religion.

There is also the aspect of gendered experience and the differential impact of policies and practices with regard to women and men, whether considered in terms of either religion and/or ethnicity. This is the case, too, in relation to the factor of age, and especially with regard to both younger and older people. In the case of the inter-relationship between religion, ethnicity and gender, especially, and to some extent with age, there is a fairly well developed evidence base of both qualitative and quantitative research and all of these categories can be correlated through the Census data.

Therefore the report that follows includes review of these factors. But it needs to be stated at the outset that the evidence base relating to the relationship of religion with disability and sexual orientation among the groups that are under consideration is sparse.

A CAUTIONARY NOTE ON BROAD CATEGORIES

When considering the evidence base on the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh populations, the Census data and much research uses these broad categories to describe the religious dimensions of the population. The use of the collective descriptors of ‘Hindu’, ‘Muslim’, ‘Sikh’ and others does have a certain practical utility and the language of ‘faith communities’ has increasingly entered into Government and wider public discourse.

However, while this terminology may be recognisable as a convenient ‘shorthand’, it is important to recognise that it can mask a range of diversities and issues of which it is important to at least have some awareness, since these categories are themselves ultimately abstractions of a much more complex religious and cultural landscape, the nature of which it is important to keep in mind even while using these labels.

4 Within the social sciences there has been ongoing debate as to whether religion is determined by ethnicity, or vice versa. The position taken here is that there is no ‘universal’ answer to this question that does not run the risk of at least some ‘facts’ being forced to fit a ‘theory’ and that the complexity of the relationship needs to be considered in each case.
Thus the identification of individual ‘religions’ in terms of the ‘itys’ and ‘isms’ of ‘Christianity’ and of ‘Hinduism’ is itself not unproblematic and if used in an unqualified way can create an unhelpful abstraction that is not adequate to historical reality. Thus, classical scholars of religion such as Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1978) have argued that one should, rather, think of religions in terms of the interplay between what, on the one hand, he identified as ‘personal faith’ and, on the other hand, as ‘cumulative tradition’.

Others, such as the contemporary scholar Timothy Fitzgerald (2002), have held that the category of religion is a construct that need not be used, that there is no need to think of religion as a specific field of study, and that the notion of culture can generally cover what has traditionally been described by the word ‘religion’. But even without taking so radical a deconstructionist approach, the diversities involved in each ‘faith community’ are not only those that are to do with the dimensions of ethnicity that have already been noted, but also concerned with the range of broad traditions and specific movements that comprise each major world religious tradition as it exists socially and historically in the UK (Ballard [ed], 1994a; and Coward, Hinnells and Williams [eds.], 2000).

Thus, among Muslims there are the broad traditions of Sunni and Shi’a, and specific movements or tendencies such as Deobandi, Barelwi and others. Among Hindus and Sikhs there are similar diversities of movement and tradition. There are also biradari, caste and jati groupings5 that can be of great significance in how these communities actually work and organise themselves.

While it is clearly not realistic for public bodies to have detailed understanding of all the differences that can and do exist, together with their potential ramifications, some general awareness of the range of diversity is important if evidence-based policy-making is not to run the risk of over-simplification. This is because the ‘tradition’ or ‘movement’ distinctive of the Hindu, Muslim or Sikh population in a particular city, town or neighbourhood can have a specific bearing on the style of approach of these populations to participation in various local initiatives. For example, where individual movements have particular interpretations of the requirements of their religion, or where they may have a specific stance towards involvement in the political process, it is important for impact assessments and policy development to take account of these particularities as far as it is practicable.

5 “The ‘ideal’ structure of Hindu society is based upon four varnas, traditionally linked, in turn, with the intelligentsia and the priests; the administrators and the military; the agriculturalists and merchants; and the labourers and servants. There are also those who are known as ‘outcastes’, whom Gandhi called ‘Harijans’ or ‘children of God’ and who, in the language of Indian officialdom are known as ‘the scheduled castes’. But in practice people identify with a particular hereditary group called a jati that is associated with one of the varnas. These groups are often referred to in English as castes or sub-castes and the pattern of jatis varies considerably according to regional origins. Biradari are extended kinship groupings found among people of Muslim background with origins in the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent.”
CHAPTER 1

Overview of the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh populations of England

1.1 Key messages

- The 2001 Census found that Christians accounted for 71.7 per cent, Muslims for 3.1 per cent, Hindus for 1.1 per cent and Sikhs for 0.7 per cent of the population of England. In total, there were 1.5 million Muslims, 546,000 Hindus and 327,000 Sikhs.

- Most people from the emerging faith communities live in London, and towns and cities in the East and West Midlands, Eastern Lancashire, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire. Each faith community has a different geographical distribution.

- Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are largely South Asian. Hindus and Sikhs are overwhelmingly Indian in origin. Muslims are much less ethnically homogeneous. While two-thirds are South Asian, 12 per cent are White, 6 per cent Other Asian, 7 per cent Black, 4 per cent from ‘Other’ ethnic groups and 4 per cent had one white parent. The Muslim population of London is highly ethnically diverse but in northern England, Muslim people are predominantly Pakistani (with much smaller Indian and Bangladeshi components in particular towns).

- The Muslim population is the youngest and most rapidly increasing faith group in England. There are more males than females in both the Muslim and Hindu populations. More than half of the Sikh population, but less than half of Muslims and only 37.5 per cent of Hindus were born in the UK.

- In aggregate, Muslims are more likely than Sikhs and Hindus to be disadvantaged. They display low rates of labour market participation, the highest male unemployment rate, larger families, a higher percentage in social housing, the highest incidence of over-crowding and are most likely to live in deprived localities. The percentage with higher educational qualifications is low and the percentage working in blue-collar occupations is high.

- Sikh people also tend to have poor educational qualifications and a blue-collar occupational bias, but, male unemployment levels are lower and female engagement in the formal labour market is significantly higher than for Muslims. The percentage of households owning their dwelling is highest for Sikh people.

Hindus have the most favourable socio-economic profile with a high proportion of workers in the professional categories, the highest proportions with high educational qualifications and a high proportion of owner occupied housing.
1.2  The changing discourse on race, ethnicity and religion

Over the last fifty years, the discourse in Britain about ‘racialised minorities’ has mutated from ‘colour’ in the 1950s and 1960s (Banton, 1955; Rose, 1969) to ‘race’ in the 1960s, 70s and 80s (Rex and Moore, 1967; Smith, 1989) to ‘ethnicity’ in the 90s (Modood et al 1997) and to ‘religion’ in the present time. This focus on religion has been driven both by major international events which have highlighted the political demands associated with religious movements and by an increasing recognition by academics, policy-makers and service providers of the importance of religion in defining identity, particularly among minority communities. In addition, minority communities are increasingly seeking to press for the accommodation of their religious customs and practices within the legal and economic system of the UK (eg recognition of minority dress codes, family practices and financial structures).

Until the 2001 Census of Population, there was no comprehensive source of data on the ‘emergent’ religions in Britain. Systematic academic treatments of British Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were few, largely based on small-scale anthropological studies. Other references were produced as by-products of census-based studies of ethnic minority groups. Religion is incidental to many of these ethnic studies. The literature on emergent religions can be categorised under five headings.

1.2.1  Speculative, sometimes grey, literature estimating the possible size of the number of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus (Knott, 1998; Nielsen, 1992, 2000; Peach, 1990a, 1990b, 1997).

This literature is now being supplemented by analyses of the 2001 census material. Most of this post-census material is part of an emerging evidence base, as yet in draft form, awaiting publication decisions from journal editors.

1.2.2  National surveys of ethnic minority populations, in which religion is one element of the investigation, but in which the frame, from which the sampled population was drawn, was necessarily incomplete.

In the light of the 2001 Census, it can be seen that sample sizes did not accurately reflect the now revealed component population sizes. The national (but basically English) surveys carried out by the Policy Studies Institute (PSI) in various guises, are the most important (Modood et al, 1997 Ethnic Minorities in Britain: Diversity and Disadvantage; Brown, 1984 Black and White Britain: The Third PSI Survey; Smith, 1976 The Facts Of Racial Disadvantage). The most recent of these studies (Modood et al 1997) is the most important because it is relatively recent (with fieldwork taking place in 1994/5) and because of the specific attention it devotes to issues of religion and identity, although these aspects of the report have been relatively infrequently used in this context. More recent studies include Bhikhu Parekh’s 2000 The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain: the Parekh Report for the Runnymede Trust and Parekh’s (2000) Rethinking Multiculturalism that has implications for the policy considerations that arise for the ODPM out of reflection on the evidence base.
1.2.3 Literature dealing with specific ethnic communities in specific locations, in which the community happens to be of a particular faith group. Religion is sometimes, but not always, a central interest in this literature.


1.2.4 There is a literature on issues of planning and faith communities

This includes Farnell et al 2003 on *Faith’ in urban Regeneration* in relation to engaging faith communities in urban regeneration, while on housing, there is Sellick, 2004, *Muslim Housing Experience*. Planning issues over places of worship has recently produced a series of papers (Peach and Gale, 2003; Gale and Naylor, 2002; Naylor and Ryan, 2002; Gale, 1999). The general theme of the literature is that, in the early days (late 19th century) the construction of mosques was considered architecturally interesting, because they were exceptional, rare and promoted by aristocrats. Later mass pressure for small-scale working class mosques were met by resistance from planning authorities, but this has been superceded in the larger cities by a greater willingness to permit minority faiths to establish religious buildings.

1.2.5 There is an important literature covering either a range of religions in the same country

Ballard, 1994 *Desb Pardesh* or one religion in a range of countries (Vertovec and Peach, 1997 *Islam in Europe*, Nielsen, 1992, *Muslims in Western Europe*, Vertovec, S. 2000 *The Hindu Diaspora: Comparative Patterns*) or several religions in several countries (Coward et al, 2000 *The South Asian Religious Diaspora in Britain, Canada and the United States*). These include micro-studies of specific geographical areas and/or groups within religions, often setting them within a comparative context.

1.3 The religion question in the 2001 Census

The 2001 Census was the first to pose a question on religion in England and Wales since 1851. In 1851, interest centred on Christian church attendance, but the 2001 Census reflected the new diversity of the religious landscape and enumerated Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jews as well as ‘Other Religions’ and those with no religion. The religious question was voluntary, but 92 per cent of respondents provided an answer.
Reflecting devolution, the form of the religion question differed in Northern Ireland and Scotland from that posed in England and Wales. In Northern Ireland (where all recent Censuses have included a question on religion) the emphasis was on denominational difference within Christianity. In Scotland the question was similar to that in England and Wales, but also identified Protestant and Catholic Christians and asked about both religion of upbringing and current identification with a religion or lack of it. In England and Wales, on the other hand, there was no differentiation within Christianity, nor a question on upbringing. The single England and Wales question was much more instrumental, aimed at establishing the size of the relatively new other than Christian and Jewish populations.

There is therefore some controversy (see Voas 2003; and Voas and Bruce, 2004) as to how the question on religion was interpreted by those who completed the census form. Given the nature of the question as asked in England and Wales, the results are best understood as reflecting the broader cultural and religious background of those who responded, within which is nested an active core of membership and belief whose size varies with the particular religions.

The 2001 Census results were adjusted for the estimated 2 per cent ‘undercount’ (greatest for young people, men and Inner London) through the “One Number Census” procedure, but is still believed to underestimate the population of some religious groups, especially in some localities. In Leeds, a community survey revealed that the Census had substantially underestimated the Jewish population (Waterman, 2003), and the London Borough of Hackney believes that the Census substantially underestimated its Jewish population.

Despite criticism, the main and most comprehensive statistical source of information on Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus in England remains that of the 2001 census. This shows those identifying themselves as Muslims to be the second largest group considered in terms of religion, albeit a large distance behind Christians taken as a whole (Table 1.1). Muslims numbered 1.5 million or 3 per cent of the population of England, compared with 35 million or 72 per cent of the population for Christians. Hindus numbered just over half a million or 1 per cent of the population and Sikhs numbered just over a third of a million or two-thirds of 1 per cent of the population. Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs together form nearly 5 per cent of the population of England.

1.4 Geographical distribution

The emerging faith communities exhibit a considerably varied geographical distribution within England. There is a marked contrast in religious composition between London and the remainder of England (Table 1.2). The Christian faith still accounts for by far the largest percentage of the population in all regions, but only three-fifths of London’s population recorded their religion as Christian. The minority faith share of regional population is largest in London, the only exception being Sikhs, whose share of the regional population is greatest in the West Midlands. Minority faiths are largest in relative terms in the West Midlands, North West, Yorkshire and the Humber and the East Midlands.

See the discussion on the Hackney LB 2001 Census web site: http://www.map.hackney.gov.uk/Mapgallery/Statistics%20Web/cen_summ.htm
Figures 1.1a to 1.1c present the geographical distribution of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh people across the 354 local authorities (unitary authorities and shire districts) in England. These maps reveal the urban, city-region concentration of the three faiths within each region. The main concentrations of minority religions are found in the areas of densest population: London, the West Midlands, the Leicester/Nottingham area and the Pennine conurbations. The Hindu population is concentrated in west London and the East Midlands, while Sikhs are concentrated in west London and the West Midlands. Muslims are predominantly located in London, the major cities of the West Midlands and the towns and cities of eastern Lancashire, Greater Manchester and West Yorkshire.

Figure 1.1d displays the religious breakdown of South Asian people across England. The South Asian population is predominantly Muslim in northern England, but other minority faiths are much more significant in the Midlands. Hindus form the majority of South Asian people in Leicester and parts of west London. Sikhs are in the minority in most areas, but form a substantial minority in parts of London and the West Midlands.

Islam has spread across a large part of the world, and hence includes people with a wide range of national and ethnic origins. In northern England and the West Midlands, Muslims are predominantly South Asian (mostly Pakistani and Bangladeshi), but in London the Muslim population has highly diverse national origins (Figure 1.1e). In north London Boroughs, the white Muslim population (including Turks and Turkish Cypriots) outnumbers South Asian Muslims. Black-Africans are also a major component of the Muslim population in some London boroughs.

Table 1.3 uses the Index of Multiple Deprivation for 2004 to demonstrate the tendency for the share of minority faith groups in the population to be higher in the most deprived areas. Muslims form 10.2 per cent of the population of the 10 per cent most deprived lower-tier Super Output Areas in England. Their share of the population broadly declines as prosperity increases. This tendency is present, but less marked, for Hindu and Sikh people.

1.5 Religion by ethnicity and ethnicity by religion

Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are all largely composed of minority ethnic populations, substantially originating in the Indian sub-continent. Among Hindus, 84.5 per cent were Indian and 11.7 per cent Other-Asian, while 91.5 per cent of Sikhs were Indian (Table 1.4). The majority of Muslims in England are also of South Asian origin; 43 per cent are Pakistani, 17 per cent Bangladeshi and 9 per cent Indian. However, ethnicity is not as neatly congruent with religion as for Sikhs and Hindus. Overall, 11.6 per cent of Muslims were white, 4 per cent of these White-British (including both converts and the UK-born children of Muslim immigrants) and 7.5 per cent classified as ‘Other White’. The latter figure includes Turkish Cypriots, other Turks, Bosnian, Kosovan and other former Yugoslav refugees, North Africans and Middle Easterners. A further 6 per cent of Muslims were Black-Africans (61.9 per cent of African-born Muslims were from south and east Africa).

It is clearly unwise to treat the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faith groups as if they were homogeneous populations. There are, for example considerable differences within and
between White Muslims, Black Muslims and South Asian Muslims. Because of this
diversity, Sellick (2004) argues that larger faith communities should be regarded as
‘confederations of smaller segments’. She also points out that averages calculated from
Census data obscure the experiences of the poorest sections of the Muslim population.
She recommends the development of sharper research tools to identify the poorest
section of the Muslim population and to direct support to them. She also highlights the
importance of adding religion to ethnicity in monitoring exercises.

Turning to the religious composition of ethnic groups (Figure 1.3), Bangladeshi Muslims
are the most homogeneous ethno-religious grouping in England, with nearly all having
origins in the Sylhet District of the north-east of what is now Bangladesh (Gardner and
Shukur, 1994). The Pakistani population of England was also almost entirely Muslim.
Pakistani migrants to the UK mainly had origins in the Punjab and the north of
Pakistan, but some also came from more diverse areas. Mirpur in Azad Kashmir7 is a
particularly important sending area. but there are also Pathans and other groups from
the Afghan border districts (Ballard, 1994; Lewis, 1994).

The Indian ethnic group is multi-religious: 45 per cent is Hindu, 29 per cent Sikh and
13 per cent Muslim. Another 2 per cent of the Indian population belongs to ‘Other
Religions’. Smaller religions such as Jains and Parsis, (Hinnells, 1996; Weller, 1997;
Coward, Hinnells and Williams, 2000) are amalgamated in this figure. Parsis (Zoroastrians)
and Jains are numerically small but economically important (Banks, 1994).

TRADITIONS AND MOVEMENTS

As briefly indicated in the Introduction to the present report, as well as differences
of ethnicity, there are also differences related to religious tradition and movement
(for further details other than the brief indications of difference included here, see

1.6 Caste/Jati and economic difference

Issues of social inclusion and exclusion are not confined to white or Christian
acceptance of ethnic and religious minorities, but to intra-ethnic and intra-religious
religious practice as well. Hindus show parallels with the Jewish population, not least
in their high degree of professionalisation, high rates of owner occupation and Outer
London concentration within the capital.

In the UK, caste or jati groups do not necessarily correlate with the social, economic or
occupational status of individuals and families but they do remain a significant social,
cultural and economic factor for many aspects of internal Hindu community life. At the
same time, the Hindu community is marked by the continuing but changing effects of
caste, such that groupings as the Patidars and Lohanas do better socio-economically
than Mochis or Valmikis (Knott, 1994; Tambs-Lyche 1980; Vertovec 1992; Warrier, 1994;
Dwyer, 1994). In addition to differences of caste, there is differentiation on the basis of
whether the original migration was direct from India or from East Africa. For example,
East African Gujarati Hindus form an elite within the Hindu elite in England.

7 Pakistani Kashmir
1.7 Socio-economic profiles of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs

With regard to socio-economic position, there are considerable differences between the groups considered in terms of religion. In relative terms, Hindus have a more affluent profile and Muslims a more deprived profile with Sikhs occupying an intermediate position. Muslim unemployment rates for all those aged 25+ were just under 14 per cent compared with 6 per cent for Sikhs, 5 per cent for Hindus and 4 per cent for the whole population in England. (Figure 1.4).

These differences reflect to a large extent the circumstances of migrants prior to immigration rather than simply differential success from the same starting point in England. For example, about a third of the Indian ethnic population originates from the professionalized, middle class East African Asian population forced out by Africanisation policies in the 1960s and 1970s. (Modood, T. et. al 1997, 113-4).

The relative disadvantage of Muslim people also has multiple causes. Among them are a predominantly rural peasant background in the sending areas of Azad (Pakistani) Kashmir and Bangladesh of first generation migrants, poor educational levels, geographical concentrations in English regions of industrial decline and location in areas of multiple deprivation. Harassment is also an issue encouraging the concentration of groups such as Bangladeshis. Nevertheless there are significant differences within the Muslim population; groups such as the East African Shi’a Ismailis are referred to by the Sikh writer Parminder Bhachu (1985, 40-41) as the pace-makers of East African Asian societies. Other ethno-religious groups, notably the Sikhs, share some of these characteristics without experiencing the same degree of economic vulnerability.

However, there are some factors that apply particularly to the Muslim population in England. One of the key factors distinguishing the economic marginality of the Muslim population (especially Pakistani and Bangladeshi people) from other groups understood by reference to religion is the low representation of women in the official workforce. Less than 30 per cent of Muslim women aged 25+ are economically active, compared with 60 per cent for all women of that age. While many Muslim women (Bangladeshis in the “rag trade” in Tower Hamlets, for instance) are engaged in home working, such work is poorly paid.

The low rates of female participation in the formal labour force may be a consequence of traditional South Asian values of protecting women’s honour (Shaw, 1994), together with relatively early and almost universal marriage for young women, early onset of childbirth and large family size. The average household size for Muslims in England in 2001 was 3.8 compared with 3.6 for Sikhs and 3.2 for Hindus. The average household size for England as a whole was 2.4.

Younger Muslim women tend to have better educational qualifications than older women. The Spring 2005 Labour Force Survey revealed that 15.4 per cent of women aged 25 to 34 were qualified to NVQ4 or above, compared to 8.1 for 35 to 59 year olds. Dale et al 2002, demonstrates the recent increase in participation in higher
education of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. Their study of Oldham demonstrated that young Muslim women were not being prevented from engaging in higher education and that mothers were anxious that their daughters should have a qualification which would facilitate return to work after having children. Men were still expected to be the main earner (and husbands born outside the UK were likely to hold traditional views), but the young women interviewed gained self-esteem from work. Better educated women, in this study, were more able to resist demands to withdraw from work on marriage and childbearing.

1.8 Demographic structure and characteristics

Table 1.5 summarises contrasts in age structure and gender balance between the religious groups present in England. The oldest on average are the Jewish and Christians, while the Muslim population is the youngest and most rapidly increasing faith group in England. The average ages of Hindus and Sikhs are substantially greater than that of Muslims. While there are broadly equal numbers of males and females of Sikh religion, males outnumber females in the Muslim and Hindu religions. While more than half of the Sikh population was born in the UK, less than half of Muslims and only 37.5 per cent of Hindus were born in the UK.

The Muslim population pyramid in Figure 1.5c is typical of a population experiencing rapid population increase, with the number of people in an age group increasing with decreasing age, reflecting a high birth rate. The large number of younger adults also reflects continuing immigration to the UK. A third of the population is aged 15 or under compared with the England average of 20 per cent. Only 5 per cent are aged 60 or more compared with the England average of 20 per cent. For the Sikhs (Figure 1.5d) the population is also young, but less so compared to Muslims. The 0-15 cohort comprises a quarter of their population and those aged 60+ just under 10 per cent. Figure 1.5d indicates that the Sikh birth-rate has been falling recently, since the number of people in the adult age groups exceeds the number of children. The large numbers of people in the ‘prime’ economically active age ranges reflects high birth rates in the 1960s and 1970s following primary immigration. The percentage of Hindus aged 0-15 is close to the England average, but the 60+ cohort (10 per cent) is half the average proportion for England. Their population pyramid (Figure 1.5b) is similar to that of Sikhs, but with more older adults, reflecting a high rate of immigration around 1970. In brief, all three faith groups have a younger average age than the population as a whole, but the Hindu age profile is most similar to the total population and the Muslims’ age profile is the most different.

The Muslim population also has the youngest marrying age for women so that Muslims also have the highest actual and potential fertility rate. Modood et al (1997, p27, p35) found that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women aged 25 were much more likely to have a partner than white and Caribbean women and that 79 per cent of Pakistani and Bangladeshi families aged 20 to 59 had children, compared with 49 per cent of white couples. Sporton and White (2002) report total period fertility rates of around 4 children for Pakistani and 5 children for Bangladeshi women, compared with 1.8 for white women.
1.9 Health and disability

There is relatively little evidence on health variations by religion. This section therefore analyses 2001 Census data on the incidence of limiting illness lasting a year or more by gender and age across the three faith communities (Table 1.6). This variable is used as an indicator of both chronic ill-health and disability. The incidence of long-term illness increases with increasing age within the population as a whole, with around a half of all people aged 65 and over experiencing a limiting long-term illness. There is little difference in illness rates between males and females, with the slightly higher percentage of women aged over 65 with long-term illnesses being probably a consequence of their greater life expectancy than men.

For both males and females aged under 50, Table 1.6 shows that illness rates for Hindus and Sikhs are just below the average for all people. However, among older people, the percentage of both men and women of Hindu and Sikh faith experiencing long-term illness is higher than average. For women aged over 65, the relative ill-health of Hindus and Sikhs is even greater. Both men and women of Muslim faith experience poorer than average health across the age range.

The relative vulnerability of Muslims

Socio-economic indicators from the Census reveal a consistent picture of the vulnerable position of the aggregated Muslim population compared to people from other minority faith groups. In terms of economic activity (participation in the formal labour force) Muslims are significantly less involved than other religious groups (Figure 1.6). While the average participation rate for those aged 25+ was 67 per cent, for Muslims it was 50 per cent. Sikhs had a 70 per cent participation rate and Hindus 71 per cent. The low Muslim participation rate was due largely to the very low female participation rate in the formal economy. Only 29 per cent of Muslim women aged 25+ were economically active (Figure 1.7). This is half the England average for women of 59 per cent. The economic activity rates for Hindus and Sikhs were just above the average at 62 per cent.

Figure 1.8 breaks down economic activity and inactivity in more detail for Muslim women aged over 25, comparing the Pakistani and Bangladeshi ethnic groups with the Muslim population other than these two ethnic groups. Around half of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women were looking after the home or family full-time, with a further quarter permanently sick and disabled or out of the labour market for other reasons. The percentages of the age group retired or unemployed are quite small (but represent a large percentage of the economically active). The economic disadvantage of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women is revealed by the small percentages in work; only 21 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. The average for all Muslim women is higher, since other Muslim women are far more likely (31 per cent) to be working, and only 32 per cent are looking after a home or family full-time. However, this is still an extremely low employment rate in comparison with women from other religious and ethnic groups.

Unemployment rates were also highest for Muslims. Nearly 18 per cent of Muslims aged 16-24 were unemployed and nearly 14 per cent of those aged 25+ (Figure 1.9). Sikh unemployment rates for the 16-24 cohort was 10 per cent and for the 25+ cohort 8 per cent. The Hindu unemployment rates for 16-24s and 25+ were 7 and 5 per cent respectively, the lowest, except for those of Jewish people.
The vulnerable profile of the Muslim population is also evidenced in the occupational composition of the Muslim male population aged 25+ (Table 1.7). Muslims have the lowest proportion (42 per cent) of men in the four white-collar major groups of the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) 2000 (ie managers and senior officials, professionals, associate professionals and technical occupations and administrative and secretarial occupations). This compares with the England average of 50 per cent, while Hindus have 63 per cent, the second highest after Jewish men (80 per cent).

At the other end of the skills hierarchy, 33.7 per cent of Muslim men work in semi-skilled and unskilled occupations (SOC major groups 8 and 9), compared with 17.7 per cent of Hindu and 31.2 per cent of Sikh men. Muslim men are more likely than other men to work in sales and customer service occupations. A high percentage of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men work (often self-employed) in trades such as taxi driving and restaurants, where there is little prospect of career progression (Wrench et al, 1996; ONS (2004)).

Sikh and Muslim women are least likely to work in white-collar occupations (50.4 per cent and 53.6 per cent, respectively), while the percentage of Hindu women in white-collar occupations (59.3) is slightly above the average for all women (58 per cent; Table 1.8). After administrative and secretarial occupations, sales and customer service occupations are the largest sources of employment. Hindu and Muslim women are more likely than Sikh women to work in professional occupations (SOC major group 2).

Sikhs have an occupational profile similar to, but more favourable than Muslims with 47 per cent of men working in the four white-collar categories. However, the economic outcome for the Sikhs is much more favourable than that for the Muslims in terms of lower rates of unemployment and lower degrees of concentration in areas of multiple-deprivation. Sikh levels of owner occupation are 82 per cent compared with the Muslim rate of 50 per cent (Figure 1.10). The greater participation of Sikh women in the formal labour market means that Sikh households probably have more disposable income to use in improving their housing circumstances and investing in their children’s education (often through private schooling). The labour market participation rate of Sikh women aged 25+ is double that of Muslim women (62 per cent compared with 29 per cent). There is no data on population change by religion, but Sikh and Hindu populations are likely to be growing relatively slowly, reflecting the trend for the Indian ethnic group as a whole (Rees and Butt, 2004), since both birth rates and rates of international migration are relatively low for Indian people.

Patterns of disadvantage are reflected in educational attainment by religious group. Among people aged 16-64, 41 per cent of Muslims but only 32 per cent of Sikhs people have no educational qualifications (Figure 1.11). For all other religious groups, less than 30 per cent have no educational qualifications.

Above average family size and concentration of Muslim households in flats or terraced homes, leads to a higher than average degree of over-crowding. Over-crowding is an indicator of low income and also possibly unhealthy physical and mental living conditions. The higher the percentage of children brought up in overcrowded conditions, the poorer the living conditions of a community and the worse their children’s life chances. The percentage of dependent children living in overcrowded accommodation is another indicator of poor living conditions and deprivation. Figure 1.13 shows that all three faith communities are disadvantaged on this measure; 40 per
cent of Muslim, 20 per cent for Sikh and 30 per cent of Hindu children live in overcrowded homes, compared with just over 10 per cent for all children in England as a whole.8

1.10 Conclusions

There are significant differences in the socio-economic profiles of the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh groups in England. Hindus emerge as the most educated and professionalised. They have high rates of owner-occupation. In London where over 52 per cent live, over 80 per cent are found in outer London, living in detached and semi-detached houses. Hindus have a low rate of unemployment and a high rate of female participation in the labour force.

Muslims are generally at the opposite end of the scale compared with Hindus. They are the largest of the ‘emergent’ religions in England. They have the youngest age structure of all the religious groups identified by the Census. They have large families, low participation rates in the formal labour market, where only 29 per cent of women are active. They have the highest male unemployment rate, the highest dependence on social housing, the highest degree of flat living and the highest degree of overcrowding. They also have a high degree of concentration in areas of economic difficulty (particularly in the North but also in deprived boroughs in London) and social deprivation. Educational levels are relatively low and the occupational structure skewed towards the blue-collar jobs.

Sikhs hold an intermediate position between Muslims and Hindus in England. Like Muslims, their educational qualifications are generally poor and their occupational profile shows a similar blue-collar bias to the Muslims. Critically, however, male unemployment levels are much lower than for Muslims and female engagement in the formal labour market is dramatically higher. The outcome is that Sikhs have the highest degree of owner occupation of houses. They are less concentrated in London than either the Hindus or Muslims (53 and 39 per cent respectively versus 32 per cent) but within London, they are overwhelmingly concentrated (86 per cent) in outer London.

The economic success of the Hindus and the Sikhs arguably owes as much to the experience of migrants prior to migration as to their entrepreneurial activities since arrival in England. A significant part of both populations originated in, or are children of, those who fled from East Africa. There they formed the professionalised middle class prior to aggressive policies of Africanisation from the late 1960s onwards. In contrast, many Muslim migrants came from a rural peasant background.

What emerges from this account is that Muslims experience greater relative disadvantage as compared with Hindus and Sikhs. Gender issues seem to play a significant part in differentiating the socio-economic outcomes of South Asian components of the Muslim population from those of the Sikhs with whom they share educational and occupational similarities.

8 The latter figure appears anomalous, given the relative economic success of Hindu people. One explanation might be the lower incomes of younger families, who are most likely to have children, but may only be able to afford smaller properties; especially in London.
Appendix 1: Tables and figures

**Note:** In the following tables, there is a need to recognise that the use of overall categories such as ‘Hindu’, ‘Muslim’ and ‘Sikh’ may mask important internal differences. Thus, as aggregations of data under the single option religion categories offered by the Census there is a need to read and use these tables with an appropriate degree of caution.

**Table 1.1: Population by Religion, England 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>35,251,244</td>
<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1,524,887</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>546,982</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>327,343</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>257,671</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>139,046</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other religion</td>
<td>143,811</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>7,171,332</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion not stated</td>
<td>3,776,515</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL PEOPLE</td>
<td>49,138,831</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2001 Census of Population, Table S103 (Crown Copyright).
### Table 1.2: Regional variations in religious composition within England, 2001 (percent of population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>ALL PEOPLE</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>All other religions</th>
<th>No religion</th>
<th>Religion not stated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>49,138,831</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH EAST</td>
<td>2,515,442</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH WEST</td>
<td>6,729,764</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YORK-SHIRE &amp; HUMBER</td>
<td>4,964,833</td>
<td>73.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST MIDLANDS</td>
<td>4,172,174</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST MIDLANDS</td>
<td>5,267,308</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST</td>
<td>5,388,140</td>
<td>72.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LONDON</td>
<td>7,172,091</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH EAST</td>
<td>8,000,645</td>
<td>72.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH WEST</td>
<td>4,928,434</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Crown Copyright)
### Table 1.3: Percentage share of religions in population of (lower-tier) Super Output Areas classified by decile of overall IMD 2004 score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deprivation category of LSOA</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>No Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most deprived 10%</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd most deprived 10%</td>
<td>65.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd most deprived 10%</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th most deprived 10%</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th most deprived 10%</td>
<td>72.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th most prosperous 10%</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th most prosperous 10%</td>
<td>75.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd most prosperous 10%</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd most prosperous 10%</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most prosperous 10%</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2001 Census of Population (Crown Copyright)
### Table 1.4: Percentage Religion by ethnic group, England April 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>44,679,361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>42,747,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>624,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other White</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1,308,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>643,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Black Caribbean</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>231,424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Black African</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>76,498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White and Asian</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>184,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Mixed</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>151,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Asian British</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>2,248,289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>91.6</td>
<td>1,028,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>706,539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>275,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>237,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or Black British</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1,132,508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>561,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>475,938</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Black</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>95,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese or Other Ethnic Group</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>435,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>220,681</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Group</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>214,619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All People</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49,138,831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base</td>
<td>546,982</td>
<td>1,524,887</td>
<td>327,343</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of Population, 2001. Table S104 England and Wales (Crown Copyright)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.5: Demographic summary of religious groups in England, 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL PEOPLE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2001 Census of Population, Table S149
### Table 1.6: Percentage experiencing a limiting long-term illness, by age, gender and religion, England 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>All people</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 0-15</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 16-49</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 50-64</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 65+</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>52.1</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 0-15</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 16-49</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 50-64</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aged 65+</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
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Source: 2001 Census of Population, Table S152
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikh</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion stated</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other religion</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion not stated</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Table 1.7: Percentage of males aged 16-74 in work by occupation, England 2001 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| **All in work**                   | 12,791,618 8,766,810 39,689 149,851 |
|                                  | 63,908 279,194 80,140 41,745 2,467,126 |
|                                  | 903,155                              |

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S154
**Table 1.8: Percentage of females aged 16-74 in work by occupation, England 2001**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOC 2000 major group</th>
<th>ALL PEOPLE</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Any other religion</th>
<th>No religion</th>
<th>Religion not stated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Managers and Senior Officials</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Professional Occupations</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Associate Professional and Technical Occupations</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Administrative and Secretarial Occupations</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Skilled Trades Occupations</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Personal Service Occupations</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Sales and Customer Service Occupations</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Process; Plant and Machine Operatives</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Elementary Occupations</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All in work 10,836,136 8,179,911 31,581 116,495 51,807 122,809 66,755 39,395 1,558,496 668,887

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S154
Mu
s
lim
% stating religion, 2001
21 to 27.99 (2)
15 to 20.99 (1)
6 to 9.99 (8)
3 to 5.99 (14)
1 to 2.99 (50)
0 to 0.99 (278)

Hindu % stating religion 2001
21 to 27.99 (2)
15 to 20.99 (1)
6 to 9.99 (8)
3 to 5.99 (14)
1 to 2.99 (50)
0 to 0.99 (278)

Review of the Evidence Base on Faith Communities
Figure 1.1c

Ethnic breakdown of Muslims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other White</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed parentage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Asian British</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sikh

% stating religion, 2001

10 to 14.99 (3)
6 to 9.99 (5)
3 to 5.99 (9)
1 to 2.99 (22)
0 to 0.99 (314)

Figure 1.1d

South Asian religions

190,000
95,000
19,000

Hindu
Muslim
Sikh

Figure 1.1e

Ethnic breakdown of Muslims

150,000
75,000
15,000

Other White
Mixed parentage
Asian/Asian British
Black African
Other
Remainder
Figure 1.2: England 2001 Religion by Ethnicity

Source: Census of Population 2001 Table S103

Figure 1.3: Ethnicity England 2001 by Religion

Source: Census of Population 2001 Table S103
Figure 1.4: Percent Unemployed by Religion by Age Group, England 2001

Source: Census of Population 2001 Table S153
Figure 1.5a
Christian Population of England by Age and Sex

Figure 1.5b
Hindu Population of England by Age and Sex

Figure 1.5c
Muslim Population of England by Age and Sex

Figure 1.5d
Sikh Population of England by Age and Sex

Source: 2001 Census of Population, Standard Table 149
Figure 1.6: Economic Activity and Inactivity Rates by Religion aged 25+ England 2001

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S153

Figure 1.7: Female 25+ Economic Activity Rates by Religion, England 2001

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S153
**Figure 1.8:** Economic activity and inactivity of Muslim women aged 25 and over, England 2001 (percentages)

Source: Table S108 Economic activity by ethnic group; Table S153 Economic activity by Religion (sheet 2 S153)

**Figure 1.9:** Unemployment rate by age and religion, England 2001

Source: Census of England and Wales 2001 Table S153
Figure 1.10: Housing tenure by religion, England 2001

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S153

Figure 1.11: Religion by Educational Qualifications, aged 16-64, England 2001

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S158
Figure 1.12: Size of family by religion, England and Wales, 2001

Source: Census of Population, 2001 Table S153

Figure 1.13: Percentage of children living in overcrowded households, England 2001

Source Census of Population 2001, Table T053

Note: The Census occupancy rating provides a measure of under-occupancy and overcrowding. For example, a value of -1 implies that the dwelling has fewer rooms than required and hence that there is overcrowding in the household.
CHAPTER 2
Disadvantage and social cohesion

2.1 Key messages

- 40 per cent of Muslim, 26 per cent of Hindu and 22 per cent of Sikh households experience housing deprivation. Muslims make up one-tenth of the population of the most deprived ten percent of neighbourhoods (Super Output Areas) in England. Sikhs and Hindus are also proportionately over-represented in four of the worst five deciles of the distribution. However, White Christians comprise the majority population even in the most deprived areas.

- Segregation studies using the Index of Dissimilarity\(^9\) reveal that the Hindu population lives in the most residentially mixed areas, the Sikhs somewhat less so and the Muslim population is most concentrated in areas which are not mixed in ethnic and religious terms. However, the Muslim population is more ethnically heterogeneous than the Sikhs or Hindus and is better understood in terms of its individual ethnic components. The faith groups and their ethnic components are not simply separated from the White or Christian majority population but show internal sorting from each other.

- Census data reveals that Muslim people are particularly vulnerable in terms of unemployment, limiting long-term illness, educational levels and housing conditions. There is some data on Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims, but little information is available on Afghan, Somali, Kurds and other Muslim groups, which experience barriers in entering the labour and housing markets.

- While the vulnerability of the Muslim population in areas of multiple deprivation is acute, policies aimed at improving conditions in the most deprived Super Output Areas\(^{10}\) (eg “Cleaner, Greener Safer”) would be particularly beneficial to larger numbers of the wider population.

- There are trends that seem likely to keep ethno-religious communities geographically concentrated. First, while dispersal is taking place, it is likely to be constrained by the wish for families to remain geographically close, though the number of independent households among the British-born generation is increasing. Secondly, the differential use of places of worship by Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus may account for some of the higher degree of geographical concentration exhibited by Sikhs and Muslims. The Sikh gurdwaras (temples) in particular, serve as major social centres for all ages and genders of the Sikh communities.

\(^9\) The Index of Dissimilarity (ID) is the most generally used measure of ethnic segregation. It has values from 0 (no segregation) to 100 (total segregation). It has a direct verbal meaning: the proportion of a group that would have to move from its area of residence to replicate the distribution of the group with which it is being compared. See Box 2 below for technical information.

\(^{10}\) The smallest units for which data are available from the 2001 census are termed Output Areas. They contain about 300 people.
2.2 Introduction

The Introduction to this report showed that the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims are found in large numbers in only a limited number of the English regions and that within them, they are concentrated into a small number of large cities. The regional distribution of the larger ethnic groups (which, to some extent, can be mapped onto the faith groups) showed substantial stability in their settlement patterns between the 1960s and the 2000s with growth concentrated in and at the edges of existing areas. (Rees and Phillips in Ratcliffe, 1996).

This chapter of the report is concerned with the ethno-religious communities within urban areas and it reviews research that is related to the ODPM Strategic Priority of tackling disadvantage by reviving the most deprived neighbourhoods, reducing social exclusion and supporting society’s most vulnerable groups. It also touches on issues of sustainable communities, urban regeneration, vulnerable groups and diversity.

The communities with which it is concerned are located mainly in the textile towns of the North West and West Yorkshire and the industrial centres of the Midlands, all of which have experienced a long period of industrial decline, and London. In all these locations, sections of the faith communities are concentrated in areas of multiple deprivation. There is however an ordering of the faith communities in which the Hindus have generally better conditions than the Sikhs who have better conditions than the Muslims.

2.3 The concentration of Hindu, Sikh and Muslim communities in areas of multiple deprivation

The geographical concentration of religious groups into deprived or prosperous neighbourhoods can be analysed through comparing the percentage of the population of each group living in neighbourhoods (Super Output Areas) classified into 10 deprivation categories based on their score on the ODPM Index of Multiple Deprivation (Figure 2.1). For the population as a whole, each of these categories contains a tenth of all households. The extent to which any religion differs from the pattern of the total population (on the left of the diagram) indicates whether it tends to be concentrated in deprived (towards the left) or prosperous (toward the right) neighbourhoods. The most striking feature of the diagram is the Muslim distribution; 33 per cent of the Muslim population is located in the 10 per cent most deprived neighbourhoods. Sikhs and Hindus also have a higher concentration of their populations in the less favourable areas, but are under-represented in the least favourable decile, and are over-represented in the second, third, fourth and fifth worst deciles.

Because of the geographical concentration of deprived people, focusing policies aimed at tackling social exclusion on particular areas has the additional potential benefit of improving neighbourhoods by reducing local concentrations of social problems. However, the geographical concentration of minority groups in deprived areas can lead to the perception that ethnic populations were getting more favourable treatment than were white people as in Bradford Oldham and Burnley (Home Office, 2001b).
The Cantle Report (Home Office, 2001b) produced a picture of parallel lives. The impression given was that communities had no overlap and were totally segregated by race. The desired outcome of social cohesion objectives is the avoidance of social and economic exclusion of faith communities from the wider British society. Much discourse on social and community cohesion (eg Home Office, 2001b) envisages ethnically-mixed housing and schools. It envisages community facilities for non-English speakers to interact with English speakers, creating places for people of all genders to meet those of other faiths. It suggests, perhaps, promoting the opening of mosques, gurdwaras, mandirs, churches and chapels to meetings with members of different faiths. It suggests an emphasis on improving facilities used by all rather than targeting benefits at groups defined by ethno-religious communities. It envisages the elimination of ‘no-go’ areas for any ethnic group and the gradual dissolution of housing areas dominated by a particular group. However, residential mixing may be seen as destabilising by some faith communities.

2.4 Regional variations in housing deprivation

The pattern of housing deprivation by religion as measured by the 2001 Census of Population is summarised in Figure 2.2. While 15 per cent of all households in England experience housing deprivation (defined as fewer rooms than household members), 40 per cent of the Muslim population, 25 per cent of the Hindu and 22 per cent of Sikh people live in conditions of housing deprivation.

The regional pattern of housing deprivation by religion is presented in Table 2.1 (in which regions are ranked in increasing order of total population). London has the highest degree of housing deprivation, not only nationally but for most religions also. The exception to this rule is the Muslim population whose highest degree of housing deprivation (48 per cent of households) occurs in Yorkshire and Humberside. The lowest region for Muslim housing deprivation is in the East Midlands (28.5 per cent), where it is possibly the presence of East African Muslims that makes the difference. Hindus and Sikhs in Yorkshire and Humberside have half the percentage of housing deprivation of the Muslims (24 and 25 per cent respectively). The lower degree of Muslim deprivation in London (albeit still at a high rate – 45 per cent) may be due to the much more ethnically mixed Muslim population there. Table 2.2 demonstrates that Muslim households are less likely than Hindu or Sikh households to live in detached or semi-detached housing and are more likely to live in terraced housing and flats, resulting from their relative concentration in deprived older inner city areas.

2.5 Ethno-religious concentration and social cohesion

People from emerging faith communities live in a great range of residential environments from detached houses in leafy Harrow in outer London, through semi detached suburban living, to inner city Victorian terraces in Sparkbrook, and back-to-backs in Manningham, to low and high rise flatted homes in Hackney (Peach, 1996b). However, there is a broad correlation between ethno-religious communities and types of location. Hindu people tend to occupy the more affluent locations, Sikhs are more likely to live in middle class areas and many Muslims occupy poorer housing, with a higher percentage in social housing than is the case for Hindus or Sikhs. Sikhs are more likely to live in detached and semi-detached housing than Hindu people.
There is a diversity of experience within South Asian groups as well as between them. Importantly, however, there is evidence from Phillips’ research in Leeds and Bradford (Box 1), that all ethnic groups are making progress in terms of access to better living standards and neighbourhood amenities in both Bradford and Leeds. (Phillips in Harrison and Phillips (2003, 41). However, the hierarchic ranking of Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims in terms of regional concentrations, operates also within the urban level in Bradford and Leeds (Phillips in Harrison and Phillips (2003, 41).

The South Asian populations map sufficiently well onto the religious groups to allow us to suggest that the South Asian Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were following a pluralist rather than an assimilationist pattern. This is to say that their residential patterns will allow them to create the critical mass necessary to maintain their institutional completeness, religious, social and cultural values rather than being absorbed into the wider society through dispersal.

Peach (1996a) showed that in London, while the Caribbean population was showing an inverse relationship between areas of concentration and degrees of increase (loss in areas of heavy concentration and growth in areas of low Caribbean numbers) between 1981 and 1991, the Indian, Pakistani and (above all) Bangladeshi ethnic groups grew fastest in the areas of greatest concentration11. Indians, particularly Hindu groups, were following the earlier Jewish trajectories of moving to Outer London (Newman, 1985; Waterman and Kosmin, 1987; Vincent and Warf, 2002) regrouping in clustered distributions with institutional completeness. Phillips (in Harrison and Phillips 2003, 41, Housing and Black and minority ethnic communities. Review of the evidence base report for the ODPM) showed that in Leeds and Bradford, while some outward movement from the inner city was taking place there was clear evidence of re-clustering within the middle ring and suburbs along the lines of religion.

---

**BOX 1: Summary of Findings: Phillips (2003)**

Religious groups living in Bradford were classified by ‘type of area’ of residence using GB Profiler data. This is a classification system that takes into account a range of variables including social class, housing type, neighbourhood characteristics and the lifestyle of local residents. The ‘status’ of areas associated with minority ethnic segregation was thus revealed. The analysis indicated that:

- More than 80 per cent of Muslims (mainly Pakistanis/Kashmiris and Bangladeshis) were living in areas classified as ‘struggling’ in 2000. These were typically inner city areas.
- Sikhs and Hindus were doing better than Muslims, although 45-50 per cent were living in ‘struggling’ areas.
- All groups were present in smaller numbers in the higher status residential areas of Bradford. For example, over a third of Sikhs (35 per cent) and a quarter of Hindus (28 per cent) were living in reasonably well off suburban areas. 10 per cent of Muslims were also present in these types of neighbourhoods. (Phillips in Harrison and Phillips (2003, 41)).

---

11 No more recent analysis is yet available.
Phillips has shown that while the local-scale geographies of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs were broadly overlapping, there was clear evidence of segregation between these religious groups at the local scale. There was also a separation of Bangladeshi and Pakistani Muslims' residence, which is reinforced by the use of separate mosques, mainly along ethnic lines but sectarian difference also plays a part. (Phillips in Harrison and Phillips (2003, 41)). Avoidance plays a significant role in the control of ethno-religious distributions.

“The South Asian populations of Leeds and Bradford are relatively absent from certain areas of these cities, and they are particularly poorly represented in the outer areas of social housing. This is partly a function of social class, a preference for ownership, and past discrimination, which has steered South Asians into particular areas of the city. The pattern is also actively sustained by avoidance. Some larger council estates are feared because of the crime, drugs and youth gangs, while other areas are simply seen as ‘white territory’ to be avoided”.

(Harrison and Phillips, 2003, 41)

Several factors are at work in this pattern: white social exclusion of ethno-religious minorities, self clustering and avoidance of other Asian groups (even those of the same religion). At the regional level and at the micro level the grass-roots pattern is one of ethno-religious completeness rather than ethno-religious mixing. This is not necessarily a conscious attempt at ethnic segregation but the outcome of chain migration and desire to keep family close. But there is some evidence of change. Simpson (2004) has argued that there is no “self-segregation” of Asian people in Bradford, because Asian people have been moving outwards into the suburbs of the city.

### 2.6 How concentrated?

If some of the largest or densest areas of ethno-religious concentration in England are examined, the picture is significantly different from that in the US. The highest percentage of Muslims in a Bradford ward in 2001 was 64 per cent in Toller ward; 48 per cent of Bradford Muslims lived in wards that were between 50 and 64 per cent. In Oldham the highest percentage that Muslims formed of a ward was 53 per cent and just over half of Oldham’s Muslims were living in the two wards that were between 50 and 53 per cent. In London, the highest percentage that Muslims formed on any ward was 62 per cent in Spitalfields and Banglatown. There were only three wards in which Muslims formed over half of the population and only 3 per cent of London’s Muslims lived in these wards. There were only three wards out of 633 in London in which there were no Muslims living.

In Leicester, the highest percentage that Hindus formed of a ward’s population was 66 per cent (in Belgrave); 31 per cent of Hindus lived in wards that were over 50 per cent Hindu. There were no wards in London in 2001 in which Hindus formed a majority of the population (43 per cent was the highest in Kenton East). There were only three wards in which there were no Hindus.

There were no wards in London in which Sikhs formed the majority of the population (40 per cent was the highest in Southall Green) and only two wards in which there were no Sikhs present. In Birmingham, the highest percentage that Sikhs formed of a single ward was 24 per cent in Sandwell. Sikhs were present in all Birmingham wards.
However, concentrations up to two-thirds of a ward exist and in several towns and cities. A slight majority or just below a majority of Muslims in Oldham and Bradford live in areas where they form over half of the ward populations. Nevertheless all Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims in England are currently living in wards with mixed populations. They do not live in religiously exclusive wards. However, with higher than average birth-rates and elderly white residents forming part of the mixed population in such wards, the potential for polarisation exists.

It is useful to decouple the concerns over concentration from those of deprivation. The Jewish and the Hindu populations, for example, have concentrations in areas of affluence (see figure 2.1). In London, the highest degree of segregation of minority religious communities relate to Sikhs and Jews. Measured by the index of dissimilarity, Sikhs and Jews have IDs of 61 and 60 respectively at ward level, at the high range of the index of dissimilarity. However, these concentrations are not in areas of deprivation, nor do they form high proportions of the ward populations. The highest ward concentration of the Jewish population in London is found at 37 per cent in an area in North London. On the other hand, Bangladeshi Muslims in Spitalfields and Pakistani Muslims in Toller and University wards in Bradford are concerning because these are areas of multiple deprivation.

So far we have examined concentrations at the ward level, however at the micro level of streets, very high concentrations become apparent in some towns. Deborah Phillips’ survey of urban ethnicity for the ODPM, found:

“High levels of South Asian segregation are evident at ward level in both cities, but a much clearer pattern of settlement emerged from a small-scale analysis at the level of the enumeration district (ED) or postcode sector. This revealed intense segregation in very localised areas, but also, contrary to the popular image, a considerable degree of ‘racial’ mixing across the core ethnic areas”.

(in Harrison and Phillips, 2003, 40-41)

2.7 The micro-geography of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus

One of the methods of assessing the degree of social cohesion and interaction of social, ethnic or religious groups is through measurement of the degree of residential mixing of the populations. Unusually in the social sciences, there is a long and cumulative literature using this method. The theory is that the more segregated a group, the less assimilated or the less the interaction between it and the group from which it is segregated: high residential mix implies high interaction; low residential mix, low interaction. The main statistical tool used for such analyses is the Index of Dissimilarity (ID), or else the Index of Segregation (IS). ID and IS have a scale from 0 (no segregation) to 100 (total segregation).

Prior to the publication of the 2001 census, the methodology had been applied in England mainly to minority ethnic groups (Peach 1996b; Rees and Phillips in Ratcliffe, 1996 for example). There had also been an attempt to use it to measure the degree of Jewish concentration in London (see Newman, 1985; Valins, 2003; Waterman and Kosmin, 1987).
The unweighted average IS of the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh populations in 10 large English urban centres in which there were at least 1,000 of the named groups are shown in Table 2.3. Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi indices are given for comparative purposes.

The Muslim IS, at 54, is the highest of the three emergent religions. However, in Oldham, Burnley, Birmingham and Bolton (the first two of which experienced urban disturbances in 2001), very high values of between 60 and 70 are scored. For Sikh people, the average is a moderate 48, but with three centres, London, Leicester and Trafford registering over scores of over 60. Hindu levels of segregation are much lower than for Muslims or Sikhs (an average of 38). The highest value is 54 in Leicester, where there is a large concentration of Hindu people.

It will be noted that the Muslim index of segregation in London was the lowest of all three religious groups. It will be recalled that low segregation is an indicator of high integration. However the reason for the low IS is, paradoxically, the high degree of internal fragmentation within London’s diverse mix of Muslim people.

Table 2.4 shows the high degree of segregation (shaded cells) between Muslims of different ethnicity in London. Bangladeshi Muslims show a high degree of segregation from all other Muslim groups. Indian and Pakistani Muslims have the most similar geographical distributions. Black-African, Black-Caribbean, white and “Other” Muslims also tend to live in similar areas.

Figures 2.2 (Bangladeshi Muslims), 2.3 (Pakistani Muslims) 2.4 (Black Muslims) and 2.5 (White Muslims) depict the geographical patterning of these ethno-religious groups within London. The geographical distribution of Muslims from these ethnic groups is very distinctive. They are similar to those of the ethnic group as a whole, and this shows the very different distributions in which ethnic cohesion is stronger than religious cohesion.

2.8 Ethno-religious resistance to ‘social cohesion’?

The evidence base suggests that emerging faith groups will tend to concentrate geographically. There are a number of reasons for this, common to Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs. First, chain migration from place of origin to place of destination has a huge inertial force. For example, the Hindu population of Outer London is sorted not only by caste but by the part of the Gujarat from which East African Hindus came before they moved to East Africa. Figures 2.6 (Surti Mochis) and 2.7 (Kathiawati Mochis) depict the distribution of people from two castes across London. Mochis are a Hindu leather working caste; Surtis originated in Surat, while Kathiawatis came originally from Kathiawar. Both places are in Gujarat state.

Secondly, the desire to keep newly formed family households close to those of the parents is strong for the faith communities (as it is for white working class families). In traditional South Asian Muslim, Hindu and Sikh households, daughters in law move to the home of her groom’s parents (Ballard, 1990). Thirdly, the tendency to reside close to other members of the faith group is intensified in the case of the Muslim groups because of the requirement in the dominant Sunni tradition to pray five times a day and therefore, if possible, to be close to the mosque. For Sikh people, proximity to the gurdwara is also of immense importance, since the place of worship is an important anchor point for Sikh social life, being not only a place of prayer, but a site of family meeting and a place of communal meals for men, women and children.
Geographical ethno-religious concentrations facilitate the development of institutional completeness in a community. The building of Gurdwaras, mosques and mandirs, the development of specialist shops like halal butchers, or Asian jewellers or fashion stores are all the result of such concentrations. Sellick’s (2004) analysis of *Muslim Housing Needs* points out that most Muslims want to live within easy reach of other family members first and foremost. They also want to be within driving distance of, or have access by public transport to, community amenities. She found that existing Muslim clusters are a valuable resource in sustaining Afghan and Somali asylum seekers, who are among the most vulnerable groups. However, this study also indicates that under the right circumstances (e.g., if a number of households were relocated at the same time), Muslim people are not averse to moving away from traditional areas of settlement to achieve better housing (Sellick, 2004, 33).

**Conclusion**

As far as tackling disadvantage is concerned, the overall picture for Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs is mixed. Hindu people display a high proportion of white collar employment, an above average educational profile, higher than average owner occupation and the majority of their households living in detached or semi-detached housing. They have moderate degrees of residential separation, as measured by the index of dissimilarity. A quarter of Hindu households live in conditions of housing deprivation. Only 7 per cent of the Hindu population is found in the worst decile of housing deprivation areas; 7 per cent of Hindus are found in the most advantaged decile of housing areas.

Sikhs have the highest proportion of owner occupation of the three groups. They have the highest proportion of detached and semi-detached houses of the three groups. They have moderate but higher levels of segregation than Hindus. They are somewhat over-represented in the five lower deciles of multi-deprived housing areas. Sikh educational levels are somewhat below average and their occupational profile is lower than that of the Hindus.

It is harder to draw as meaningful a set of generalisations about the Muslim population than about Sikhs and Hindus. The Muslim population is more of a confederation of ethno-religious components. Data are good on large parts of these ethnic components, such as the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, but poor, so far, on other groups such as Indian Muslims, Afghans, Kurds, Somalis, Bosnians, North Africans and Arabs for example.

While some survey and anthropological evidence suggests that East African Indian Muslims are prospering, evidence is less certain about Gujarati Muslims who originated directly from India. Information on the groups such as the Afghans, Somalis and Bosnians, of whom a large proportion are asylum seekers, suggest that they are in the most vulnerable position. However, taking the Muslim population as a whole, they face some of the most acute conditions of multiple deprivation.

The analysis of this chapter suggests that policies for remedying disadvantage based on areas of multiple deprivation would be more successful than policies based on targeting disadvantaged groups categorised by religion. However, general policies based on general data/knowledge may fall into the trap of continuing social exclusion and disadvantage by not taking into account specific needs and specific characteristics of minority populations.
Appendix 2: Tables and Figures

**Figure 2.1:** Percentage concentrations of Religious groups in deciles of housing conditions, standardised on the total population, ranked from worst to best, England 2001

![Graph showing percentage concentrations of religious groups in housing conditions](image1)

Source: Census of England and Wales 2001 (Crown Copyright)

**Figure 2.2:** Housing Deprivation by Religion, England 2001

![Graph showing housing deprivation by religion](image2)

Source: Census of England and Wales 2001 commissioned table M321. (Crown Copyright)
Table 2.1: Differences In The Degree Of Housing Deprivation By Religion By Region, England 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Not Stated</th>
<th>No Religion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NORTH EAST</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST OF ENGLAND</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAST MIDLANDS</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH EAST</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOUTH WEST</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
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<td>WEST MIDLANDS</td>
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<td>23.9</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>42.6</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH WEST</td>
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<td>15.5</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>48.0</td>
<td>25.3</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>19.8</td>
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<td>LONDON</td>
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<td>21.6</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLAND</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>19.9</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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</table>

Source: Census of England and Wales 2001, commissioned table M321
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dwelling Type</th>
<th>Christian</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Not Stated</th>
<th>No Religion</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detached house</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-detached</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terraced house</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>29.3</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose-built flat</td>
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<td>7.9</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat; maisonette</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flat in commercial building</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.8</td>
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<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A caravan or other</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
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<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of England and Wales 2001, commissioned table M317
Table 2.3: Ward level Indices of Segregation for urban areas with 1,000 or more of named groups 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Urban Areas</th>
<th>Muslim</th>
<th>Hindu</th>
<th>Sikh</th>
<th>Caribbean</th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Pakistani</th>
<th>Bangladeshi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>42.2</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolton</td>
<td>60.2</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>27.6</td>
<td>55.4</td>
<td>57.4</td>
<td>54.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradford</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>42.8</td>
<td>51.1</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnley</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>64.1</td>
<td>79.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirklees</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>37.4</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>63.6</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>47.0</td>
<td>61.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldham</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preston</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trafford</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>60.5</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>62.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unweighted average</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>38.3</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 2.4: Intra Muslim ethnic segregation, London, ward level 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White Muslim</th>
<th>Indian Muslim</th>
<th>Pakistani Muslim</th>
<th>Bangladeshi Muslim</th>
<th>Black Caribbean Muslim</th>
<th>Black African Muslim</th>
<th>Other Ethnic Group Muslim</th>
<th>Other Mixed, Muslim</th>
<th>Other Asian, Muslim</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Muslims</td>
<td>607,140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>White Muslim</td>
<td>116,338</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian Muslim</td>
<td>40,476</td>
<td>53.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani Muslim</td>
<td>130,656</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi Muslim</td>
<td>142,929</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>61.4</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean Muslim</td>
<td>2,735</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African Muslim</td>
<td>73,845</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>54.9</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Ethnic Group Muslim</td>
<td>28,761</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>45.3</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Mixed, Muslim</td>
<td>10,420</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>54.6</td>
<td>55.2</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>46.0</td>
<td>44.7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian, Muslim</td>
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<td>46.1</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on data from Census 2001, London ward tables for ethnicity by religion Table S149. Values above 50 (moderately high) and 60 (high) have been shaded.

Note: to read the degree of segregation of two groups from one another, read the table like a distance chart between a set of towns eg 61.1 per cent of Bangladeshi Muslims would have to change their ward of residence to have the same distribution as White Muslims.
Note: Figures 2.4 and 2.5 map data derived from unpublished research undertaken by Professor Peach.
CHAPTER 3

Faith communities and planning

3.1 Key messages

- The architectural designs of purpose-built premises have also been a common source of contention over the religious buildings of minority groups, with such buildings frequently being characterised as ‘out of keeping’ with existing built environments.

- Whilst the response of planning authorities to the needs of religious minorities appears generally to have been slow, there are some examples of ‘best practice’ that could provide useful guidance to other authorities.

- Planning authorities could be encouraged to be sensitised to the need of religious minority groups to establish religious facilities in neighbourhoods where such groups form a large proportion of the population.

- Planners could be encouraged to work closely with religious organisations, to ensure that their needs for places of worship and other faith-based resources are not being disadvantaged by planning constraints.

- Planners could identify key faith organisations in their locality, and build up a database of contact organisations for consultation on planning policy issues.

- Local planning authorities could also be encouraged to assist religious organisations identify appropriate sites and premises on which to establish religious facilities.

- Most importantly, planning authorities should monitor the ethnicity and religious identity of planning applicants as a matter of priority, to establish whether ethnic and religious minority groups are being unwittingly discriminated against by development control and other planning procedures.
3.2 Introduction

Recent policy statements by the ODPM are indicative of the Government’s commitment to creating sustainable communities, which have been identified as ‘places where people want to live and work, now and in the future’ (ODPM, 2005b). Allowing for differences between neighbourhoods, ODPM characterises sustainable communities as ones that incorporate a number of common, desirable attributes, including affordable housing, good employment opportunities and access to quality services, such as health and education (ODPM, 2005b). Of direct relevance to the present report, ODPM characterises sustainable communities as ones that are socially inclusive, are conducive to equality of opportunity and access to service provisions, and which encourage ‘tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs’ (ODPM, 2005b: 56).

As noted in chapter 2, in neighbourhoods where the density of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh families is high, their communities are underpinned by the religious, cultural and social organisations of their respective faith traditions. Within these neighbourhoods, places of worship and multi-functional community centres often play a key role. Places of worship provide a focus for many community activities beyond prayers and worship, including groups for young children, the elderly, parents, women and others. Many places of worship are therefore also community centres.

The first part of this chapter examines evidence of the ways in which planning impacts upon Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities, focusing in particular on places of worship and religious education. The second part reviews existing policies at the national and local levels, exploring the extent to which planning policy and practice has succeeded in responding to the demands placed upon them by religious diversity. Smaller sections of the chapter briefly consider the related issues of providing for cemeteries, slaughter-houses and faith-based schools.

3.3 Places of worship – the role of urban planning

The impact of urban planning upon religious minorities arises primarily from the operations of the development control system, and the effects of this upon religious buildings. In broad terms, religious groups wishing to establish a designated place of worship have three options.

The first of these is to adapt an existing religious or another building in the same ‘use-class’, thereby obviating the need for additional planning permission (Nye, 1998, 2001). The second is to convert another sort of building, such as a house or commercial site, which may be convenient for reasons of size and location, but which is in a different use-class. The third option is to purpose-build a new place of worship. Each of the latter two scenarios will necessitate the acquisition of planning permission.

The most reliable evidence to date on the distribution of the places of worship of minority faith groups across these building categories stems from a Leverhulme-funded survey of all registered Hindu, Muslim and Sikh places of worship in England and Wales, which was conducted by the School of Geography at Oxford University between 1998 and 2001.¹² This showed that slightly more than 10 percent of such buildings are

¹² The project, ‘Ethnicity and Cultural Landscapes’, was coordinated by Professor Ceri Peach of the University of Oxford and Dr. James Ryan, University of Leicester. Leverhulme Trust reference no. F/773.
conversions of existing religious premises (most commonly the churches and chapels of Nonconformist denominations). However, of the remainder, approximately 14 percent were purpose built premises and approximately 76 percent were conversions from one type of building use to another. As such, approximately 90 percent of these buildings will have had to obtain planning permission.

From sources such as the *British Muslims Monthly Survey*, planning appeal cases, and a growing body of academic studies (see eg Eade, 1996; Edge, 2002; Gale and Naylor, 2002; Gale, 2004a, 2004b and 2005; Nye, 2001; Weller, Feldham and Purdam, 2001), it is increasingly clear that planning processes surrounding the religious buildings of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh groups have frequently been problematic. In part, the planning issues that have tended to arise have altered as these religious groups have become more established, resulting in changes in their building requirements. Thus, early research literature documents conflict that arose over the use of houses as places of worship by Muslim groups in Birmingham in the 1970s, given that this was the predominant means by which Muslims fulfilled their need for religious sites at this time (Hodgins, 1981).

There are cases which show that similar issues have also confronted Hindu and Sikh groups, when they have likewise resorted to the conversion of residential premises (see Cherwell District Council and Vadivale [1991] 6 Planning Appeal Decisions, 433, for Hindus; and *ex parte Sarvan Singh Seera* [1986] 53 Planning & Compensation Reports, 281 (Queen's Bench Division) for Sikhs). The reason for this conflict was that religious activities were frequently perceived, both by local residents and by planners, to threaten the ‘amenity’ of neighbouring properties in residential areas. For this reason, many planning authorities, including Birmingham City Council, adopted policies on places of worship in the 1970s and 1980s, which aimed to control the conversion of houses into religious facilities (examples include the policies of Leicester City Council (1977), Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council (1980) and Wellingborough Council (1979)).

It is important to note, however, that recent research in Birmingham shows that the need for places of worship embedded in residential areas continues to be high, with house-conversions providing a convenient means of fulfilling this need (Gale, 2005). Correspondingly, planning disputes over the conversion of houses is still a source of concern for religious groups, and particularly for Muslims.

Over the past two decades, as religious minority groups have grown in size and become better resourced, a demand has emerged for large, purpose-built premises, giving rise to new planning issues, in particular, over architectural design and location. This has been the case where planning authorities have either sought to maintain the existing aesthetics of a given built environment, or have mediated the reactions of local residents to the proposed styles of religious buildings (Gale, 2004b). Either way, the result has often been to represent such buildings as antagonistic to existing urban landscapes. One early example is the case of ‘Tower Hamlets London Borough Council and Esha’ Atul Islam’ (1993) 9 Planning Appeal Decisions, 247-51, in which a proposal for a mosque that drew upon Islamic architectural antecedents was rejected by the local planning authority on the grounds that it would be ‘out of character’, ‘unsympathetic’

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13 The *British Muslims Monthly Survey* is a digest of local and national media coverage of a variety issues confronting British Muslims, including the planning and construction of mosques and madrasas, access to cemetery space and experiences of religious and racial discrimination. It is published by the Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, based at the University of Birmingham.
and ‘not in keeping with the surrounding buildings’, which reflected inner London’s ‘traditional architectural heritage’. Likewise, as recently as April 2005, plans for a major new mosque in Dudley were put on hold due to heavy public opposition to the building’s size, style and prominence. Specifically, local residents argued that the minaret was too high, and that the building was architecturally ‘out of place’ in the context of Dudley’s ‘ancient’ townscape.\(^\text{14}\)

One consequence of this form of contestation has been the displacement of such buildings from residential areas into mixed-use zones, including industrial or commercial districts. The most famous exemplar of this pattern is the previously noted Swaminarayan Mandir which, despite its aesthetic function as an ‘exotic’ representation of Indian architecture, now stands near an Ikea warehouse in Neasden, a short distance from the North Circular, having previously been refused planning permission in suburban Harrow (see ‘Brent London Borough Council and Swaminarayan Hindu Mission [1987] 2 Planning Appeal Decisions, 327-31).

There is evidence that a number of other planning issues, aside from ones directly related to building type or size, have also arisen in relation to the places of worship of minority religious communities. Some of these issues have encroached upon the religious customs of minority groups, disrupting the practices associated with places of worship when these have again been perceived to threaten neighbourhood ‘amenity’. One example of this is the use of conditions when granting planning consent, to restrict the hours during which a religious building can be used.

For example, in 1997, a Council in Lincolnshire imposed a condition on a mosque that was housed in a former Baptist church, restricting its hours of use to between nine o’clock in the morning and nine o’clock at night. This was justified on the grounds that to use the site outside of these hours would ‘unacceptably harm the general living conditions of neighbouring residents, on account of noise and disturbance’ (Planning Appeal Decisions, 13 (1998) p769). However, this condition prevented the use of the mosque for the first and the fifth of the five daily prayers (\(\text{sal} \_t \text{al-Fajr} \) and \(\text{sal} \_t \text{al-’Ish’} \)). As such, local planners had interpreted legislation in a way that implied a hierarchical ordering of the claims of different local groups, with the interests of Non-Muslim residents prevailing over the Muslim group’s religious obligations. The Muslims appealed in this case, and the inspector overturned the decision of the Council, on the grounds that this restriction had prevented the observance of the early and late prayers.

A further example is the use of conditions to prevent broadcasts of the Muslim call to prayer (\(\text{azan} \)) from the minarets of purpose built mosques. In Birmingham during the early to mid 1980s, an extensive planning case ensued from the City Council’s decision to prevent the broadcasting of the azan from the Birmingham Central Mosque. The case took four years to come to a conclusion, on account of the extent of public opposition. Following a trial period and public consultation exercise, the condition was partially relaxed, allowing the azan to be broadcast at the times of the midday (\(\text{sal} \_t \text{al-zuhr} \)), afternoon (\(\text{sal} \_t \text{al-’asr} \)) and Friday (\(\text{jum’} \)) prayers (Gale, 2005). However, a recent case involving a mosque in Blackburn confirms that the issue of broadcasting the azan in public space continues to be a planning concern that may need further guidance (\(\text{Guardian}, 24 \text{ August 2004} \)).

\(^{14}\) News reports were placed on the website of This is the Black Country between February and April 2005: \url{www.thisistheblackcountry.co.uk/the_black_country/archive/2005/03/11/stourb_news_letters18ZM.html}
3.4 National level guidance

To date, there have been a variety of forms of national level planning guidance, produced both by central government and the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), the planners' professional body, giving direction to local planning authorities on how to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Historically, most of the planning issues with direct relevance to the religious practices and identities of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities have been subsumed under the discussion of ‘planning and race’ (RTPI/CRE, 1983) and ‘planning and ethnicity’ (Krishnarayan and Thomas, 1993). There has also been an information leaflet produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) in partnership with the Inner Cities Religious Council (ICRC), which contained a short chapter on planning and religion (LGA, 2002). This gave broad guidance to religious organisations, in terms of the requirements they should expect from the planning system when setting up religious premises, and also to planning authorities, in terms of the need for them to translate technical planning jargon into language that is accessible to non-specialists (LGA, 2002: 21).

The first attempt to implement national level guidance on these issues was the Planning for a Multi-Racial Britain report, produced jointly by the RTPI and Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in 1983. The report made a number of recommendations with reference to places of worship. For instance, it discouraged the rigid application of car-parking standards for all religious and community facilities, stating that 'too often, it is the car-parking issue which prevents a change of use from residential to a place of worship' (RTPI/CRE, 1983: 47). It also noted the incapacity of planning legislation to provide effective guidance for planners when faced with ‘novel’ designs and forms of development, and advised planners to ‘carefully analyse their own stance’ when making decisions which, although apparently ‘professionally objective’, may have ‘particular significance to members of minority communities’ (RTPI/CRE, 1983: 34). Planners were also advised to be ‘scrupulously careful’ in their decision-making practices and that they ‘may like’ to ‘take advice from cultural or architectural sources’ (RTPI/CRE, 1983: 34).

It is now over two decades since this report appeared, yet subsequent reports have shown that many of its central messages, including those relevant to the experiences of religious minorities, have yet to be integrated into planning policy and practice (Krishnarayan and Thomas, 1993; Loftman and Beazley, 1998a and 1998b). Of 111 British planning authorities responding to a survey conducted on behalf of the LGA in 1998, only eight had policies on places of worship, and only one on ‘religious slaughtering/food preparation’ (Loftman and Beazley, 1998b: 21). More recently, in a survey conducted on behalf of the ODPM, it was found that only slightly more than 25 percent of all local planning authorities in England stated that they ‘always’ consulted faith groups when preparing development plans or special planning guidance, whilst 26 percent stated that they ‘never’ did so (ODPM, 2004: 29). Correspondingly, the report found that only 10 planning authorities assessed the impact of development plans upon faith groups, once these plans have been adopted (ODPM, 2004: 25).
3.5 Local planning responses

The research findings summarised above suggest that local planning authorities appear, on the whole, to have been slow to respond to the planning needs of religious minorities. Nevertheless, there are several local planning authorities that have developed a positive set of policy initiatives in response to the needs of religious minorities, and there is a need for their experience to be extended and circulated to other planning authorities that have only relatively recently been confronted with the need to sensitisise their policies and practices to religious group interests. Such an approach to sharing of good practice is a helpful one.

One planning authority that has an extensive history in these matters is Birmingham City Council. The city of Birmingham is the largest planning authority region in Britain, both in terms of geographical area and the size of the population within its area of administration (Cherry, 1994). Moreover, the population of Birmingham reflects considerable cultural and religious diversity, with many of the faith groups now established in the city being of Indian sub-continental heritage. As statistics from the 2001 Census indicate, there are 28,592 Sikhs and 19,358 Hindus of Indian heritage, and 140,033 Muslims, the majority of whom are of either Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage.15

Expressed as proportions of the city’s population, Sikhs in Birmingham constitute 2.9 per cent (compared to 0.6 per cent nationally), Hindus 2.0 per cent (compared to 1.1 per cent nationally), and Muslims 14.3 per cent (compared to 3.0 per cent nationally). Correspondingly, the post-war period in Birmingham has seen a rapid flourishing of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh places of worship within the urban landscape.

Birmingham City Council’s first policy on places of worship was adopted in 1973. Whilst this document signified that the planning authority had begun to recognise the needs of sectors of its increasingly diverse population for religious premises, this policy was ultimately one of restriction, aiming to limit the establishment of places of worship in the residential areas where South Asian groups, in particular, had concentrated. Ultimately, however, following an appeal case in which the prescriptions of the policy were not upheld, the policy was rescinded in favour of one that recognised the right of minority groups – and Muslims in particular – to establish religious and community facilities in residential areas. It also acknowledged the importance of taking into account the local population dynamics in the area surrounding the religious facility, to establish whether or not it would constitute a local resource. This policy, which was originally adopted in 1981, has since been reviewed at regular intervals, and continues to inform development control decisions in relation to religious establishments.

It should be noted, however, that whilst these policy changes certainly succeeded in ameliorating some of the impact of planning on religious minority groups, recent analysis has shown that there continues to be a relatively high rate of refusal for planning applications pertaining to mosques and madrasas in Birmingham (Gale, 2005). Moreover, this high rate of refusal is statistically associated with the attempts of Muslim communities to establish religious premises in residential areas, often through the conversion of residential properties. Further analysis is necessary in other local authority contexts to assess the extent to which this pattern continues to be replicated nationally. Nevertheless, it is clear that for planning controls to constrain the ability of

15 http://www.government-statistics.co.uk/census2001/profiles/00cn.asp
Muslim, or indeed other religious minority groups, to practice their religion in areas of community concentration is unacceptable on its own terms, and goes against the grain of the ODPM’s aim to foster sustainable communities.

By far the most sophisticated attempt to systematise a planning response to the needs of religious groups has been that of Leicester City Council. Leicester’s first policy on places of worship was adopted in 1977, and this marked the first stage in an uneven trajectory towards what has ultimately become a positive relationship between the council and minority religious groups in the city. Ultimately, the first policy built upon the crude assumption that issues arising from the establishment of places of worship would subside once information concerning the requirements of the planning system had been disseminated. Nevertheless, the experience that accrued from it paved the way for the council’s more ‘proactive’ approach in subsequent years (Gale, 1999: 20-27).

Thus, when the council came to revise its places of worship policy in 1987, it eased the stringency of the earlier policy, asserting that it would ‘exercise a presumption in favour of proposed new places of worship’ (Leicester City Council, 1987: 3). This policy is now quite dated and has not since been reviewed. However, this is partly because the prescriptions of the policy were robust and far-reaching, anticipating some of the principal ways in which the planning needs of Leicester’s diverse faith communities would develop in future.

As with its predecessor, the 1987 places of worship policy of Leicester City Council was a response to the level and consistency of demand for religious sites that prevailed at the time of its publication. However, judging from statements made in the policy, the planning authority had begun to recognise that the demand for religious sites was not static but in a process of fairly rapid change, with many minority religious groups moving on from the use of converted houses, through larger conversions of one sort or another, to the establishment of purpose-built premises with elaborate architectural designs. For instance, it was noted in the document that ‘1987 saw the opening of Leicester’s first purpose-built mosque’ and that ‘in time, other religious groups will have the resources to build places of worship’ (Leicester City Council, 1987: 29). Accordingly, whereas the earlier policy had been premised on the assumption that the high level of demand for places of worship was only temporary, the new policy sought to anticipate the likely course this demand was to take in future.

There were three prominent aspects of this new policy that were designed to achieve this, and which can be identified as ‘best practice’. Firstly, all major new housing developments, and some industrial and recreational sites, were to include land allocated for the development of new places of worship. Secondly, all vacant property owned by the City Council (including both land and buildings) which were to be offered for sale would be assessed pre-emptively according to their suitability for housing religious premises. In addition, in instances when such property was deemed appropriate for use by a religious organisation, the City Council would undertake to sell it to the respective group at a rate below the market value. And thirdly, a register was set up ‘of all religious groups approaching the City Council for help’ (Leicester City Council, 1987: 40).

This register was used as the basis on which Council property would be allocated to religious groups, with groups that had been on the list the longest, or whose needs on various other criteria made their case especially compelling, being given priority (See
Gale (1999) for a more detailed examination of this policy, along with case-studies that explore its impact upon specific religious organisations. As it translated into practice, this policy unquestionably had an important impact upon improving Leicester as a decent place to live for religious minority groups: in some instances, the policy has allowed places of worship to develop in areas of the city where they would previously have been opposed; in others, it has eased the ability of religious communities to relocate from one building to another, where expansion in numbers of attendees or other factors have made such a move necessary.

SCHOOLS

Although responsibility for schools does not lie with the ODPM, the place of schools in local communities is directly relevant to questions of the sustainability and cohesion of communities. Indeed, the schooling of students from ethnic and religious minorities has been among the most controversial policy issues for some years.

The number of maintained (ie state funded) schools with a Muslim character in England was four in January 2004. Two of them were primary schools and two were secondary schools. Maintained schools in England with a Sikh character numbered only two: one primary and one secondary. There were no maintained schools with a Hindu character. In addition, the number of independent schools with a religious character (hereafter ‘faith schools’) in England is approximately 300, roughly 100 of which are owned and managed by Muslims.

The volume of research on students at Muslim schools – maintained and independent alike – is considerable (Parker-Jenkins 1995; Kucukcan 1998). The effects of schooling on Muslim students have also been studied in depth (Jacobson 1997, 1998). An even more substantial body of research findings and commentary has grown up around questions about the state’s funding of faith schools (Hewer 2001; Judge 2001; Parker-Jenkins 2002; Jackson 2003; Cairns & Gardner 2004; Parker-Jenkins et al. 2004), the dress code of female Muslim students, the degree to which Muslim schools inculcate ideas of British citizenship in their students and the contribution that the ‘segregation’ of Muslim students makes towards the cohesion – or lack of cohesion – of the neighbourhoods where the schools are located.

In addition, numerous reports into problems arising in areas of dense Muslim residence have made observations about schooling as merely one aspect of the social context (Bradford Race Review 2001; Burnley Borough Council 2001; Oldham Borough Council 2001; Home Office 2001a, 2001b). Finally, a few inquiries have been conducted into the general situation of Muslim students in educational establishments and into parental demand for Muslim schools (Bristol City Council 2004; Oxfordshire County Council 2004; Coles 2004; Halstead 2005).

Nevertheless, there are some features of this literature that limit its potential usefulness in a consideration of the evidence base on Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in relation to the ODPM’s strategic priorities. First, most of the literature is concerned with ‘ethnic’ or ‘racial’ groups rather than with faith communities. It is therefore difficult to know how far the reports bear on questions related to religion. Second, the extent to which the

16 The register was in operation in the late 1990s when the research referred to here was conducted, but has since fallen into disuse.
literature considers the cases of Hindus and Sikhs is small. The focus is overwhelmingly on the education of Muslims. Third – and most relevant for this report – the literature rarely reports on research into the impact of the schooling provided for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs on their respective communities. An exception occurs when discussion focuses on the cohesive or divisive consequences of separating Hindu, Muslim and Sikh students from others. The amount of empirical evidence that is brought to bear on these discussions is, however, small.

CEMETERIES

Attacks on Muslim cemeteries occur all too frequently and have been highlighted by reports on Islamophobia (Runnymede Trust, 1997). The successful negotiation of space set aside in public cemeteries for Muslims receives much less publicity in the mass media. After some conflicts in certain areas, agreements have been reached in many local authorities about the location and character of burial plots for Muslims (Gardner 1998). This marks an important stage in the identification of Muslims with their localities. It also demonstrates that they have acquired a significant stake in the communities where they live without having to compromise their fundamental religious and cultural beliefs.

Through processes of constructive dialogue with Muslim communities in their areas, planning authorities can ensure that provisions have been made for adequate space for Muslim burials. Such allocations could take account not only of the size, but also the demographic profile of local Muslim communities, which can be established through analysis of 2001 census data.

Unlike Muslims, the strong preference of Hindus and Sikhs is for cremation at the earliest opportunity, and this has been accommodated without problem by most local authorities. Two difficulties remain to be resolved in a few places, however (Firth 2000). The first concerns access to crematoria at weekends or on national holidays (especially Christmas and the New Year). The second concerns permission for the eldest son in Hindu families to press the button that ignites the crematorium fire.

HALAL FOOD AND RITUAL SLAUGHTER

According to a Meat & Livestock Commission press release issued in October 2001, Muslims consume a disproportionate amount (20 per cent) of the lamb and mutton products sold in Britain. Their consumption of beef and chicken is also high. The halal food trade is therefore a key component of the businesses and jobs staffed by Muslims – as is the extensive network of restaurants, market stalls and other food outlets that Muslims operate. Their contribution towards the prosperity of neighbourhoods populated by large numbers of Muslims is considerable.
3.6 Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, there is clear evidence that urban planning policies and practices constrain the ability of minority religious groups to develop places of worship and other related religious establishments in areas where there are patterns of community concentration. Such evidence as there is on a national scale suggests that this is an indirect – and therefore unintended – outcome of the efforts of planners to maintain neighbourhood ‘amenity’ through development control, resulting in turn in an emphasis upon restricting the presence of non-residential land-uses in residential districts. However, as recent ODPM policy guidance in this area makes clear, planners need to engage far more extensively with diversity than they have to date if they are to contribute to the overall policy objective of creating sustainable, inclusive communities and neighbourhoods (ODPM, 2004a, 2005b).

Recognising the building requirements of religious minorities is an important way in which planning departments can respond constructively to the demands placed upon them by issues of social and cultural diversity. The extent to which different planning provisions may be required could be established through strong, constructive dialogue with the membership of religious organisations, a suggestion which is consistent with existing ODPM planning guidance pertaining to diversity in the form of the report, *Diversity and Equality in Planning – A Good Practice Guide* (ODPM, 2005b).
CHAPTER 4

Housing

4.1 Key messages

- The evidence base on the quality of housing occupied by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is sparse and uneven, with much greater attention to Muslims than to the other faith communities.

- Muslims in Britain are disproportionately numerous in areas of poor quality housing, although the number of Muslims enjoying good housing conditions is increasing.

- It is not clear whether Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs with unmet housing needs share the same access to relevant information and services as other people and whether any systematic penalties are attached to belonging to a minority religious group.

- Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs who wish to move away from disadvantaged neighbourhoods face a wide range of obstacles, including exclusion and racism that constrain their decisions.

- Further (survey-based) research amongst the members of ethnic and religious minority groups needs to be undertaken to explore ways in which housing design can be tailored most sensitively to meet religious and other cultural needs.

- Research needs to investigate the potential value and issues related to ‘clustered dispersal’ as a means of enabling Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs to live outside disadvantaged neighbourhoods if they wish.

- Shari’a compliant schemes for funding the purchase, repair or improvement of houses are becoming more widely available to Muslims, but the impact of these schemes on housing markets and individuals needs to be investigated.
4.2 Introduction

Extensive reviews of the literature on the housing circumstances of ethnic and religious minorities can be found in, for example, Ratcliffe (1996, 1998), Tomlins (1999), Ratcliffe et al (2001), Harrison (2003) and Harrison with Phillips (2003). However, consideration has only rarely been given to the very small number of people from ethnic minorities who live in rural or small coastal settlements. Nor, until recently, was the extensive literature on minorities and housing identified in terms of their religion or faith. But partly in response to Government schemes for ‘mainstreaming diversity’ and for engaging with faith communities in programmes to renew neighbourhoods, regenerate communities and enhance social cohesion, researchers have begun to investigate housing with reference to religion (Peach 1996b; Sellick 2004).

Related issues concerning the planning policies and procedures that are desirable in a religiously, culturally and ethnically diverse society are also gaining attention (ODPM 2004a). In addition, this relatively new focus for research is partly a response to concerns about housing that have been independently voiced by organisations speaking on behalf of these groups (see, for example, the Muslim Council of Britain). Another boost for research in this area has come from the extensive programmes of empirical investigation and policy analysis concerned with social exclusion and disadvantage (Harrison 1998; Ratcliffe 1998; Power) thereby confirming the ODPM’s recognition that ‘more could be done to integrate housing policy and neighbourhood renewal policy’ (2005b: 38). Finally, outputs from the 2001 UK Census have enabled researchers to analyse the position of groups understood by reference to religion separately from groups understood by reference to ethnicity.

Policies that aim to support sustainable growth, to revive housing markets and to tackle the abandonment of residential property are most likely to be effective if their implementation takes account of relevant differences between communities. Religion, along with other dimensions of diversity such as ethnicity, class, sexuality and disability, can be directly – and indirectly – relevant to the housing needs of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. If the implementation of general policies on housing is to be effective, then, it needs to take account of any factors affecting these communities that might perpetuate exclusion or disadvantage. This chapter identifies the points at which evidence about the housing circumstances of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in England has a bearing on the implementation of ODPM strategic priorities in relation to housing supply and demand.

4.3 Housing and ‘emergent’ faith communities

According to the findings on religion from the UK Census 2001 (Office for National Statistics 2004: 11), Muslim households, containing an average of 3.8 persons, are more likely than those of any other faith community to rent accommodation from councils or housing associations (28 per cent), to be living in private rented accommodation (24 per cent), to experience overcrowding (32 per cent) and to lack central heating (12 per cent). They are also the least likely to be homeowners (52 per cent) compared to the

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17 For example, the priorities of the ODPM’s ‘Race Equality Scheme 2003 – 2005’ include to ‘develop a strategy to help tackle under representation on the boards of our public bodies and to mainstream diversity in our public appointment procedures’. Online at:
national average of 69 per cent. This evidence suggests that Muslims may be disproportionately at risk of housing exclusion.

At the same time, as explained in the Introduction to this report, it needs to be noted that aggregate percentage figures for Muslims in England can conceal important differences. When ethnicity and nationality are taken into account, some sharp differences with regard to housing appear among Muslims from different backgrounds and which are, in turn, related to differing patterns of educational qualifications, unemployment, and also unavailability for work on the part of Muslim women.

Thus the proportion of homeowners is particularly low among Bangladeshis but much higher among Pakistanis18. Moreover, research in Scotland describes some South Asian owner-occupiers as ‘reluctant home owners’ in the sense that ‘they have been forced to buy in the face of constraints on access to alternatives’ and that ‘They are most likely to be owner-occupiers of poorer quality housing, which may lack amenity and be over crowded’ (Bowes & Dar 2000: 8,9). This is reflected in the finding that two-thirds of Muslim respondents in Anwar and Bakhsh’s (2003) study of British Muslims and state policies reported that ‘housing was an area of serious concern’ to them. (Box 2).

**Box 2**

Focus group research conducted by the North London Muslim Housing Association, a black and minority ethnic housing association, found in 2004 that the main problems facing Muslims living in social rented accommodation in Kensington and Chelsea included overcrowding, lack of sufficient space for gender segregation, lack of access to gardens, and a reluctance to take out interest-bearing mortgages in order to become home owners. The Association campaigns for a better representation of Muslims on the staff of local authorities and housing associations and for a stronger involvement of Muslims in neighbourhood renewal schemes.

The housing situation of Sikhs, who have an average household size of 3.6 persons, is considerably better than for Muslims. Sikhs are more likely than members of any other religious group in Britain to own their own homes (82 per cent), in many cases by buying them with mortgages or loans, although Jews (40 per cent) and Christians (32 per cent) are more likely to own their homes outright. Sikhs are also among the least likely to be social renters (8 per cent) or to lack central heating (5 per cent). Hindus, with an average household size of 3.2 persons, are among the most likely to be homeowners (74 per cent) and the least likely to be social renters (8 per cent) or to lack central heating (4 per cent). The differences between the housing situations of faith communities are related in complex ways to their respective age profiles (Fig 1.5a, 1.5b, 1.5c, 1.5d), rates of economic activity (Figs 1.6, 1.7, 1.8), educational qualifications (Fig 1.11) and family size (Fig 1.12).

The differences in housing circumstances within and between Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs need to be more clearly highlighted than is possible when the category of ‘Asian’

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18 Analysis of the 2001 Census 3 per cent Individual Sample of Anonymised Records reveals that among Muslim households 69 per cent of Indian and 68 per cent of Pakistani households are owner-occupied, compared with 37 per cent of Bangladeshis and 17 per cent of Black-African households. 57 per cent of Black-African and 49 per cent of Bangladeshi households are social renters and 26 per cent of Black-African households rent privately.
is used as a proxy. In fact, the English House Condition Survey (ODPM 2001) does not distinguish between respondents who are Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs,\(^{19}\) but it is reasonable to assume that the category of ‘Asian’ includes most of them. It shows that Asian households in the survey are more likely than ‘white’, ‘black’ and ‘other’ households to be ‘non-decent’ (44.5 per cent), to fail the ‘thermal comfort’ test (32.7 per cent) and to fail the ‘fitness’ test (9.2 per cent). Furthermore, the surveyed Asian households have, on average, less floor space than the other categories for each person. Indeed, Pakistani and Bangladeshi households – the vast majority of which are Muslim – have an average of 22m\(^2\) per person, whereas Indian households have 35 m\(^2\) and white households have 45m\(^2\). The survey reports that Pakistani and Bangladeshi households are more likely than other ethnic groups to have an insufficient number of bedrooms to meet their needs (around a quarter of such households being below the bedroom standard). More than half of Pakistani and Bangladeshi households comprise five people or more. The dwellings required to meet the needs of many of these households either do not exist in sufficient numbers or are not affordable (ODPM 2001: 32).

Evidence from the 2001 Census and the English House Condition survey (ODPM 2001) indicates that the quality of housing occupied by Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is varied. It also shows that Muslims and – to a lesser degree – Hindus and Sikhs are disproportionately likely to occupy sub-standard housing and to have unmet needs for appropriate accommodation.

4.4 ‘Bounded choices’

As with other topics, the knowledge base on Muslims in relation to housing is much greater than it is on Hindus and Sikhs in Britain. This may be partly to do with Muslims’ generally higher levels of material disadvantage and their numerical superiority but it could also reflect the stronger tendency for Muslims to settle in relatively large numbers in neighbourhoods where access to mosques and close kin is easy. This puts pressure on local stocks of rented and privately owned housing, as noted by the Bradford Race Review’s (2001: 10) report of the inquiry into race relations in Bradford. It reported that many Muslims preferred to live in neighbourhoods demarcated by ethnicity and Islam.

This view of residentially self-segregated communities is not, however, shared by all observers. Harrison with Phillips (2003: 47) – along with, for example, Phillips (1998); Tomlins (1999); Simpson (2004); Robinson (2002, 2004) – argue that this preference may be a response to ‘the perceived hostility and exclusion of the wider society’: not simply a free, religiously-informed choice. They therefore advocate the notion of ‘bounded choice’ as a way of conceptualising the decision-making processes that have resulted in a pattern of separate housing for many Muslims. The practice of ‘racial steering’ by estate agents, for example, is a practice that limits the choices available to ethnic minority householders (Phillips 1998: 1696; Power 2001: 82; Phillips & Ratcliffe 2002; Harrison with Phillips 2003: 45; CCHR 2003: 21; Munro et al. 2005: 53; CSR Partnership 2005: 21).

\(^{19}\) In part, this is because the cell sizes would be too small if the ‘Asian’ category were disaggregated into Hindu, Muslim and Sikh categories (and in the absence of booster samples).
Summarising the findings emerging from their research on South Asian housing in Leeds and Bradford,20 Harrison with Phillips (2003: 40-44) note that, between 1991 and 2000, Asian households not only continued to cluster in areas where they had clustered in the past but also tended to become larger and more densely concentrated than previously. This was partly because white households continued to move out of these areas. Thus:

“The geographies of Muslim, Sikh and Hindu residence [in Bradford] are broadly overlapping, but distinctive... There was clear evidence of segregation between these religious groups at the local scale. There is also a separation of Bangladeshi and Pakistani areas of residence, which is reinforced by the use of separate mosques.”


There was also evidence from an analysis of names in the electoral register that, while 35 per cent of Sikhs and 28 per cent of Hindus were living in higher status neighbourhoods in Bradford, only 10 per cent of Muslims had left the poorer areas of the city where owner occupied accommodation tends to predominate but where the practice of renting it to relatives is widespread (Harrison with Phillips 2003: 41). In fact, ‘More than 80 per cent of Muslims (mainly Pakistanis/Kashmiris and Bangladeshis) were living in areas classified as “struggling” in 2000’ (Harrison with Phillips 2003: 41). The English House Condition Survey (DoE 1993) reported that 20 per cent of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis lived in the ‘worst’ housing in England; and the findings of the survey eight years later (ODPM 2001) showed no sign of significant improvement. Sellick’s (2004) study of housing for Muslims broadly confirms this pattern.

On the other hand, the presence of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities in areas of industrial decline and dereliction has at least helped to prevent the housing stock from becoming uninhabitable or remaining vacant for long periods of time (Peach 2005 personal communication; Cameron & Field 2000). In spite of the problems associated with run-down housing, however, Harrison with Phillips (2003: 45) note ‘the greater locational inertia of the Pakistani/Bangladeshi groups’. They also claim that Muslim women have a much more restricted perception of neighbourhood than do Muslim men in Leeds and Bradford. Nevertheless, this perception owes much to realistic fears for their safety in neighbourhoods where Muslims are relatively few in number. In the words of an expert on ‘race’ and housing consulted as part of this review, ‘Muslims don’t usually choose to segregate themselves these days. They feel that segregation is forced on them’.

The evidence reviewed by Harrison with Phillips (2003: 46) indicates that racist harassment may be a particular problem for Asian renters of social housing if they have to live outside the neighbourhoods where they can count on support and access to communal facilities (see also Modood et al. 1997). The quality of social housing may be better than that of much rented accommodation in the private sector, but Asian renters of social housing may experience isolation and vulnerability if they move to better quality housing in areas where they nevertheless form a small minority (Ratcliffe et al. 2001: 29, 32). Unless housing associations and local authority housing departments take firm action against the perpetrators of racist harassment, the rate at which Asian residents choose to move out of their often unsatisfactory accommodation seems likely

20 This project tried to distinguish between the members of different South Asian faith communities by analysing electoral registers on the basis of family names. Finer analysis was conducted at ward level on the basis of data for enumeration districts or postcode sectors.
to remain low. This has not deterred some local authorities, such as Birmingham, from trying to develop social housing estates at a distance from the city centre, with the consequent risk of contributing to the isolation of minorities (Harrison with Phillips 2003: 73).

A further reason why many Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs may not perceive social housing as attractive is that many of the residential units on offer fail to satisfy their requirements. For example, Muslim households – especially multi-generational ones – tend to be larger than the average for Britain, so standard-sized council and housing association accommodation is often too small. In fact, Karn et al. (1999) questioned whether the supply of larger council houses was adequate to meet the needs of Muslims in many places (see also Ratcliffe et al. 2001: 29-30; CSR Partnership 2005: 30). According to the Muslim Council of Britain, ‘Making provision for extended families should not be seen as burdensome. Allowing extended families to live together promotes family stability and social cohesion’.21 It is not yet clear, however, to what extent the changing socio-economic circumstances of successive generations of British Muslims will imply changes in their pattern of extended families.

4.5 Housing design

Increasingly, policy documents and academic studies of the relationship between ethnicity, religion and housing recognise that the religious and cultural practices of ethnic and religious minority groups have important implications for the designs of domestic space (Penoyre and Prasad et al, 1993 and 1998; Mathias, 2001; Harrison with Phillips, 2003; Sellick, 2004). However, the research base on this issue is as yet relatively slight, and worthy of more sustained attention.

The most significant contribution in this area to date is a report published by the Penoyre and Prasad et al entitled Accommodating Diversity – Housing Design in a Multicultural Society, which appeared originally in 1993 and was revised and re-issued in 1998 (Penoyre and Prasad et al, 1998). The report was aimed primarily at professionals involved in housing provision, including registered social landlords, private developers, local authorities and construction contractors, and set out a series of design considerations that could be used as the basis for consultation with client-groups when new housing developments were being proposed.

It is important to note that this report drew extensively upon interviews with the representatives of housing organisations ‘serving’ ethnic minority groups, rather than with the members of ethnic and religious minority groups themselves, and as such, may reflect only an approximation of the housing needs and aspirations of different groups. Nevertheless, it contains important insights and recommendations that ought to be taken into consideration by professionals involved in housing provision.

The report addressed specific issues relevant to the internal design and layout of housing, such as the need to accommodate both ‘large’ households and extended families (which the report is careful to distinguish), which are common amongst Pakistani, Bangladeshi and other Muslim groups (p.14). The report also addressed such practicalities as the provision of generous space for the storage and preparation of food.
The report also outlined a range of design considerations with regard to specifically religious requirements and customs, including the need for the internal arrangements of rooms and stairways that could facilitate – without imposing – the separation of men and women (p.16); the provision of spaces that could be used for the installation of shrines and religious observances (p.20); the provision of toilets and washing facilities that permitted ritual washing (pp.37-9); and a connecting door between living/reception areas and family rooms, to enable the housing of large gatherings on religious ceremonial occasions (p.29).

As well as addressing the internal layout of dwellings, the report contained recommendations on locational issues. Indeed, the report went as far as to suggest that the location of housing ‘will often matter more to tenants or purchasers than how well it is built’ (p.8). The primary considerations here were the positive desire to live in proximity to extended families and wider social networks, ease of access to religious and cultural facilities, and the safety and security that comes from residing in areas of community concentration (p.8). However, rather than assume, on the basis of cultural stereotypes, that these locational issues could be addressed by simply providing areas of extra-large housing, the report encouraged housing providers to gauge precisely how social networks function amongst different ethnic (and religious) groups, and to take account of generational differences (p.8).

Perhaps the most significant feature of the report was its recognition of the need to balance the incorporation of design features that responded to religiously and culturally specific domestic requirements with the need to avoid ‘prescriptive’ housing solutions that negated generational and intra-group differentiations.

“Like the rest of society, all minority ethnic groups are in a process of change, some fundamental and some unpredictable. Second and third generations have needs and aspirations which may be very different from those of the first generation migrants. Furthermore, social and cultural variations within the categories into which minority communities are generally divided may be greater than differences between sections of those communities and white British society.”

(Penoyre and Prasad et al, 1998: 1)

In this way, the report provides sensitive guidance and recommendations for further exploration in given housing scenarios. It effectively avoids collapsing into a ‘tool-kit’ approach based upon reified ethnic and religious categories, which would inhibit rather than enhance the ability of housing providers to respond to the issues of social and cultural diversity and changing population dynamics.

4.6 Access, information and housing policy development

Alongside design issues, there are also questions concerning the access of minority groups to information about housing possibilities. Thus the Muslim Council of Britain recommends more training and capacity building for Muslim organisations campaigning for better access to appropriate housing. This complements the conclusion of the survey of Asians living in Bradford (Ratcliffe et al 2001: 78) that a key factor limiting their access to social housing ‘appeared to be lack of knowledge: lack of knowledge
of who the main housing providers are, what housing is available, and how one goes about acquiring it. In addition, survey respondents and participants in focus groups in Bradford voiced serious concerns about conditions prevailing on council estates. For example, focus groups of ‘Bongladeshis’ were ‘negative about council housing because of the quality and location of the stock and the services that went with it’ (Ratcliffe et al. 2001: 40), while young ‘Pakistani’ men had mostly ‘negative images of council housing’ and ‘a low level of awareness of housing association property’ as well as a reluctance ‘to live in what they perceived to be rough, White areas’ (Ratcliffe et al. 2001: 45). Their attitudes towards housing associations or Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) were ‘slightly more positive’.

Another potential constraint on the opportunity for households in the ‘emergent’ faith communities to benefit on an equal footing with the rest of British households from the Government’s housing policies is highlighted by the report of Munro, Pawson and Monk (2005: 51). They argue, largely on the basis of a review of literature, that the ethnic minority households that are unfairly excluded from social rented housing are, by the same token, excluded from the ‘most advantageous outcomes available’ from Right to Buy schemes because their houses do not tend to be ‘the best houses with the biggest discounts’. There is also uncertainty about whether Large Scale Voluntary Transfers of Local Authority housing stock into Housing Associations and private ownership or schemes to facilitate mobility between social housing in different parts of the country have worked to the equal advantage of White and ethnic minority households. Nor is it known whether ethnic minority owner-occupiers have been able to take full advantage of financial help with grants for improvements or facilities for people with disabilities. In view of these uncertainties, consideration should be given to investigating how far housing policies are achieving their goals in a way that is equitable between groups.

Harrison with Phillips (2003: 81, 79) report that discriminatory practices against Asian clients may still persist among estate agents in Leeds, although in general ‘equal opportunities expectations have become more widely established’ and ‘the cultural sensitivity of [housing-related] services has moved up the agenda’. They also report that, although ‘overt racism has far less purchase in housing practice today’ (2003: 78), RSLs were still not mainstreaming ‘race’ equality issues and that council house allocation procedures remained discriminatory in some places (see also Robinson 2002). Their conclusion is that more research is needed on access to RSLs by specific religious and ethnic groups.

4.7 Change

The 2001 Census results, as well as the findings of research, indicate that the housing situation of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is changing – slowly. There is evidence of some de-concentration in, for example, Bradford, Leeds and North Staffordshire, especially among young adults from Indian backgrounds (Phillips & Ratcliffe 2002; Harrison with Phillips 2003: 39; Tomlins et al. 2001: 8-10, 32; CSR Partnership 2005: 21).

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22 The interview-based survey of 182 South Asian residents and a control group of 27 ‘white’ residents was conducted in seven ‘areas known to differ radically both in ethnic composition and housing quality’ (Ratcliffe et al. 2001: 58). Six were in Bradford and one in Keighley.
At the same time, some Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are already taking advantage of schemes being run in many cities to facilitate ‘block moves’, ‘settlement nodes’ (Phillips & Unsworth 2002: 85), ‘group lettings’ (Robinson 2003: 7), ‘clustered dispersal’, ‘community lettings’ (Pawson & Kintrea 2002) or ‘cluster lettings’ (Power 2001: 89) on the part of groups of families willing to move into housing areas outside their previous neighbourhoods (Phillips & Unsworth 2002). For example, the Bangladeshi-led Surma Housing Co-operative in Rochdale is responsible for a new build scheme of 49 homes located adjacent to a mainly ‘white’ neighbourhood and outside the areas of Rochdale where Muslims have usually lived (Fotheringham & Perry 2003: 11). A survey of the moving intentions of Asian families in Oldham found that “many would be willing to move to another area if a number of Asian families (somewhere between five and twenty) moved with them, so long as provision was also made in the area...for a mosque, Asian shops and schools.” (First Choice Homes Oldham 2004: 7). Moving into new areas in company with other families from the same faith group offers security and support. This was also one of the reasons given by Cameron and Field (2000: 841) for supporting Newcastle City Council’s ‘Going for Growth’ strategy for regenerating the West Gate area by creating mixed tenure neighbourhoods with which Bangladeshi Muslims coming from a nearby neighbourhood would identify themselves and where they would feel secure. Cameron and Field (2000: 841) conceded that ‘there may be unease at the idea of the deliberate creation of ethnic enclaves’, but on balance they considered that the plan to revive an inner city area by attracting a ‘young, growing population’ would contribute ‘at least one building block of the strategy for the future of the area’. In other words, membership of an ethnic or religious minority ‘can be a crucial advantage of which a restructuring strategy could make use’. Ethnic minority RSLs – or, possibly, RSLs for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – are in a potentially strong position to assist these group-level changes. The provision of Housing Plus support services for improving the sustainability of communities where ethnic minority households live as relatively isolated minorities can also assist these changes (Tomlins et al. 2001: 45-7).

Similarly the allocations policies of RSLs can ‘give priority to family connections’ (Munro et al 2005: 50) as a way of fostering the support required to sustain moves by ethnic minority households into housing areas outside their ‘normal’ range. To date, the most radical proposal for ‘clustered dispersal’ concerns the Orthodox Jewish community of Charedim in the North London neighbourhood of Stamford Hill (Guardian, 4 April 2005). Plans to move 300 Charedim families to Shenley in Hertfordshire in 1992 were not successful, but community leaders are in discussions with local and regional authorities about the possibility of creating a new Charedim community, complete with appropriate houses, synagogue and businesses, in the Thames Gateway development or in Milton Keynes. This appears to be in accordance with policies for fostering ‘citizen engagement in the decisions that affect them’ (ODPM 2005b: 18) and with some local authorities’ strategies for renewing neighbourhoods by means of, for example, Quality Parish Schemes, area committees, New Deal for Communities areas and individual ‘community advocates’. It would also be consistent with the principle that:

“Whatever form neighbourhood arrangements take they must be responsive to the needs and diversity of the community and its organisations. Ethnicity, age, disability, and gender differences, and issues of language and faith, can all be relevant to the way in which people need to be engaged with. Neighbourhood engagement will often be the best level at which to reach out to the whole
community, and especially to include the most vulnerable people and groups. Voluntary, community and faith groups can contribute to this, alongside statutory bodies.”

(ODPM 2005c: 15)

Although Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities have a younger age profile than other faith communities (see Table 1.5 and Figures 1.5a, 1.5b, 1.5c and 1.5d) the demand for facilities and services to cater for the needs of the increasing number of elderly people from Asian backgrounds is growing (Atkin & Rollings 1996). It is also clear that Hindu, Muslim and Sikh voluntary organisations are already responding to these emerging needs (Lukka et al. 2003). Some of these needs are all the more pressing because younger relatives in Britain have less time to spend caring for the elderly (Atkin & Rollings 1996; Ahmad & Walker 1997) – and insufficiently large homes in which to deliver care to the ‘frail elderly’ in particular (Karrn et al. 1999).

Generational changes in longevity, child rearing, female employment, geographical mobility and levels of prosperity all help to swell the demand for culturally and religiously appropriate services for elderly Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims – just as for other sections of British society. Moreover, Wray (2003) has argued that gerontological research has tended to overlook or to render invisible the cultural differences between elderly people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

At the same time, surveys (Ratcliffe et al. 2001; Harrison with Phillips 2003; Sellick 2004; CSR Partnership 2005; Robinson et al. 2005) consistently show that a growing proportion of young adults in the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities are choosing to set up single person and small family households outside the neighbourhoods where they grew up. However, they also prefer to remain close enough to these neighbourhoods to be able to return frequently for family, communal or religious purposes.

### 4.8 Homelessness

‘Homelessness is another extreme housing problem and again, ethnic minority households suffer this disproportionately’ (Munro et al. 2005: 46. See also Chahal 1998). Nevertheless, evidence about homelessness among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in particular is sparse, but a leading activist in Muslim organisations dealing with problems facing young people reported that a growing number of young Muslim men were either sleeping rough or were dependent on friends and relatives for temporary shelter. Research by Julienne (1998) also found that young men from Asian backgrounds – as well as African Caribbean men – were over-represented in groups vulnerable to homelessness such as refugees and released prisoners. The number of Muslims serving prison sentences in England and Wales has been increasing steadily since the early 1990s (Beckford & Gilliat 1998; Guessous et al. 2000; Beckford 2004). On their release from prison they are at risk of being rejected by their families for having brought shame on them. An expert whom we consulted about criminal justice questions affecting Muslim communities considered that released prisoners were at serious risk of homelessness and, therefore, of re-offending (Social Exclusion Unit 2002). The problem is aggravated by racism and by the inadequate treatment of mental illness (Radia 1996). But, as an expert on housing reminded us, homelessness affects a wide range of people from many different backgrounds (Davies et al. 1996). Some women are forced into homelessness by the threat or the reality of violence and other forms of oppression at the hands of male relatives (Bhopal 1997; Macey 1999; Beckett & Macey 2001).
The problem of homelessness is particularly difficult for lesbian, bisexual or transgender women who identify themselves culturally or religiously as Muslims (Box 3). Since ‘public knowledge of a person’s homosexuality can bring enormous dishonour and shame to [a Muslim] family’ (Safra Project 2003: 19), pressure to conceal the identity of LBT women and gay men (Yip 2004) can be strong.

Some have no alternative but to continue living with disapproving relatives (Kawale 2003). Those Muslim women who do leave their family home can find themselves devoid of support and shelter that, in different circumstances, might be offered by friends or sympathetic relatives. The Safra Project\(^23\) aims to help these women by providing information about organisations that cater for their housing needs.

In other cases, whole families are technically homeless in the sense of having no settled residence in their own name (Pleaf & Quilgars 2003; see also Gaubatz 2001), although they may be ‘concealed’ in large family homes (Ratcliffe 1996: 76-87). According to Klinker & Fitzpatrick (2000), only 11 out of 197 studies of homelessness among single people published between 1990 and 1999 concerned ethnic minorities; even fewer paid explicit attention to the faith-specific aspects of housing issues. Consideration should therefore be given to including faith issues in homelessness research \textit{per se}.

4.9 Disability

Disability is a further dimension of diversity that has implications for housing and for debates about equality of access to information and appropriate services. The 2001 Census showed that, after taking account of the different age structures of the main faith communities in Britain, Muslims had the highest rates of disability.\(^24\) The rate was 24 per cent for Muslim women and 21 per cent for Muslim men. Yet, relatively little research has been done on the relation between disability and the housing circumstances of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. An important exception is Ratcliffe’s (1996: 55) survey of ‘race’ and housing in Bradford, which showed that ‘almost two-thirds of South Asian households contained someone who had problems with steps or stairs’ and that the Pakistani respondents ‘fared worst’ in respect of their physical

\(^{23}\) \url{http://www.safraproject.org/about.htm}

\(^{24}\) The relevant Census question asks ‘Do you have any long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits your activities or the work you can do?’
capacity to perform ‘daily activities’. The incidence of ‘special housing needs’ was highest among Muslim households containing at least one person with disabilities.

Moreover, refugees and asylum seekers – some of whom are Hindu, Muslim or Sikh – who have disabilities suffer from not only multiple but also cumulative disadvantages (Harris 2003). Part of the difficulty in some cases is that health and social services staff tend to assume that Hindu, Muslim and Sikh families prefer to look after their own dependent relatives who need care. This assumption is indeed questionable (Radia 1996; Ahmad & Walker 1997; Chamba et al 1999) but is substantiated by Phillipson et al (1998) and Ratcliffe (1996: 70), although research by Owens & Randhawa (2004) and Katbamna et al. (2004) has found that it is hard to deliver home-based care unless, among other things, the housing is adequate for this purpose. This refers to more than the number of rooms and ease of access to bedrooms and bathrooms. It also means the ready availability of a team of carers. In the words of Katbamna et al. (2004: 399), however, ‘even if the will to provide informal care was there, strict immigration laws, a growing preference for nuclear households, occupational mobility, housing problems, and for many, the fragmentation of family networks’ made it difficult for family members to deliver good care in the community at home.

The widespread assumption that Hindu, Muslim and Sikh families prefer to look after their own members in need of care may have some truth but it is not true for all such families in all circumstances. The findings of Kiran Radia’s (1996) studies of ‘Asian people’ with mental health problems in the London Boroughs of Brent, Harrow and Ealing and in Tower Hamlets showed that the diversity of their ‘cultures, beliefs, religions and traditions’ called in question stereotypes of ‘the Asian family’.

The findings also drew attention to the financial and social factors that prevent some Asian families from providing the care that they would like to offer to their relatives with mental health problems and disabilities (see also Rait & Burns 1997; Tomlins 1999). As a result, the need for culturally and religiously sensitive services in, for example, sheltered housing is no less strong among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs than among the rest of the British population. In any case, ‘The predicted steep growth in the numbers of African Caribbean and Asian older people is not only likely to increase the demand for community care and sheltered housing, but is also likely to alter the ratio of younger to older people and consequently the potential to arrange informal care’ (CCHR 2003: 21).

Finally, it is important to bear in mind the wide range of differences between and among ethnic minority communities in terms of housing needs and circumstances.

“Diversity arises from differences in demographic factors such as age and household type, culture and religion, expectations and aspirations, the period a particular community has lived in this country, current housing situation and socio-economic position.”

(Sellick 2004: 32)

Evidence suggests that a process of differentiation is taking place within all emerging faith communities (Phillips 1998: 1690; Bowes, Dar & Sim 2002: 383). Differences between the quality of housing occupied by Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, for example, are a striking example of diversity among Muslims. Moreover, ‘Pakistanis are differentiated by gender, locality and class, and their ethnicity is as dynamic and variable as other ethnicities’ (Bowes, Dar & Sim 2002: 397). RSLs and companies in the private housing market need to adjust to these differences and to these differential processes of
change – just as they adjust to the different needs and interests of other sections of housing markets. Moreover, the focus has necessarily been on problems and deficiencies in the housing circumstances of minority faith communities because most research is driven by concern with identifying emerging problems and their solutions. Ideally, however, research would also investigate levels of satisfaction with housing, indicators of success in the reduction of problems and of ‘what works’ in practical terms.

For example, a successful outcome has been achieved in negotiations between Muslim groups, financial institutions and the Treasury concerning alternatives to interest-bearing mortgages or loans for house purchase. This is important to those Muslims who regard the avoidance of *riba* (usury) as an Islamic obligation. Although, according to one of the Muslim experts whom we consulted, some *shari’a* legal authorities have determined that Muslims with primary residences in Europe are permitted to avail themselves of interest-bearing loans and mortgages, demand is growing in the UK for the so-called *shari’a*-compliant housing finance schemes on offer from, for example, the Ahli United Bank and the Arab Banking Corporation.²⁵ Both of these banks work co-operatively with mainstream building societies to provide either an *ijara* or a *murahaba* finance scheme. The former involves the purchase of a property by a bank that rents it to the client at an agreed rent for a determinate time. At the end of the rental period, the property reverts to the client. The latter scheme means that a bank purchases a property at an agreed price and then sells it on to the client, who pays for it by instalments, at a higher price. This amounts to a sales transaction.

Both types of Islamic mortgage used to incur a double burden of stamp duty because, in effect, they involved two separate purchases. This burden was lifted, however, in the 2003 budget. More recently, the ODPM issued a consultation document on ‘Non-standard mortgages for purchasing social dwellings’ (ODPM 2005d), and consideration will be given to the Government’s proposal to enable local authorities to make ‘voluntary disposals’ to ‘tenants who have the Right to Buy but feel they are unable to exercise that right in a way that is compatible with their religious beliefs’ (ODPM 2005d: 5).

Nevertheless, there are still two uncertainties. One is about the ‘insurance weighting’ applied to these finance schemes; and the other is whether schemes such as the First Time Buyers Initiative, Homebuy or the Low Cost Home Ownership programme, which were set out in ‘Sustainable communities: home for all’ (ODPM 2005a: 34), are compatible with *shari’a*-compliant financing. Consideration should therefore be given to commissioning research on all aspects of *shari’a* compliant finance in connection with house purchase, improvement and repair – especially in the nine Pathfinder areas of low housing demand (ODPM 2004b), at least five of which contain large numbers of Muslim households.

²⁵ A Datamonitor report on ‘UK Islamic mortgages 2005’ found that ‘Islamic mortgages have grown at an average of 68.1 per cent per year since 2000, in comparison to the total mortgage market’s average growth of 16.2 per cent’. See summary of the report online at: http://www.datamonitor.com/~9fad13c5f2ae4438a6ca9385fa57a2ce/-/industries/research/?pid=BFFS0371&type=Brief.
4.10 Conclusion

The growing evidence base clearly indicates that housing issues continue to be a major concern for many Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as well as for other ethnic minority groups and the white majority. It makes no sense to separate housing issues from wider concerns with social exclusion, community cohesion and neighbourhood regeneration. Although many of the problems associated with housing are a function of factors affecting very many people, it remains the case that Muslims in particular – but also many Hindus and Sikhs – face particular problems that have not been adequately investigated. This does not imply that such research would necessarily ‘blame the victims’ for their problems (Pleace & Quilgars 2003). It means only that attempts should be made to identify the full range of factors that may account for the disadvantages that many Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs experience in regard to housing. Ideally, research would also address the extent to which the ODPM’s housing policies are managing to improve the housing circumstances of people in emergent faith communities and, on the other hand, the extent to which the implementation of these policies places Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs at a systematic disadvantage.

Depending upon the social composition of local populations, consideration should be given to the demands that may be made upon domestic space by different cultural and religious customs and practices in proposals to develop new housing units. Such ethnically and religiously sensitised housing policy should not be prescriptive or culturally essentialist, but should allow the internal arrangements of dwellings to be sufficiently flexible that they can be modified to accommodate the spatial requirements of different ethnic and religious groups.
CHAPTER 5
Regional and local governance and public services

5.1 Key messages

• Local authorities have been applying policies for promoting equal opportunities, anti-racism and diversity to the delivery of their services since the 1970s, but the social profile of local councillors still does not reflect the full diversity of their constituents in all places.

• Although the proportion of the British workforce drawn from ethnic minority communities is higher in the public than in the private sector, it is not clear whether all minorities – including Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – enjoy equal opportunities for employment and seniority in local authorities.

• Various forms of partnership at local and regional levels are central to strategies for improving the delivery of public services, but it is not clear how far they take account of the needs felt by the most disadvantaged members of emergent faith communities.

• The engagement of emergent faith communities in programmes of neighbourhood renewal and social cohesion is widely welcomed, but the factors that might limit their capacity to participate fully need to be taken into consideration.

• Local inter-faith activity can stimulate the contribution of emergent faith communities towards programmes of neighbourhood renewal and social cohesion, but this entails the risk of reducing religious diversity to a lowest common denominator.

• Organisations of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs can serve as useful channels to some of the most hard-to-reach and disadvantaged sections of society, but it will not be possible to assess the impact of ODPM policies on them unless the religious identity of service users is properly monitored.

• It is not easy for minority faith community groups to relate to the bodies concerned with regional governance due to the lack of regional infrastructure among the majority of these groups.

• Nevertheless, work is now ongoing in relation to the regional level ‘mapping’ of faith community organisations, their capacities and involvement in the delivery of services, while inter-faith infrastructures are gradually emerging to relate to governance structures bodies at both local (more strongly) and regional levels (less so).
5.2 Introduction

As part of the trend towards the devolution and decentralisation of powers, local and regional responsibility has increased since 1997 for the design, delivery and assessment of public services shaped by ODPM policies at the English national level. Policies and strategies are in place to ensure that the delivery of services takes proper account of their users’ circumstances. Religion is only one aspect of these circumstances, but research has shown that it is particularly – but not exclusively – salient in the lives of many Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in England (O’Beirne 2004).

Regional governance is also becoming of ever increasing importance both in the context of devolution and decentralisation within the United Kingdom and in the regional approach found within the European Union. Regional level development agencies are an important engine of economic development, while regional Assemblies have a role in planning and in other strategic activities.

From the late 1990s onwards pressure increased on local authorities to ensure that their services delivered not only ‘race’ and ethnic equality but also equality and diversity in ways that took proper account of disability, sexuality, gender and religious belief. The Macpherson report (1999) on the murder of Stephen Lawrence, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) and the Employment Equality Regulations (2003) have all strengthened the need for local authorities to place equality and diversity at the centre of their policies, structures and activities. This clearly applies to the appointment of local authority employees, but the position of elected members is different.

Concern about the low level of diversity among the elected members of local councils is shared by the main political parties, and the evidence base on the representativeness of councillors shows a clear over representation of white men in their late fifties who are either retired or working in white-collar professions (Brown, Jones & Mackay 1999; EO & IDeA 2005; ODPM 2005c). Analysis of the social characteristics of local councillors in terms of ethnicity (Solomos & Back 1995; Morgan 2003), and age and gender (Rao 1998, 2005) has noted the slow pace of change in electing councillors who are more representative of their constituents. Obstacles to the participation in Local Government by women (Newman 2002), lesbians and gay men (Carabine & Monro (2004) and members of ethnic minority groups (Geddes 2001) indicate persistent resistance to increasing the representativeness of local councils (Bochel & Bochel 2000).

In any case, Rao’s (1998: 35) argument is that ‘the traditional value of representativeness has been relegated to the margin’. Adolino (1998) also argues that ethnic minority councillors consider themselves to be primarily representatives of political parties rather than of ethnic groups.

Evidence about the ethnic or religious backgrounds of local councillors is sparse, but the Local Government Census for 2004 (EO & IDeA 2005: 25) shows that ethnic minority councillors in England amounted to only 3.5 per cent of the councillors in the survey (compared with 8.7 per cent of the population of England and Wales). The corresponding figure for 2001 was 2.7 per cent. On the other hand, ethnic minority councillors are over represented in some wards – especially in London – where the

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26 The findings are based on replies received in the Autumn of 2004 from 91 per cent of the 388 local authorities in England and from 53 per cent of individual councillors in office. The results are grossed estimates for all 19,657 councillors or seats.
density of ethnic and religious minorities is high. According to the same survey, councillors with South Asian ethnic backgrounds constituted 2.3 per cent of councillors, whereas 3.9 per cent of the population of England and Wales is from South Asian backgrounds. It is fair to infer that most of the 188 councillors with Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds are Muslims and that at least 10 per cent of the 198 councillors with Indian backgrounds may also be Muslims. In other words, we estimate that about 208 local councillors in England in 2004 were Muslims (1.06 per cent of the total); and approximately 178 others were Hindus or Sikhs (0.9 per cent of the total). No doubt many of the 69 councillors with ‘other Asian backgrounds’ should also be added to the number of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs.

Purdam’s (2000, 2001) research on 160 Muslim local councillors in England – only four of whom were women – showed that there were significant tensions between their roles or identities in relation to local, regional, national and international contexts. This was true even though the councillors mostly represented wards with dense concentrations of Muslim residents in 1996. Several rival organisations of Muslim councillors compete for political influence in Britain and in parts of South Asia, but attempts to create specifically Muslim parties in Britain have rarely succeeded. In fact, it appears that Muslim councillors distance themselves from mosques to some extent and ‘are critical of their effectiveness as bases for community leadership’ (Purdam 2000: 59). The conclusion is that

“Muslim councillors’ identities are not fixed; instead, they have fixed points of orientation anchored in family, movement and settlement. Their identities as British citizens are negotiated and positioned alongside prior affiliations. Their contemporary British identities are plural and defined in relation to residence and their cognitive mapping of the Muslim identity” (Purdam 2000: 61).

The evidence base on elected members of local authorities clearly shows that the number and proportion of ethnic minority councillors have hardly changed since 1997 (EO & IDeA 2005: 4). Although ethnic origin is not a proxy for religion, it is reasonable to infer that the number and proportion of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs within the ethnic minority category of councillors have also seen very little increase. Data on the gender of these councillors – and on the incidence of disabilities among them – are not yet available.

Although the rate of increase in the number of ethnic minority councillors is low, research conducted in twelve local authorities that were involved in work on sexualities and equality between 1990 and 2001 disclosed conflicts between ‘different equalities areas – sexualities, disability, and gender, but especially between race and faith equalities and lesbian and gay equalities’ (Carabine & Monro 2004: 319). Moreover, the conflicts concerned Christians as well as Muslims. This research suggests that local authorities now face the challenge of finding ways to mainstream diversity without giving priority to some claims for equality over others. This is consistent with the observation that ‘there is some basis for regeneration officials’ fears of conflict between secular views of equal opportunities and the traditional values of some faith communities’ (Farnell et al 2003: 36).

Generally, with regard to their employees, local authorities do not undertake faith monitoring. Nevertheless, the GLA began to collect information in 2004 about the faith groups of its employees ‘for business planning purposes’ (Greater London Authority 2005b: 19) in accordance with its comprehensive Faith Equality Action Plan. As this
type of ‘faith monitoring’ is not a legal requirement, it is not known how many local authorities will regard it in the future as a part of their equality and diversity programmes. But the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority (2003: 2) had already noted that the percentages of staff who declared their religion to be Hindu, Muslim or Sikh in 2003 were, respectively, 0.4 per cent, 0.5 per cent and 0.2 per cent. Moreover, the information booklet that described the role of chaplains in the LFEPA at that date still stated that ‘the Chaplain’s stand is unashamedly on the Christian gospel’.

5.3 Religions as part of service delivery partnerships

Relations between faith communities and public bodies at all levels have become more routine since the late 1990s. Partnership between the ODPM and faith communities, including Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, has been clearly evident in the work of the Inner Cities Religious Council since its inception in 1992 and its re-launch as an advisory forum in 1997. It is centrally concerned with the engagement of faith communities in neighbourhood renewal and regeneration as well as in Local Strategic Partnerships and Community Empowerment Networks. Many other policy areas of the ODPM also involve consultation and co-operation with faith communities and, therefore, with a wide range of community and voluntary organisations associated with them. This form of partnership can be particularly helpful in enabling the ODPM to reach some ‘hard to reach’ sections of the emergent faith communities and in enabling them to make their voice heard in Government departments. Research has also identified some problems with partnership between Government and voluntary associations in faith communities.

The most extensive review of relations between faith communities and the Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) (Lukka, Locke & Soteri 2003: 69) concluded not only that ‘the very existence of organised faith and faith-based organisations depends upon ... voluntary action by countless individuals’ but also that faith-based voluntary action can lead to improved relations with other networks in local communities. The range of types of involvement with local communities was found to be wide.

However, the general view was that ‘engagement with the local voluntary sector is not close’ and that ‘the faith-based sector exists in a parallel universe to the mainstream voluntary and community sector’ (p.70-1). The report also raised concerns about the fact that some faith groups can obtain funding to run local welfare services. The concerns centred on the perceived exclusiveness of some faith groups; the ‘fragility of religious pluralism in the UK’; and the perception that sex roles were so sharply divided in some faith groups that it was difficult to imagine how they could contribute towards ‘bridging social capital’. Finally, the report noted that information about funding opportunities for voluntary action undertaken by faith groups was unevenly distributed and that many were ‘out of the loop’ (p.73).

The potential problems of using faith groups to deliver statutory services – or at least to accept funding from statutory bodies – are rehearsed in Greg Smith’s research (2002a, 2002b, 2004). They centre on the capacity of faith groups to deliver ‘best value’, to be fully accountable, to interface with a wide variety of agencies of the state, to implement equal opportunities and diversity policies, and to monitor their performance adequately.
Similarly, the investigation conducted by Farnell et al (2003) into the engagement of faith communities in urban regeneration unearthed wide differences between faith groups in terms of their resources, their willingness and their capacity to engage in regeneration activities. Many of their contributions are ‘informal, frequently small-scale, self-funded, and with an emphasis on long-term process rather than short-term targets’ (p.41), but their distinctive strength lay in ‘careful listening to socially excluded people’ and in providing a grassroots voice. In addition, partnership with faith groups required that official agencies had to adjust some of their common assumptions and procedures, improving their ‘religious literacy’ in the process.

The Farnell (2003: 44) investigation, conducted mainly in Bradford, Coventry, Newham and Sheffield, also showed that ‘it would be counterproductive to make inter-faith collaboration a condition of funding’. This is an important finding in relation to a possibly perceived tendency of Government to foreground the role of national, regional and local inter-faith bodies in a kind of ‘intermediary’ role. This is because the engagement of faith communities with government at the national level is often mediated by the IFNUK; and collaboration is frequent between government departments, local authorities and the IFNUK (see Local Government Association 2002a, 2002b, 2004). But concern has been expressed, for various reasons, about foregrounding inter-faith interests (Smith 2004; Furbey & Macey 2005) at the expense of unilateral relations between faith communities and government departments.

5.4 Relations between faith communities and Local Strategic Partnerships

Initiatives to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, flexibility and coherence of local public services are part of a broad framework intended to produce ‘joined up working’ in Local Government. The aim of the framework, formalised in Local Area Agreements (ODPM 2004), is also to foster a more mutually responsive relationship between Government departments and local authorities working with their partners in Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), including faith communities. These Partnerships act as umbrella bodies that bring together senior people from the public, private and voluntary sectors alongside members of the local community.27

Research on the implications of LSPs for Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs is sparse, but several relevant considerations arise from the ODPM’s (2004f) report on ‘Evaluation of LSPs: a baseline of practice’. First, the potential contribution of faith communities was unclear (ODPM 2004f: 52). Moreover, a Local Government Association report on ‘Local Government’s agenda for the new parliament’ (LGA 2001) estimated that only 44 per cent of LSPs would contain faith communities as partners in spite of the fact that the National Strategy Action Plan for neighbourhood renewal stated that faith communities were among the groups that Government expected LSPs to work with (ODPM 2001: 45).

In fact, a survey of all 376 LSPs in 2004 found that, among the 305 or 81 per cent of partnerships that responded, faith organisations or individuals representing faith groups were part of the core membership of 46 per cent of LSPs (compared with 28 per cent in 2002) (ODPM & DfT 2005). In addition, 71 per cent of LSPs reported that faith

27 See Lowndes & Sullivan 2004 for a systematic review of the relationship between ‘partnerships’ and ‘participation’ in local authorities.
organisations or individuals representing faith groups were part of their total membership (compared with 46 per cent in 2002). It is possible that faith groups are also represented on LSPs as members of, for example, ‘voluntary sector umbrella groups’ or ‘ethnic minority groups’. The survey did not ask questions about the identity of the faith groups represented on LSPs.

Second, there was uncertainty about how best the contribution of faith communities (and of the diversity of issues they confront) can be represented. There is a tendency in some areas to conflate the interests of voluntary, community, faith and minority ethnic groups’ (ODPM 2004f: 16). In any case, the openings created for religious group participation bring new challenges. Thus where the Board of an LSP has only one, or perhaps at most, two, places available for religious representation, the question arises of how such representatives might most appropriately be identified and, when appointed, how they might maintain channels of communication with, and accountability to, the wider local religious constituency.

An example of a local research and development project that attempted to address issues of this kind was the ‘Involving Religions’ project commissioned by the Community Empowerment Fund in Derby (Weller & Wolfe, 2004). This project used semi-structured interviews and focus groups with people from among the religious groups of the city, as well as with representatives from the voluntary and community, private and public sectors to identify how appointments might most appropriately be made to two places available for religious participation on the Board of the Derby City Partnership.

In this instance, the project led to the creation of a new Forum of Faiths for Derby as the context for identifying such participants, but also with a wider remit in the promotion of good relations between people and groups of different faith backgrounds in the city of Derby (See Box 4). While in this regard specific to its locality, the project and the report also identified a series of questions that may be of more general relevance where similar issues are under consideration.

Particularly, but not exclusively, with regard to Local Strategic Partnerships, there is guidance to local authorities on the involvement of, and consultation with, religious groups. However, there is arguably now a need for an audit of the extent and nature of the arrangements for the participation of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in the work of LSPs. If the desired outcome is equality of opportunity for their faith communities to participate in LSPs, special attention should be paid to their rates of success in acquiring resources from the Single Community Programme, Well-Being Power and the Community Development Venture Fund.

Box 4

The Forum of Faiths for Derby has been established to appoint two representatives of religious groups on to the Derby City Partnership Board and to explore the potential for religious group involvement in other partnership groups.
5.5 Neighbourhood engagement

ODPM policies to tackle the problems of disadvantaged areas centre on empowering local communities to solve their own problems and to create better futures for themselves. The National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal, activated via LSPs in the 88 most deprived local authorities, has the goal of eliminating their disadvantages within twenty years. Resources are made available to eligible authorities through the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) and the New Deal for Communities (NDC) for the poorest communities with support from the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and regional Neighbourhood Renewal Teams.

The assumption is that ‘Communities, local services, business and voluntary and faith groups are all ready and willing to participate’ (ODPM 2001: 11). Indeed, the National Strategy Action Plan (ODPM 2001: 52) affirms that ‘Faith groups may offer a channel to some of the hardest-to-reach groups. A pragmatic approach will be taken to funding faith groups, recognising that they may be the most suitable organisation [sic] to deliver community objectives’. This may be particularly relevant to Hindu, Muslim and Sikh communities because of the socio-economic disadvantages that adversely affect some of them. But the pragmatic approach still has to contend with the finding of the Home Office Citizenship Survey that ‘Asian people were less likely than Black people and White people to be involved in social participation, informal volunteering and formal volunteering’ (Attwood et al. 2001: 81). As the Open Society Institute (2005: 84) report suggests, some Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs may feel disinclined to participate in voluntary organisations that have historically been dominated by Christians. Although some of these organisations are not faith based in any explicit sense, their ‘traditional’ inheritance can easily therefore work towards an indirect discrimination through a failure to have re-examined policies and practices in the light of contemporary religious diversity since it is assumed that traditional ways of doing things are inclusive whereas they may be experienced as exclusive.

Evidence collected in the course of the Inner Cities Religious Council’s (ICRC) pilot project on the extent of faith community involvement in the New Deal for Communities suggested that emergent faith communities wanted to be more involved in the work of LSPs – but only on condition that adequate funding was available (ODPM’s 2005a: 21). Moreover:

“Lack of funding for faith-based organisations is particularly acute for the minority faiths, which lack even the limited institutional funding to which the mainstream faiths might have some recourse. Faith groups reported trying to operate their community activities on a shoe-string, at times using inadequate accommodation in, and or linked to, the mosques, gurdwaras, temples and churches.”

(ODPM 2005a: 22)

The issue of funding for the contributions made by emergent faith communities to neighbourhood renewal is closely associated with the distinction that funding bodies sometimes make between religious functions and community work. Applications for funding can fail because of fears that public money will be seen to support religion rather than community, whereas Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs – just like many Christians and Jews – do not necessarily distinguish in the same way between religious and community functions. This also raises a question about the extent to which a ‘pragmatic approach’ is taken to the funding of faith groups in accordance with the National
Strategy Action Plan (ODPM 2001: 52). An allied issue is how far officials in funding bodies have sufficient understanding of emergent faith communities to appreciate the difficulty of making a categorical distinction between ‘religion’ and ‘community’. According to the ICRC pilot project report (ODPM 2005a: 13), another difficulty is that some faith-based organisations are reluctant to disclose their sources of funding.

If emergent faith communities are disadvantaged in respect of the resources required for them to make successful applications for funding to contribute towards neighbourhood renewal they are more likely than mainstream churches to rely on the help of volunteers. According to the report of the ICRC pilot project:

“Lack of funding and the consequential financial constraints oblige many faith communities to rely heavily on volunteers both to develop and run their community activities. This necessarily makes it more difficult for them always to have those with the most appropriate skills and experiences to conduct the activities. It also means that they are less likely to have dedicated staff able to monitor and evaluate the often excellent performance of their community initiatives, thus creating a seemingly circular problem when faced with the requirement by potential funders for a record of outputs and outcomes before funding will be considered.”

(ODPM 2005a: 22-3)

The most comprehensive investigation of the engagement of faith communities in urban regeneration (Farnell et al 2003: 24-7) also found that, as with many voluntary associations, problems of communication, capacity and decision making were related to funding shortages. A related consideration is that the religious professionals among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are not necessarily the community ‘leaders’ with whom statutory and other funding agencies would probably expect to interact. One of the lessons learned in the course of the research conducted by Farnell et al (2003: 22) is the importance of consulting and working with leaders of formal organisations in emergent faith communities – not just the leaders of theological, pastoral and ritual activities. A further problem identified by this research is ‘evidence of disenchantment on the part of many young people with the control exerted by faith elders and a migration either away from faith altogether or towards alternative, sometimes more fundamentalist and separatist, expressions of religious identity’ (Farnell et al 2003: 23).

An important consideration must, therefore, be the extent to which lack of adequate funding acts as an obstacle to the participation of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of all ages in neighbourhood renewal. The relative shortage of professional administrators working in emergent faith community organisations makes it all the more likely that volunteers will experience the process of seeking funds for community projects as bewildering, stressful or even impossible. The requirement to provide carefully quantified outputs is also daunting when projects actually have ‘soft’ goals, the achievement of which may take decades.

It seems highly probable that the pressure to form inter-faith alliances and federations stems in part from the realisation that individual emergent faith communities will often fail to obtain public funding for their community projects. It is no doubt convenient from the point of view of NRF and NDC officials to deal with inter-faith combinations of faith groups, but some consideration should be given to the possibility that the distinctiveness of separate faith communities might thereby be flattened out in the long term. In fact, one of the lessons learned from the ICRC pilot project was that ‘it is better
to engage with faith communities on a regeneration or social justice agenda, rather than focus on inter-faith issues alone’ (ODPM 2005a: 34). The findings presented in Chapter 2 above are consistent with this assessment.

5.6 Local inter-faith groups

The challenges posed by living together in a religiously plural society have meant that local inter-faith groups, organisations and initiatives have moved more into both the religious and social ‘mainstream’. In 2001, the directory *Religions in the UK* (Weller [ed.], 2001) recorded the existence of 30 inter-faith organizations operating at UK level, 1 at Welsh national level and 1 at Scottish national level, as well as of details on over 94 local inter-faith groups (including 88 in England, two in Wales and four in Scotland). By the time of the publication of Inter Faith Network for the UK’s (2003: 7) report on its survey of local inter-faith activity in the UK, nearly 140 local multilateral initiatives had been identified. The majority of these are to be found in localities characterised by a high degree of ethnic diversity and visible religious plurality and therefore, according to the particularities of the local demographies concerned, often involve Hindu, Muslim and Sikh participation, although the degree of actual participation on the part of individual communities can vary.

Local inter-faith groups have a range of different histories, self-understandings and ways of working. These include the motivation to work for better understanding and appreciation of other religions; the objective of working towards improved social harmony and friendship and work towards the securing of greater social and religious acceptance for minority religious groups. A number, however, and especially those which use the terminology of a ‘Council of Faiths’ have tended to see a major part of their work as being concerned with the interface between religious groups and wider public life and, in particular, with local government. A number of such organizations originated in the work of local Racial Equality Councils and, as a result, have had a particular concern for the promotion of better community relations. More recently, among newer inter-faith initiatives that are particularly and primarily concerned the contribution of religions to regeneration and broader social policy matters, there has been a tendency for the terminology of ‘Forum’ of Faiths to predominate.

Many, but not all local inter-faith groups and initiatives are affiliated to the Inter-Faith Network for the United Kingdom. Alongside the changing landscape of the religions themselves, inter-faith organizations have, from the perspective of faith communities, the Government and other public bodies, increasingly moved from a relatively peripheral to a more central role. As the Inter-Faith Network for the UK et al (1999: 5-6) local inter-faith guide explains it, local inter-faith initiatives can now often be

“...places where members of the different faith communities come to know each other, learn more about their neighbours’ deeply held beliefs; and develop relationships of trust which can underpin co-operative work on social issues; a resource for local government, hospitals; police forces and other bodies which need information on particular faiths or a reliable pattern of contacts for consultation and partnership; of assistance to Local Authorities in allocating resources more efficiently and with appropriate attention to the particular needs of faith communities; for example in the areas of education and social services.”
Where Local Inter Faith Councils already exist that have sought to engage with public bodies rather than being concerned only with intra- and inter-faith matters, their role and strategic significance has been enhanced. Where inter-faith initiatives of this kind have not previously existed, the social policy policy shift towards welcoming the contribution of religious groups gives a new impetus to their potential creation. As the Government’s guidance document on community cohesion puts it:

“The development of effective local interfaith structures, bringing together representatives of different faith communities in a local authority area, can provide a valuable framework both for promoting mutual understanding and co-operation between them and as a mechanism for consultation by the local authority and other public bodies. Local authorities can provide valuable encouragement and support for the launching of initiatives of this kind in areas where they have yet to be established and also in helping to sustain existing local inter-faith structures.”

(LGA 2002b: 21)

In addition, the focus of faith communities on neighbourhood renewal has recently been formalised and sharpened by the establishment of the Faith Based Regeneration Network UK (FBRN). This network has received ODPM funding since its formation in 2002 for bringing together ‘regeneration practitioners who identify with faith traditions, or who work with or for faith community organisations’ (FBRN News no. 1, December 2003: 1). Its members are drawn from the Inter-Faith Network’s list of nine faith traditions, thereby reproducing the well established pattern for consultation and collaboration between Government departments and faith communities (Home Office 2004).

5.7 Delivery of services

Engaging faith communities in the delivery of local services such as care for the frail elderly or for people with disabilities and their carers is a well established practice. Good examples include the Health Access Programme run by the Islamic Cultural Centre in London with a grant from the Department of Health between 1998 and 2001, the Sikh Women’s Forum in Birmingham, the Hindu Elders Welfare Group in Gloucester and the Muslim Women’s Helpline (http://www.mwhl.org/). Such initiatives certainly help to ensure the delivery of services that are culturally and religiously appropriate, thereby conforming to the policy goal of tailoring services to the needs of service users (see also Sachdev & Van Meeuwen 2002). For example, Atkin, Ahmad & Jones (2002) emphasise how complicated it can be for young deaf people from South Asian backgrounds to negotiate their identity in public and domestic settings. This is because the strength of the young people’s identification with the community of deaf people is sometimes difficult to reconcile with their ethnic and religious identities. Furthermore, Ali et al. (2001: 964) report findings showing that some Muslim parents of children with disabilities or severe illness hesitated to send them to care centres because male staff would look after their daughters, who would therefore be mixing with the opposite sex, and because halal food might not be available.

In other words, the rise of a generation of British-born people from South Asian backgrounds may add another layer of complication to the lives of Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs who either have disabilities or have responsibilities for dependants with disabilities. Shah and Hatton’s (1999) study of young South Asian carers touched on some of these tensions (see also Shah 1997; Chamba et al 1999; O’Neale 2000). But the
increasing number of British-born Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs gives rise to fresh considerations, opportunities and challenges (Lau 2000). See Box 5.

**Box 5**

Sharing Voices (Bradford) is a front line project supported by Bradford City Teaching Primary Care Trust and the Centre for Citizenship and Community Mental Health at the University of Bradford. Since 2002 it has taken a community approach to mental health problems among ethnic minority groups by bringing their own cultural and spiritual expertise to bear on problematic issues. It has a link with the Bangladeshi Youth Organisation and is a pilot site for a Community Engagement Programme with the National Institute for Mental Health in England.

Other generational changes that are occurring among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in Britain include the growing proportion of elderly people in the population, the increasing rate of marital discord (despite the persistence of low rates of divorce) (Pankaj 2000; Qureshi et al 2000) and the diversification of family structures (Berthoud 2000). There is no suggestion that these changes imply a disproportionately high incidence of social problems or demand for social services in emergent faith communities: quite the contrary. But the evidence of change is clear; and it implies that consideration needs to be given to the design, delivery, take-up and monitoring of local public services from the viewpoint of emergent faith communities.

With regard to social services provided for minority ethnic parents, for example, Henricson et al (2001) question their adequacy, while Becher & Husain (2003: 51) claim that ‘While more “general” services, theoretically aimed at all parents do exist, research has shown that these types of services tend to be under-utilised by minority ethnic parents, and by South Asian families in particular (Butt and Box 1998)’.

The barriers to the planning, delivery and take-up of appropriate services include racism, cultural stereotyping and language differences (Becher & Husain 2003: 53-6). In addition, ‘in the context of British South Asian communities, where community leaders are normally men and gender segregation is commonplace, meeting the needs of both women and men while respecting cultural practices and religious beliefs can be particularly challenging’ (Becher & Husain 2003: 58). But these writers also insist that, since values and attitudes among Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs are changing, there is no warrant for policies and practices that simply aim to ‘preserve culture’.

Assessing the equality impact on Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of current policies governing the delivery of local public services is all the more difficult for not being a legal requirement. Data on the religion of Local Authorities’ service users are therefore scarce and patchy. This is partly why the Open Society Institute report on *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens* (OSI 2005: 46, 53) recommended that:

> “Government ensure that more comprehensive data is collected on the basis of individuals’ religious identity, not only their ethnicity... Better information, and

28 This echoes the findings of Law et al. (1994) research into the take-up of social security benefits by ethnic minority communities. Young Bangladeshi and Pakistani men were particularly reluctant to claim benefits partly because of community or cultural pressures and partly because of the perceived norms of Islam.
research that targets the faith needs of these communities directly, rather than indirectly, may reveal problems in policy that the Government previously has not realised, due to officials’ insistence on using race or ethnicity as the most appropriate categories for analysis.”

It is worth adding that Birmingham City Council, for example, has proposed to administer an Equalities Monitoring Form to service users, with whom it has an ‘on-going service provision relationship’, which includes the question ‘Do you have a religion or belief that you would like to mention?’ It also asks ‘How would you describe your sexuality?’

Matters concerning religion are often put together with ‘race’ as in, for example, the title of Worcestershire County Council’s ‘Equality Group for Race and Religion’. In addition, very few Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) make any reference to religion. Of course, this does not prevent Local Authorities from choosing to make religion a matter of equal opportunities policy. Barnsley Council’s library service, for example, is committed to ensuring ‘equality of opportunity to library services regardless of race, ethnic background, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, religion or disability’.

29 www.birmingham.gov.uk/Elibrary?E_LIBRARY_ID=342
30 Spalek 2005: 285 makes the same point about discrimination on the grounds of religion in the criminal justice system.
31 An exception is BVPI 60 that monitors the number of users/carers who report that matters of race, culture or religion were noted.
32 http://www.barnsley.gov.uk/service/libraries/missionstatement.asp
CHAPTER 6
Some implications to inform ODPM policy considerations

6.1 Key Messages

- The outcome of this review underlines that there is a need for new research to enhance the evidence base specifically in the areas of religion and disabilities, and religion and sexual orientation. There is also relatively less research in relation to Hindus and Sikhs and topics that relate to ODPM policy areas and concerns than there is with regard to Muslims.

- There is a need to consider monitoring by religion and belief in assessing the extent to which strategies and policies are being implemented in ways that are inclusive of religious diversity.

- Programmes of staff development, and the designation of key staff responsibilities to support the development of basic organisational capabilities in relation to ‘religious literacy’ are important options for public bodies to consider in engaging with the implications of religious plurality for policy development and policy impact assessments.

- There is a need for greater clarity in the location of responsibilities towards external stakeholders and service users between the Inner Cities Religious Council and its Secretariat and the Cohesion and Faith Unit at the Home Office.

- The identification, collection and dissemination of best practice stories on the interface between religion and ODPM strategic priorities would help to ‘flesh out’ the interfaces between religion and public policy.

- Patterns of consultation by public bodies need to be kept under continuous review, maintaining a balance between direct consultation with faith community bodies and consultation that is mediated through inter-faith structures.
6.2 Religion, legislative and public policy frameworks

A significant part of the evidence base that affects the position of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh groups is the legal and policy context within which the development of these groups, and the issues faced by them, is situated. While ethnicity is now the subject of a comprehensive legal and policy framework that highlights and shapes policy development and impact assessment with reference to ethnic factors, the same is not yet true with regard to religion. It has only been in the last decade that the dimension of religion has begun to move into centre-stage in policy considerations, as both reflected and given further impetus by the adoption of the religious affiliation question in the 2001 Census.

With the commissioning of research, in 1989-2001, into the nature and extent of religious discrimination in England and Wales, successive Governments recognised that there was an issue to be addressed in terms of the nature and extent of discrimination on the grounds of religion (Weller, Feldman and Purdam, et al. 2001). Nevertheless, at present there is no comprehensive legal or policy framework for promoting equity and tackling discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief.

However, in the specific field of employment, there is now the framework of law provided by the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations, 2003. For the first time in England, Wales and Scotland and in the context of employment and vocational training, this prohibits (except for genuine and determining occupational requirements) direct discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, as well as indirect discrimination (except for objective justification that is both appropriate and necessary), and also harassment, and victimisation on grounds of pursuit of issues relating to discrimination or harassment on the grounds of religion or belief.

There is also the overall yardstick for both legislation and policy development that is provided by the Human Rights Act 1988 and its incorporation into domestic law of the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms with regard to the freedom of religion and belief and their manifestation. Article 9 of the Convention provides that:

“Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or in private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.”

“Freedom to manifest one’s religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights or freedoms of others.”

33 Northern Ireland introduced legislation to combat religious discrimination much earlier. The Fair Employment Act of 1976 created the Fair Employment Agency to address the perceived problem of religious or political discrimination in the workplace. The legislation only outlawed direct discrimination and not any discrimination caused indirectly. The FEA was replaced when stronger legislation was introduced in the 1989 Fair Employment Act which set up the Fair Employment Commission (FEC).
These clauses on religion and belief and their manifestation introduced into domestic law, for the first time, positive rights with regard to religion. Thus the Human Rights Act’s upholding of the Convention’s provisions with regard to religion and belief need to form an integral and explicit part of policy impact assessments, in order for these to be able to take proper account of the religious dimension.

It should also be noted that proposals for legislation with regard to the religion dimension are now beginning to extend beyond all the above to include also proposals relating to ‘incitement to religious hatred’. Finally, there was the Prime Minister’s announcement at the Labour Party Conference of Autumn 2004, of an intention to legislate on religious discrimination more broadly. All of this is also taking place within the institutional context of the planned development of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights which will, for the first time bring together sources of advice and expertise concerned with all the equality strands: namely those relating to race, gender, disabilities, religion, age and sexual orientation.

In future, it is likely that religion specialists in the proposed Commission will be able to provide a particular resource to engage with the potential for tension and possibly for conflict that could, in practice, emerge between what could become competing claims for equality based on these different grounds.

There is therefore an increasing legal and policy meta-framework that requires more explicit account to be taken of religion. At the same time, overall, the picture is still an emergent one as compared with the more comprehensive frameworks governing discrimination and equal opportunities on the grounds of ethnicity, disability and gender. In this respect, the position of religion is more akin to the developing areas of sexual orientation and age.

6.3 Religion, consultative arrangements and resources

Until the establishment of the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights provides a focus for dealing with religion and other equalities strands in relation to legislation, policy and consultative mechanisms, a key document for informing the ‘faith’ dimensions of policy development and policy impact assessments is the Home Office Faith Communities Unit’s (2004) report on co-operation between government and faith communities. This contains the recommendations of a steering group set up from within Government and the faith communities to review patterns of engagement between Government and faith communities in England. It is therefore a key resource also for the ODPM, including its sections on consulting faith communities nationally; provision of guidance for faith communities; issues around national services and celebrations; local and regional consultations by central government; and central consultative arrangements, while its appendices offer examples of the consultative arrangements found in different government departments and other examples of good practice.

Notwithstanding the caveats that need to be appreciated with regard to the meaning and significance of the Census data on religion, the Office for National Statistics is clearly a source of ongoing importance for policy making and impact assessments that take account of religion. This includes not only originally published material, but also
specially commissioned tables such as Table M275: Religion (most detailed categories) that provides further breakdowns of the ‘write-in’ responses to the Census question on religion. Other tables can be commissioned from National Statistics in support of particular policy issues and needs as required.

Religious groups and organisations and inter-faith bodies are themselves also a key part of the evidence base. The patterns in which these exist and work are, of course, continually changing and developing and there is therefore an ongoing need for maintaining up to date knowledge about these organisations. One resource that provides a one-stop-shop overview of the religious landscape of the UK is the directory of *Religions in the UK* (Weller [ed], 2001) that was designed for broad accessibility and practical use among a non-specialist professional audience.

*Religions in the UK* provides an overview of the religious landscape of the UK and introduces the basic beliefs, practices, festivals, community structures and personnel of the Bahá’í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh and Zoroastrian traditions, together with contact details34 for around 3,500+ of their national, regional and local organisations, and for inter-faith organisations and groups. The Home Office have agreed to fund the updating and production of this data for provision through the Office for National Statistics’ Access to Neighbourhood Services domain.

In each of the world religious traditions there is a whole range of representative bodies operating at national level from among each of the world religions with substantial communities in the UK. One of the challenges for consultation is that for no community is there a single body that covers the entire diversity of the tradition concerned. One of options discussed in the Home Office’s report on the Government’s interface with faith communities was the possibility of creating a national Faith Communities Forum to act as a single point of reference and consultation across the machinery of Government. In evaluating arguments (see Home Office, 2004b: 80) for and against this option, the conclusion (Home Office, 2004b: 81) was reached that ‘the case for a new Forum is not proven, that its establishment would be premature and that more flexible arrangements are preferable.’

Outside of Government and serving as a critically important point of consultation and signposting is the Inter-Faith Network for the United Kingdom, founded in 1987. At the time of writing the Network links over ninety organizations within four different categories of affiliation. These include representative bodies from within the historic world religious traditions with significant communities in the UK (namely, the Bahá’í, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Sikh and Zoroastrian traditions); national inter-faith organizations; local inter-faith groups and councils; and a number of educational bodies, study centres and academic bodies that are concerned with the study of religions and the relationships between them.

The Network’s aims are ‘...to advance public knowledge and mutual understanding of the teachings, traditions and practices of different faith communities in Britain, including an awareness both of their distinctive features and of their common ground and to promote good relations between persons of different religious faiths’. It has provided a major catalyst in the transformation of inter-faith initiatives from what were, historically, relatively marginal initiatives into a central feature of the contemporary

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34 Clearly, the most recent available edition is now several years old, meaning that many of the contact details, especially at local levels, may well have changed.
religious landscape of England and the UK. From its inception the Network endeavoured to facilitate the participation of the full range of religious communities in the public life of the UK. As time has gone on, the dimension of the Network’s work in relation to Government and public bodies has assumed greater importance. Thus the Network has encouraged Government Departments and other public bodies to consult faith communities on the development and implementation of policies and programmes that are of particular concern to them. This has been both a stimulus for, and a response to, the Government’s own developing approach in these matters.

Within the ODPM itself, the existence of the Inner Cities Religious Council (originally located in the former Department of the Environment) and its Secretariat clearly offers a key resource of expertise, advice and information in relation to the key role that it has played over the past decade and a half in fostering partnership between Government and faith communities in tackling urban social and economic problems. With a membership drawn from the Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, and Sikh communities, the ICRC was originally formed in 1992 as part of the Government’s response to the issues raised by the report of the Church of England’s (1985) Commission on urban priority areas.

Within Government, in 2003 the Religious Issues section of the Home Office Race Equality Unit was reconstituted into the Faith Communities Unit and has recently been further restructured into the Cohesion and Faiths Unit. Among external stakeholders, there is a certain lack of clarity in perception of the respective remits of, and relationships between the ICRC and its Secretariat and the Cohesion and Faiths Unit suggesting that there is a need for greater clarity for external stakeholders and service users with regard to the location of responsibilities.

6.4 Conclusion

This report has highlighted a number of common features arising from the evidence base on the Hindu, Muslim and Sikh populations of England in relation to ODPM policy areas, as well as some specific aspects relating to each individual group. It has demonstrated the importance of developing an appropriate “religious literacy” that enables public bodies to take account of “faith dimensions” in a way that is informed by an appropriate level of understanding of the religious, ethnic and socio-economic diversities that exist in and among these populations.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this review report will itself add to the accessibility and applicability of the evidence base in the context of ODPM policy development and policy impact assessment, which the evidence base suggests it is important is taken forward in full consultation with appropriate faith community and inter-faith bodies.
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Note: This bibliography contains the details of the sources cited in the report, and additionally lists a number of other important works not referenced in the text.


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