Runnymede: Intelligence for a Multi-ethnic Britain

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• Provide evidence to support action for social change;
• Influence policy at all levels.

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Runnymede and the Fabian Society believe that different ethnic groups in the UK should interact in a meaningful way on a day-to-day basis. We care, in other words, about the quality of social relationships in our society. Meaningful interaction is, of course, valuable in itself, but it is also necessary for a successful democracy.

Such interaction is hindered by the various inequalities that Black and minority people continue to experience. As James Gregory indicates in this essay, where these inequalities are targeted by politicians and public officials to improve their lives, they must show leadership in justifying those policies. Otherwise, the danger is that racial differences will map onto differences about ‘undeserving’ welfare recipients, thus creating further divisions between the different people living in the UK.

The direction of policy is, however, moving more and more towards targeted or means-tested measures, creating risks not only for BME people, but for poorer people generally. As this essay indicates, one of the underappreciated benefits of universal welfare policies is that they improve the quality of our social relations with one another. If we were to focus more on developing universal policies, this would not only affirm the notion that we actually are ‘all in this together’, but make those institutions more efficient and responsive to citizens. This is because those with the sharpest elbows are more likely to see their complaints acted upon and thereby improve those institutions. And when they do so, we all benefit.

Whatever one’s view on universal welfare institutions such as the NHS, policymakers and other leaders need to consider more seriously how we ensure the kind of social interactions necessary for a healthy democracy. Unless we tackle the inequalities that persist in BME communities, and also affirm the value of civic engagement and reciprocity, we will be unable to build a more just and democratic Britain.

Rob Berkeley, Director, Runnymede Trust
Sunder Katwala, General Secretary, the Fabian Society
Modern liberal societies appear to face a problem: how can a shared sense of identity and solidarity be maintained in the context of increasing ethnic diversity. Is it possible to have social solidarity in a diverse society, or does one have to be sacrificed to the other? The challenge, according to a growing body of opinion, is that the progressive desire to champion diversity and different ways of life risks fatally undermining the collective solidarity on which a strong welfare state depends (Goodhart, 2004).

In this essay I challenge the thesis that there is a crisis of diversity and solidarity: that the decline in support for the welfare state is a consequence of increased diversity. My argument is that the evidence suggests that this supposedly stark trade-off is largely illusory and that reducing diversity is a poor strategy for increasing solidarity. Instead, the right kind of welfare state can itself create the shared sense of mutual obligation and citizenship needed to support the solidarity that a strong and popular welfare state requires. In fact, there is good reason to think that the commentators who link declining support for the welfare state with increasing diversity have mistaken the direction of causation: ethnic diversity is not an insuperable problem for welfare states; rather, the wrong kind of welfare state is a problem for those who want cohesive, multi-ethnic societies.

Put simply, universal welfare institutions tend to create common bonds of citizenship, whereas narrowly targeted welfare services tend to divide us as a population, characterizing some as needy and dependent, and others as virtuous and independent. An exemplar of such a process is how failed areas of social housing are often described as ‘sink-estates’ – estates of outsiders very much ‘not like us’. By way of contrast, the evidence suggests that more inclusive and collective welfare provision (such as the NHS, universal benefits, or well-planned social housing and schools) can have a strongly cohesive effect. Collective welfare institutions that bring people into contact through common needs and services can retain strong support in diverse societies – and indeed help to provide the glue of common citizenship.

For some this claim will strike a deep chord. It would seem inconsistent to assert, for instance, that our society must choose between a strong NHS or increasing diversity, given the widely recognized fact that the NHS has long depended on a diverse workforce.

This paper examines evidence on solidarity and diversity from a range of countries and disciplines and finds that the more plausible explanation lies in institutional design. It is poorly-designed institutions and welfare policies, rather than diversity, which have led to a decline in solidarity and support for the welfare state.

Public support for welfare spending has declined quite dramatically over the last 30 years. In 2007 just 32 per cent agreed that ‘Government should redistribute income from the better-off to those who are less well off’, compared to 51 per cent in 1985 (National Centre for Social Research, 2007). The number of those agreeing that it should ‘definitely’ be the Government’s responsibility to provide ‘a decent standard of living for the unemployed’ has fallen from 42 per cent in 1985 to just 10 per cent in 2006 (Sefton, 2007). Over that same period we have become ever more diverse as a society – hence the intuitive plausibility of the Goodhart thesis.

Nevertheless, correlation is not the same as cause. Moreover, there is a political danger in allowing this false conflation to go unchecked. The real risk is that this pessimism becomes self-fulfilling: if we believe that ethnic diversity runs against the grain of collective identity and altruistic motivation, then we will not seek to build on the institutions and shared experiences that could help strengthen the common bonds of citizenship. A misreading of the evidence may well create the conditions in which diversity becomes more of a ‘problem’ than it is currently. This unhappy possible future would in part be the consequence of an elite consensus that has succumbed to a fatalistic view that declining solidarity is inevitable, with an associated loss of support for collective institutions. Institutions must adapt to changing circumstances, but without political leadership – and without the support of an opinion-forming media elite – calls for the positive evolution of the welfare state are likely to come second place to narratives of welfare ‘crisis’ and renewed calls for retrenchment.

That is why we urgently need to both challenge the myth of a ‘crisis’ of diversity and, at the same time,
offer a vision of what strong collective institutions can do for us all in a modern, diverse society. This is ever more important if we are to accept – as we should – that diversity poses genuine challenges for liberal societies. A strong society does need a sense of common identity and purpose – and a strong welfare state can help to provide it.

Report Summary

In summary, this essay will argue that we need to create a stronger, more universal welfare state if we are to maintain a sense of shared identity in a highly diverse society.

The following chapter discusses the ways in which Britain’s model of welfare provision has tended to create stigma and social exclusion for its recipients, and argues that this has been far more important than diversity or racial identity as a driver of social division. This chapter also highlights an alternative ideal of the welfare state based on citizenship, an ideal seen in many other European welfare states today (and which, in some ways, reflects the original ideals of the UK’s post-war welfare settlement). In Chapter 3 we turn to the evidence on the relationship between ethnic diversity and solidarity, and find that the relationship is weak, is potentially less important than the relationship between poverty and solidarity, and in any case is mediated by more important factors like the presence of the political left and the underlying structure of the welfare state. In the final chapter we suggest some principles and policies for future development.
Chapter 2. Welfare and Solidarity

This chapter outlines the way in which welfare institutions can have an important impact on the way we perceive ourselves and others. It is an issue we shall revisit later in Chapter 3. But in simple terms the argument here is that a strong welfare state creates common bonds, whilst a weak one highlights perceptions of difference; creating a sense of ‘them’ (welfare recipients – perhaps failing to contribute fully to society) and ‘us’ (virtuous tax-paying citizens). At this stage, the analysis is not specifically about race or multicultural diversity, but rather about the more general way in which policies and institutions can confer identities on individuals and groups in society – identities that can then interact with other aspects of difference, including race and culture.

Weak Versus Strong Welfare Regimes

This analysis requires an account of what is meant by ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ welfare regimes. These are terms derived from a debate amongst political scientists on the comparative characteristics of different models of welfare state in advanced economies (Esping-Anderson, 1990; Larsen, 2006). The three ‘regimes’ that the literature identifies are the ‘Nordic’, the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and the ‘conservative’. The most salient contrast here is between the Nordic and the Anglo-Saxon regimes. The former type of welfare state tends to be universal, seeing welfare provision as a right of all citizens. In contrast, the latter type of system is predominantly based on need, with resources targeted only on the poorest. Often this is described as a ‘residual’ welfare state. When this kind of targeting becomes predominant – even if it is motivated by considerations of social justice – it is easy to characterize the recipients of welfare as different from other citizens, creating a sense of ‘social distance’.

What does this polling tell us? The most obvious answer is that social and spatial distance – especially in the context of social housing – is associated with a lack of solidarity and support for welfare spending.

There is nothing inevitable about this distance. It is a result of social and institutional structures, historical processes and policy choices. In the context of large, concentrated council estates, both of these distancing dynamics (social and spatial) are at work. Spatial concentration and de facto separation has been the result, in the first instance, of poor planning policy, with far too many mono-tenure estates built in isolation from core services and utilities. But there has also been another process at work: the ever greater targeting of social housing as a resource, increasingly distributed to only the neediest and poorest. The result has been a very visible and tangible sense of ‘otherness’, frequently associated with social stigma, and often manifested in media and television representations of ‘chavs’.

This was not always the case. Quality social housing was a central plank of the post-war welfare settlement. The vision was grand and powerful, and based on some of the same fundamental principles underpinning the NHS.
course, the council housing of this era was never intended to be fully universal in the sense that it would be for everyone. But there was a crucial sense of solidarity and universality because council housing was not seen as a socially separate system or service, marked off from other tenures as intrinsically different (and inferior). So, while not universal, it was socially inclusive: indeed, an explicit objective of social housing in this era was to counter the divisive and segregating tendencies of pre-war social housing, which displayed many of the characteristics we have come to caricature as ‘sink-estates’. Aneurin ‘Nye’ Bevan (1949) insisted that public housing should be of the highest quality in terms of materials and design. Perhaps more importantly he also declared that housing provision in Britain must form a ‘living tapestry’, a framework of mixed communities in which the doctor, labourer and butcher would live side by side as equal citizens. So the quality of social relations – built upon a non-hierarchical view of housing tenure – was as important as the material quality of public housing (Timmins, 1996).

The story of how this vision failed is well-known. Briefly, in the 1950s, housing provision was defined by the need to build more and more. The ideology of a property-owning democracy took hold in the Conservative Governments of this era, and the explicit assumption was that public housing was only a temporary stopgap, a stepping stone on the way to ownership. As a result the material quality of public housing was allowed to decline, quite dramatically in some cases such as the notorious Ronan Point building in east London, which collapsed in 1968. At the same time, the ‘rush to volume’ (the race to build as many houses as possible) led to poor planning. In addition, public housing often involved re-housing the residents of slum clearances en masse, leading to high concentrations of public housing in particular areas and, as a result, further social segregation. Also at work was an allocations policy (from 1977 onwards) that gave priority to the neediest and most vulnerable, and the 1980 Right to Buy legislation, which led to the exit of many of the more affluent and independent households (and properties) from the social sector, whilst also restricting the ability of local authorities to replace the lost stock. Over time this has led to ever greater concentrations of poorer households on large estates – a visible and apparently easily identifiable class of the ‘dependent’.4

In this example, as well as spatial segregation, socio-economic status is the most obvious driver of social distancing and stigma: as social housing has become targeted to the extent that it is almost exclusively the preserve of the most vulnerable, it has created a sense of a residual welfare system that simply isn’t for ‘ordinary’ citizens. Here, the intersection of racial identity and poverty cannot be ignored. A disproportionate number of people from ethnic minorities are poor – 40 per cent, or twice the rate for the ‘white British’ population (Palmer and Kenway, 2007) and are therefore often ‘filtered into’ social housing. Thus, in his landmark review of social housing in 2007, John Hills found that 27 per cent of black and ethnic minority householders were social householders, compared to 17 per cent of the general population (Hills, 2007). Table 1 below indicates housing tenure by ethnic group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Owner occupied</th>
<th>Social renters</th>
<th>Private renters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White - British</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White - Other</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All White</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Caribbean</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Ethnic Minority</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: DCLG, live tables
Note: Rows may not add up to 100 due to rounding

The political impact of recent immigrants seeming to ‘jump the queue’ for social housing is also important, even though this happens far less than one would think from the media coverage that it receives: less than two per cent of social housing tenants are in fact recent immigrants (defined as being in the UK for less than five years) (Rutter and Latorre, 2009).

The intersection of poverty and race can therefore be particularly damaging in a society...
where poverty itself, and a resulting reliance on the welfare state, is a marker of inferior social status. One of the key policy responses to this, developed in Chapter 4 of this essay, should be the pursuit of far greater social and cultural mix across all housing provision, with a special focus on integrating social housing with other tenures. Mix, as we shall see, helps create perceptions of ‘ordinariness’ among citizens. This is a point worth special emphasis here, because there is good reason to think that it can have an impact not just on perceptions of welfare and desert, but can also more directly impact on attitudes towards immigration, ethnic difference and multiculturalism.

One recent survey found that, even though there is a considerable degree of anxiety about immigration, ‘people with immigrant contacts and friends are far likelier to view immigration positively than those without such links’.5

The thesis of this essay is that social proximity and mix – socio-economic, cultural, and ethnic – are key to social solidarity. My argument is that we should use the welfare state as a vehicle for such mix, just as Bevan’s ‘living tapestry’ suggests. It is important to stress, however, that ‘mix’ here does not require a rather naïve and idealistic vision of active social interaction for its own sake; indeed, the current ‘cohesion’ policy framework places far too much emphasis on cultural discourse as an end in itself. Instead we should concentrate on spatial mix and core services that have the more modest aim of proximity and ‘everyday interaction’.

So far, we have discussed the link between residualization, segregation and othering in the context of social housing, but it applies in other areas too – including cash benefits and transfers. There is often low public support for

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Box 1. Diverse Britain: Facts and Attitudes

Few people in contemporary Britain would dispute that we live in a diverse society after the population changes of the last several decades. Data from the 2001 census showed that 11 per cent of Britain’s population were foreign-born, a figure that will almost certainly have increased over the last decade, which saw large net inward migration. Around 300 languages are spoken in London’s state schools and there is a similar if less pronounced pattern elsewhere around the country.6

In fact, we live in such a diverse society that some argue it is more accurately described by the new concept of ‘super-diversity’ (Vertovec, 2007). Whereas in the late 1960s terms like ‘diversity’ and ‘multiculturalism’ only referred to a relatively small number of large immigrant groups from the Commonwealth (Jenkins, 1968), that pattern has now changed beyond all recognition: Bangladeshi, Somali, Polish, Turkish and Brazilian – all these groups and many more are now present in neighbourhoods in towns and cities across the UK, especially in London.

Political debates on diversity often conflate two kinds of facts – the number of foreign-born people living in Britain, and the number of individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds born in Britain. There is also a marked tendency to treat ethnic identity in terms of clear ‘groups’ and ‘communities’, rather than in terms of individuals from a certain background (which they may identify with to quite varying degrees). Sometimes it makes sense to speak in terms of groups, but it is not all about the politics of group identity. But whatever the nuances, ethnic diversity is an undeniable fact in modern Britain.

This is not to say, however, that everyone is comfortable with this diversity. Over the last decade, debates about diversity have often centred on public concerns about immigration, which have seen a marked rise. In MORI’s survey of the most important issues facing Britain, the proportion of respondents naming ‘race relations and immigration’ rose from three per cent in June 1997 to 29 per cent in June 2007.7 According to the Transatlantic Trends Comparative Survey, by 2010 a full 59 per cent of Britons thought there were ‘too many’ immigrants. And, even though the onset of the financial crisis has made people more concerned about the economy, 23 per cent still cite immigration as Britain’s biggest problem (German Marshall Fund, 2011).8

Why is there such apparent resentment? Scarcity of resources, and the sense that many immigrants are not contributing to those resources, is clearly a crucial factor (Gilens, 1999). Insecurity in the labour market is also an important factor: over half of Britons think that immigrants lower wages and take jobs away from native citizens (German Marshall Fund, 2011). Competition for social housing also comes high on the list of resentments (Rutter and Latorre, 2009).
highly-targeted benefits, and these often have low take-up rates too because (rightly or wrongly) potential claimants feel there is a stigma attached to their receipt. The targeting of Free School Meals and Educational Maintenance Allowances has sometimes provoked tensions within schools, and, on occasion, a perception of stigma for recipients. For example, although the administration of Free School Meals has improved markedly in recent years (the presentation of vouchers and other methods which identify recipients are now used far less), it is still estimated that around a third of a million children entitled to receive them do not claim them.9 Low take-up has also been a strong feature of targeted assistance for pensioners in the post-war period. The perceived stigma of claiming National Assistance in the decades after the war meant that, by the mid-1960s, approximately 15 per cent of eligible pensioners were not claiming it. We see a similar problem today, with approximately one third of all pensioners entitled to Pension Credit and almost half of all pensioners entitled to Council Tax Benefit not taking them up.10

In the next section we look at the anxiety that surrounds a ‘benefits culture’ and a presumed ‘dependency’ crisis in Britain. Goodhart’s thesis (Goodhart, 2004) suggests one possible explanation of current anxieties here: if people have qualms about immigrants’ entitlement to welfare (because they are ‘not like us’) then, as the volume of immigration has increased, so have anxieties over welfare entitlement.

In fact, the historical snapshots I offer here suggest that such an interpretation is too simplistic. It is too simplistic because the narrative of dependency far predates the onset of greater diversity and multiculturalism. Furthermore, as we have argued, there are other factors that explain what is happening more convincingly, factors relating to the way in which our welfare institutions differentiate particular individuals and groups in society.

‘Crisis’ and Continuity: Solidarity and Narratives of Dependency

Here, we briefly look at two historical snapshots of the status of benefit claimants. We do so to make a rather basic but overlooked point: the British welfare state has been in almost perpetual ‘crisis’ going back through the 20th century and into earlier centuries – and certainly long before we became a truly multicultural and ethnically diverse society.11

Whilst there may be some initial plausibility in the idea that anxieties about the integrity of the welfare system lie in ethnic diversity, there is a more compelling case for concluding that resentment of immigrant groups in this context falls under a broader type of welfare resentment, often couched in the language of ‘welfare dependency’, that has been evident since at least the turn of the 19th century. That resentment, we should be aware, is tied up with the notion of a feckless and undeserving poor. In contemporary discourse this has manifested itself in political rhetoric about the ‘life-style choices’ of individuals and families ‘choosing to live on benefits at the expense of their fellow citizens’ (Osborne, 2010). Both the sociological assumption behind this claim (that welfare provision encourages dependency) and the divisive language of ‘scrounging’ and ‘desert’ stretch back to at least the time of the 1834 Poor Laws, which took it as given that state aid would encourage fecklessness. Thus, central to the Poor Laws was the principle of ‘less eligibility’, stating that no ‘pauper’ should be better off than the poorest working labourer, lest they become dependent on the state. When the Poor Laws were significantly modified by the early welfare reforms of the Liberal Government in 1909 there was a serious backlash. This was manifestly not an age of an overblown welfare state; nevertheless, the sense of outrage and crisis anxiety was strikingly similar to today. Thus, the Daily Mail complained of ‘a vast army quartered upon us unable to pay for themselves’ (15 February 1909) and the News of the World asserted that ‘Englishmen are no longer too proud to loaf, to “sponge”, to beg’ (February 21, 1909) (Golding and Middleton, 1982).

The basic point is that the liberal reforms, modest as they were, faced resistance because a prior conception of welfare – the deeply residual Poor Laws – had fostered a sense that welfare recipients were not part of the same social system or order of citizenship. This nascent welfare crisis had nothing to do with ethnic diversity: what was at work was the binary division of a welfare system that people were either ‘in’ (dependent) or ‘out’ (leading a life of virtuous independence).

Another historical episode illustrates the same point from a different perspective. This was the fierce bout of ‘scroungerphobia’ in the British media in the mid-1970s. In this period, we were an ethnically and culturally diverse society, and the notion of ‘multiculturalism’ had already taken hold and started to exert an influence over policy. At the same time, sparked by sensational coverage
of benefit fraud cases in the summer of 1976, there was a wave of media hysteria directed at individuals seen to exemplify the failings of the welfare state (individual dependency and fecklessness). But, as Golding and Middleton\'s classic analysis of this episode clearly indicates, virtually all of the protagonists in these media stories were white (Golding and Middleton, 1982). To the extent that there was a crisis of solidarity, race was not a key component.

From these examples it can be seen that, while ethnic diversity was not a salient factor in either of these two historical episodes, one unifying theme does stand out: the language of dependency.

The phenomenon of scroungerphobia is still seen in recent public support for the Government\'s cuts to Housing Benefit (HB) – one recent poll put support for the cuts as high as 72 per cent. Why is this? It is likely that some of the support for the cuts is attributable to the way in which HB is very often closely associated with resentment of recent immigrants, perceived (often incorrectly) as being dependent on this benefit (Rutter and Latorre, 2009). Both the political rhetoric of the current Government, and a great deal of irresponsible media coverage, share some of the responsibility for this public anxiety.

It is not the purpose of this essay to totally repudiate the conception of dependency that underpins this public anxiety, nor to deny the existence of individuals who actively \‘game\’ the system. We do in fact face genuine dependency dilemmas in our modern benefits system, where some features genuinely provide a barrier to claimants wanting to move into work (the notoriously perverse incentives embedded in the current structure of Housing Benefit are a case in point). But we also need to understand why dependency rhetoric is so pervasive and powerful that it tarnishes the great majority of claimants. But the crucial point is that there is very little reason to think that these dilemmas reflect an intrinsic manifestation of a trade-off between solidarity and ethnic diversity.

Moreover, despite all this bad welfare news, it is crucially important that we recognize that there have been parts of the British welfare state that have worked well and which have been extremely popular. The final (positive) snapshot is of a universal welfare institution: the National Health Service (NHS).

Legitimacy & Universalism: A Snapshot of Success

One way to understand the anxiety caused by an apparent crisis of dependency is through a contrast with aspects of our welfare system that do not tend to create this kind of stigma and punitive judgment. A key contrast is between highly targeted welfare systems (such as social housing and out-of-work benefits) and universal services such as the NHS.

The story here is of the enduring popularity of the NHS – still free to all at the point of need and funded by general taxation – compared to the historical decline in the popularity of targeted services and benefits. Even in an age where the received wisdom of our governing elites has been that the public is inherently hostile to taxation, the NHS has proved to be an exception: the 2002 budget, which increased National Insurance Contributions (NICs) by 1 per cent in order to finance increased investment in the NHS, was the most popular budget since the 1970s.

Note, too, that the popularity of the NHS has endured long after the first serious waves of immigration in the 1950s, and remained remarkably constant right up to the present day, with the proportion of the population strongly supportive of the NHS rarely falling below 80 per cent. (Lowe, 1999). As of last year, amid growing anxiety about diversity and immigration (indeed, immigration continues to be vital if the NHS is to meet its labour demands), the NHS remains very popular, recording its highest ratings ever (National Centre for Social Research, 2009). Significantly, diversity has not dented the solidarity expressed by the basic social good of healthcare for all (although there has been growing concern, in some quarters, about \‘health tourists\’) (Beckford, 2011); indeed, part of the cultural fabric of the NHS as an institution is its long history of integrating commonwealth (and now other) immigrants into its workforce, reflecting (and perhaps creating) a sense that multicultural diversity is of positive value.

There are a number of characteristics that help make the NHS so popular and explain why \‘we\’ do not see those who use it as different to \‘us\’. First, it is a truly universal service which all of us, regardless of ethnic background or economic status, have an interest in maintaining. Second, NHS provision is delivered in mixed settings: a labourer and a lawyer are more than likely to share a hospital ward, brought into proximity by common
need. Third, it seems to create a genuine feeling that, so far as health goes, we in Britain really are all ‘in it together’. Finally, largely because of the above characteristics, access to the NHS tends to be viewed as a right of *citizenship* – even part of what it means to be ‘British’ – rather than as a safety net only for the poorest. How many people, after all, have ever been ashamed of accessing the services of the NHS in preference to a private provider?

Taken together, these characteristics explain the resilience of the NHS to unpopular reforms – as we have seen with the extraordinary public and professional backlash against the reforms proposed by Health Secretary Andrew Lansley.

Next Steps

In this essay, however, it is not the political resilience of institutions built upon universalistic principles that is of primary interest to us, though this is indeed important if we want a strong and stable welfare state. Rather, the aim of this essay is to draw on the positive lessons of institutions such as the NHS, and then to apply these to the task of creating a welfare framework that has the value of equal citizenship at its heart. As I argue, this is the kind of strong welfare state that we need if we want to maintain a meaningful sense of shared national identity and solidarity in a highly diverse society.

The next step of this essay, therefore, is an examination of the empirical evidence on the relationship between diversity and solidarity. If there is an intrinsic tension between solidarity and diversity, then there is some reason to think that the strong welfare state advocated here is unrealistic.

This, however, is not the conclusion that the evidence yields.
3. Reconciling Diversity and Solidarity: The Evidence

Earlier, I outlined the thesis that there is a crisis of welfare and diversity. The deepest of these complaints suggests that there is an inherent tension between diversity and solidarity, with little or no room for a common identity and strong sense of citizenship in a diverse society. This is the suggestion of a number of commentators, most notably David Goodhart, whose 2004 essay ‘The discomfort of strangers’ really triggered the ‘solidarity-versus-diversity’ debate.15

In essence, the claim is that I will not want to support immigrants or those from a different ethnic background as much as those from my same ethnic or national group – hence a steady decline in support for the welfare state at a time of increasing diversity. This is a view that has steadily been gaining political influence. But is it true? Does it amount to a ‘crisis’? In the next section, we examine the evidence on which Goodhart’s argument drew.

Reviewing the Evidence behind Goodhart’s Thesis

Much of the evidence for the equality or diversity thesis comes from the United States of America. In particular, Goodhart’s argument was based on the influential work of Harvard economist Alberto Alesina. The central claim of this work is that racial heterogeneity is the key factor explaining the absence of a strong welfare state in the US (Alesina, Glaeser and Sacerdote, 2001; Alesina and Glaeser, 2004). The contrast here is with many European countries that are both more homogenous and which have generous welfare states. Comparing a large number of countries, Alesina and Glaeser (2004) show that the impact of ‘racial fractionalization’ on welfare spending is highly significant (taking into account a variety of other factors that might also influence spending). Indeed, they suggest that racial diversity accounts for about half the difference in spending between Europe and the US.16

Alesina and Glaeser go on to argue that diversity has weakened support for collective provision in the US for a variety of reasons. One claim is that diversity undermines the willingness of individuals to redistribute to each other, especially when (as in the US) there are marked inequalities along racial lines, meaning that welfare is seen as redistribution to ‘others’. Another important claim is that diversity prevents the development of a common political identity and therefore prevents the emergence of a mass popular movement for collective welfare. Furthermore, the authors note that racial divisions create opportunities that politicians and campaigners can exploit, particularly when such divisions are aligned with other inequalities or segregation.

If this is true, it seems plausible to predict that increasing diversity in European welfare states will lead to a decline in popular support for welfare. Indeed, this is precisely the conclusion Alesina and Glaeser draw from the American evidence, noting that, ‘As Europe has become more diverse, Europeans have increasingly been susceptible to exactly the same form of racist, anti-welfare demagoguery that worked so well in the United States’ (Alesina, Glaeser and Sacerdote, 2001: 181). In this respect, Alesina’s work contributes to a large body of research and commentary implying that, for a variety of reasons, European welfare states may be evolving inexorably in the direction of the US model.

But such analyses of the link between diversity and welfare spending, including that of Alesina, have been subject to two important criticisms. These criticisms undermine the deterministic connection drawn between increased diversity and reduced support for welfare – and, with it, the assertion (adopted by commentators such as Goodhart) that increasing diversity and immigration in Europe will necessarily bring about the decline of European welfare states.

First, the strength of the negative correlation between diversity and welfare spending in such studies tends to rely heavily on the weight of the evidence from the US. Yet America is in many respects a quite exceptional country, with a unique history when it comes to deep racial cleavages, as well as low welfare spending by international standards (Kymlicka and Banting, 2006). Thus, the strength of the relationship between diversity and welfare spending tends to be far lower when the US is excluded from such analyses. When Peter Taylor-Gooby ran a similar analysis to Alesina’s but
omitting the US, he found that increased diversity was linked to lower welfare spending, but this did not have a statistically significant impact on spending (Taylor-Gooby, 2005).

A second criticism is that such analyses can fail to consider other factors that might better explain differences in welfare spending between countries. In particular, while Alesina and colleagues controlled for a variety of other factors that are known to influence welfare spending (the age structure of the population, the constitutional framework, per capita GDP, and so on), they omitted to include the role of the left in politics. Yet many studies have shown that ‘left politics’ (in terms of left parties’ representation in Government) has a very strong influence on the shape of welfare states (Castles, 2004; Huber and Stephens, 2001; Swank, 2002).

Thus, when Taylor-Gooby conducted an analysis similar to Alesina’s but including the strength of the political left, he found not only that this was the strongest variable in explaining levels of welfare spending, but also that – once the political left variable was included – racial diversity had no statistically significant effect on welfare spending in Europe.

So once left politics are taken into account, the impact of diversity on social spending falls dramatically. As Taylor-Gooby concluded:

… the presence of the left appears able to insulate welfare systems against the impact of greater diversity among citizens. The data reviewed here indicate that it is not inevitable that Europe becomes like the US. To assert that diversity has been an important factor obstructing the development of state welfare in the US may be justified. To claim that it will therefore undermine welfare statism in the existing European context is to go beyond the evidence. (Taylor-Gooby, 2005: 671)

Diversity, Welfare Regimes and Support for Spending

As we have just seen, there is good reason to think that the impact of immigration and diversity on the strength of welfare states is seriously overstated. This is not to say that there is no impact. As I argued in the previous chapter, tensions do exist and in the wrong political context diversity can indeed be made toxic, which over time is likely to have an impact on support for a strong welfare state.

But even where a relationship has been found, it turns out that this is often mediated by – and potentially overridden by – other factors. Of particular relevance to the argument set out here is that the structure of welfare institutions often seems to be a crucial factor, overriding any negative effects of increased diversity. In short, universalist welfare states tend to deal with diversity better.

This lesson comes through most clearly in the extensive literature on different ‘welfare regimes’ (for example, liberal, Christian democratic or social democratic welfare states). Mau and Burkhardt, for example, explored the impact of diversity on attitudes to welfare spending, finding that the proportion of non-nationals in the population has a very weak (but significant) effect on attitudes, but that this was less important than factors such as the welfare regime (Mau and Burkhardt, 2007). Thus, ‘attitudes are not just a simple reflex reaction to the degree of fractionalization. They are mediated institutionally’, and key factors in public attitudes to immigration are ‘whether inclusion is institutionally organized and whether social benefits schemes have been so constructed that they reinforce or weaken conflicts over redistribution’ (Mau and Burkhardt, 2007: 25). A key example, as we saw in the previous chapter, is the way that the very tight rationing of social housing has created tensions around who receives support and who doesn’t; a perception that in some areas of the country very easily maps onto racial and ethnic difference.

This thesis is also backed up by evidence on how spending on particular types of welfare and public services varies with diversity. In a study covering a large number of countries, Sanderson (2004) found a very strong negative relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and spending on welfare programmes such as out-of-work benefits, social assistance and public housing, but no such relationship with spending on health and education. As he points out, social assistance is often targeted and likely to be seen by some as going primarily to ethnic groups other than their own; by contrast, health and education are usually universal, benefiting everyone.

Another relevant set of studies are those showing that the effect of immigration on social spending is unrelated to the size of the migrant stock, but rather is related to how quickly the migrant stock is increasing. For example, Soroka and colleagues (2004) found that, over a thirty-year period, the faster the increase in the migrant stock, the slower the rate of growth in social spending (though interestingly in no country in their study did immigration lead to a reduction in social spending). Similarly, Banting and colleagues (2006) found that
the relative size of the immigrant population has no impact on social spending across OECD countries, although, again, spending growth appears to be slower in countries with very rapid immigration. Importantly, these findings suggest that it is not diversity per se that is the issue, but rather the way in which increases in diversity are managed by society – including how political actors and policymakers respond to immigration.

All this suggests that how policy makers design welfare programmes may ultimately prove of greater significance in sustaining support for welfare within diverse societies than the fact of diversity itself. Optimally-designed programmes could override tensions posed by increased diversity, while poorly-designed programmes that emphasize racial or ethnic divisions could exacerbate tensions.

**Diversity and Trust**

As with the relationship between diversity and support for welfare, a range of studies within the US have argued that diversity and immigration have undermined trust and social capital. This similarly merits our attention since both trust and social capital could be important (maybe even necessary) for generating and maintaining solidarity. These studies link to more general studies of social capital, such as Robert Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (Putnam, 2000), which argue that social cohesion is in decline, with worrying implications for collectivism.

Two key studies by Alesina and La Ferrara find that: (1) ‘participation in social activities is significantly lower in more unequal and in more racially or ethnically fragmented localities’ (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2000); and (2) ‘living in a racially mixed community and/or in one with a high degree of income disparity’ is associated with low levels of trust (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002). Other studies from the US come to similar conclusions (Costa and Kahn 2003; Glaeser, Laibson, Scheinkman and Soutter, 2000), as do a number of international studies. One comparative study found that ethnic homogeneity is associated with high levels of trust, along with other factors such as relatively low levels of income equality (Delhey and Newton, 2005).

Now, one response to such evidence is simply to line up the large number of studies that find against this type of conclusion. In particular, there is an emerging body of evidence that highlights the sense in which it is poverty and not diversity that undermines local trust and social capital. For example, Natalia Letki (2008) has studied social capital in deprived British communities and found that poverty was a far more important variable than racial diversity:
‘Deprivation and disorder damage the sense of community: they erode formal and informal interactions, which in turn lowers interpersonal trust and the sense of belonging to a neighbourhood’.

Similar conclusions have been drawn in other studies (e.g. Crepaz, 2006).

Yet, as Letki (2008) rightly notes, it is racial diversity that is so often blamed for a loss of social capital, trust and solidarity. In part, this is because race and poverty so often collide, especially in the extraordinary racial politics of the US. (Indeed, as with the relation between diversity and support for welfare, discussed above, it is precisely for this reason that we should be wary about drawing general conclusions solely from US studies.) In Britain, we should certainly be taking an approach that recognizes inequality and racial diversity as distinct variables but that nevertheless is framed in terms of reconciling equality and diversity, rather than the terms set by the ‘equality or diversity’ debate (Johnson, 2010).

The reason for the intersection of poverty and diversity in Britain is simply that a disproportionate number of those in ethnic minorities are poor. As argued elsewhere in this essay, this brings with it a reliance on a weak welfare state that sometimes literally segregates low-income families from the rest of society – as often happens with housing and schooling – and which, at its worst, confers an inferior social status on welfare recipients. Understanding this type of systemic and cultural interaction of poverty with race and ethnicity is therefore of more importance than a simple list of empirical evidence for and against the trust-diversity trade-off.

In summary, a key message coming out of the cross-national studies of diversity and support for welfare is that the relationship between these two phenomena is mediated by a number of factors, including the structure of welfare states themselves (as well as other aspects of difference, such as socioeconomic inequalities).

Why should this be so? The contention here is that the structure of welfare institutions is important because of the impact that this has on individual and collective identity and on social relations. I have already sketched the historical evidence for this argument in the previous chapter. The remainder of this chapter looks at recent developments in social psychology and political science that help us to understand why the design of institutions can have such a powerful effect on public attitudes to welfare.

In so doing, I explain how and why the universal institutions of a strong welfare state can create a shared identity – and a strong sense of citizenship and belonging – that can not only coexist with the more specific identities of a multicultural society, but on some occasions can ‘trump’ them.

**Welfare Coverage, Identity and Group Membership**

The coverage of a social policy – whether universal or targeted – can profoundly affect our perceptions of each other in the way it divides the population into distinct groups of recipients and non-recipients. Social psychological research demonstrates that categorizing people into groups with separate identities tends to make people perceive a sense of positive group distinctiveness, where the ‘ingroup’ is favoured over the ‘outgroup’. This leads them to look for dimensions on which their own group is perceived to be superior to the outgroup and to emphasize these dimensions, often leading to negative judgements and stigmatization of those in outgroups (Tajfel and Turner, 1986). In this way, different social identities can create social distance between individuals.

We have seen this repeatedly throughout welfare history, with narrow targeting often leading to the ‘othering’ of welfare recipients, and resulting in judgemental attitudes towards them. Over the longer term, the increased social distance between recipients and non-recipients can result in reduced public willingness to redistribute to the disadvantaged group (and to contribute through taxation to the policy in question) (Brewer and Kramer, 1986).

So the way in which policy divides up a population can actually constitute and shape the social relationships between individuals and groups. Of course, pre-existing social cleavages (defined by class, geographical and other boundaries) can historically give rise to policy structures based on those cleavages. But the claim here is that the causality works the other way around too: that choices about the coverage of institutions actually create groups within society with their own social identity. By contrast, policies with universal coverage automatically define recipients as part of the same group as everyone else, thereby reducing social distance and potentially enhancing willingness to redistribute. That is why no one
suffers stigma for using universal institutions and why increased spending on universal institutions is usually quite popular.

The ways in which institutional coverage can shape group membership are particularly relevant to the politics of diversity and welfare. Racial and ethnic differences – as with other types of difference – produce sub-groups within a society. Institutions that treat these sub-groups in different ways will tend to reinforce these separate racial or ethnic identities, potentially exacerbating tensions and divisions. By contrast, organizing institutions in a way that cuts across or unites different sub-groups will tend to highlight other (potentially broader) aspects of citizens’ identity, making racial or ethnic identity less relevant to the politics of welfare.

Canada is a good example of a country that is both ethnically diverse and which has had a strong welfare state. In an early response to Goodhart’s essay, Nick Pearce pin-pointed just why Canadian analysts do not see the kind of tension between solidarity and diversity that is such a strong feature of the US studies. According to Pearce, Canada has a robust sense of welfare and citizenship because:

‘First, the Canadian welfare state places relatively little reliance on means-tested benefits that immigrants might qualify for on arrival, mitigating hostility to welfare transfers. Second, immigrants have historically been integrated into the workforce relatively rapidly, which again promotes a perception that newcomers are making a positive contribution to society. Third, and most tentatively, Canadian national identity has from its inception both encompassed difference and stressed commonality of citizenship, and this may have been critical in Canadians’ relative acceptance of diversity’. (Pearce, 2004)

Crucially, where universal institutions are successful in highlighting shared identity they can trump difference: they create what psychologists call a higher or ‘superordinate’ identity, which enables citizens with different racial or ethnic identities to nevertheless see themselves as part of the same group.

The power of this phenomenon has been the subject of a series of studies by psychologists Tom Tyler and Heather Smith, where they have found that people are more willing to redistribute to disadvantaged groups if they see them as part of the same superordinate group as them. Indeed, superordinate identification can become far more important in shaping people’s political attitudes and actions than subgroup identification. To quote Tyler:

‘The centrality of superordinate identification matters because we know a great deal about how to create and maintain superordinate identification among immigrants, minorities and others…. Superordinate identification can be strengthened by creating opportunities for members of different groups to work across group boundaries to pursue commonly beneficial goals’. (Tyler, 2009)

Indeed, this suggests that, in addition to universalism per se, policies that encourage mix and social interaction will also be very important for successfully managing welfare in a diverse society. Indeed, while a range of academic studies show that people living in racially homogenous communities tend to hold more negative views of out-groups (Oliver and Wong, 2003; Powers and Ellison, 1995), other studies show that ordinary contact over a sustained period of time diminishes racial prejudice (Jackman and Crane, 1986). Significantly, this can also bring with it a measurable effect on solidaristic characteristics such as interpersonal trust (Marschall and Stolle, 2004). Research conducted for the Department for Communities and Local Government (2006), based on an analysis of the 2005 Citizenship Survey, found that deprivation was one of the key variables explaining the level of community cohesion. People living in more affluent areas were significantly more likely to report that people from different backgrounds got along and that ethnic differences were respected.

Finally, it is worth noting that promoting universalism is only one application of these insights about group psychology. Another could be to foster a stronger sense of common national identity. In another study, for example, Smith and Tyler (1996) found that US citizens who thought of themselves primarily as ‘Americans’ rather than ‘white Americans’ were more likely to support welfare policy targeted at black Americans than citizens who thought of themselves primarily as ‘white Americans’. Similarly, white US citizens who thought of black Americans primarily as ‘Americans’ rather than as ‘black Americans’ were more likely to support policy targeted at black Americans.

Coverage and Perceptions of Fairness

A further point is that, in shaping social identities, the coverage of welfare policies can also affect...
individuals’ evaluations of fairness in welfare. For example, the social distance created by targeting may reduce perceptions of the ‘deservingness’ of welfare recipients, thereby reducing support for welfare policies targeted at them (van Oorschot, 2000).

Again, this effect is particularly acute in the context of immigration and welfare. Looking at attitudinal data from the European Values Survey, a recent study by Van Oorschot (2006) finds that Europeans in 23 countries largely share a common ‘deservingness culture’: elderly people are seen as most deserving, closely followed by the sick and disabled; conversely, unemployed people are seen as less deserving, and immigrants are rated as least deserving of all. Indeed, the majority of Europeans are highly unwilling to support welfare framed as transfers to immigrants. Van Oorschot argues that: ‘if in Europe welfare should become negatively associated with “immigrants”, as it is with “blacks” in the USA, the legitimacy of the whole welfare system might be affected, with as a likely longer-term outcome, a reduction of the level of generosity’ (Van Oorschot, 2006: 38).

There are two points to make here. First, this reminds us that when welfare is targeted, special effort is necessary to ensure that the welfare contract is seen as fair and that there is a sense of perceived reciprocity – an issue that we will examine further below.

Secondly, and more generally, it shows us why universal policies are often highly popular and why they are rarely the subject of painful debates about entitlement and fraud. As Larsen (2007) points out, whereas selectivity ‘opens up’ a range of questions about who benefits from welfare policy and how deserving they are, universalism tends to ‘close them down’.

Now we can see why segregated services such as housing, discussed earlier, create social distance and undermine solidarity. But the same point applies to individual benefits such as Jobseeker’s Allowance (JSA) as well. In a study of Scandinavian welfare states, looking specifically at housing allowances and social assistance, Christian Larsen (2007) has found that the more targeted a benefit is the more it creates a sense of social stigma. The results are represented in Table 2 below and show a marked correlation between narrow coverage and wider perceptions of stigma. Norway targets housing assistance on far fewer people than in the other countries, and there is correspondingly greater stigma attached to recipients. By contrast, the coverage of social assistance is greater in Finland than in the other countries, and there is correspondingly less stigma attached to recipients.

A recent survey for the Fabian Society on attitudes to social housing – briefly cited in the previous chapter – shows the same phenomenon, with important implications for the debate about the relationship between diversity, welfare and solidarity (Gregory, 2009). Respondents who felt the most ‘socially distant’ from social housing

Table 2. The link between media coverage and stigma

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Denmark</th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Norway</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Allowance coverage (% of population receiving it)</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td><strong>1.1</strong></td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigma associated with Housing Allowances (% of population saying Housing Allowance recipients are looked down on)</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td><strong>23.0</strong></td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Assistance coverage (% of population receiving it)</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td><strong>9.0</strong></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigma associated with Social Assistance (% of population saying Social Assistance recipients are looked down on)</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td><strong>49.0</strong></td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>68.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Larsen (2007)
tenants also had the most negative attitudes towards mixing with them and towards welfare provision more broadly. For example, those who felt they had ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ in common with council tenants supported the idea of mixed communities by a margin of 59 per cent in favour to 37 per cent against. By contrast, those who felt they had ‘not very much’ or ‘nothing’ in common with them opposed mixed communities by a margin of 36 per cent in favour to 60 per cent against. And while those who felt they had ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ in common with council tenants agreed with the statement that ‘the Government should spend more on welfare benefits for the poor, even if it leads to higher taxes’ by a margin of 43 per cent in favour to 35 per cent against, those who felt they had ‘not very much’ or ‘nothing’ in common with them disagreed with this by a margin of 30 per cent in favour to 47 per cent against.

**Reciprocity and Solidarity**

**Reciprocity and public attitudes to welfare recipients**

Just as the coverage of welfare policy can structure the social relations between individuals and groups, so can the distributional principles on which policy is organized. David Miller (1999) has set out how the principles by which goods and services are allocated impose a particular character on to the social relations between individuals. For example, allocation by desert implies competitive relations between individuals, while equal allocation emphasises common identity and equal social status. Importantly, need-based allocation can sometimes imply sympathetic or solidaristic relations, but can also have a potentially distancing quality (emphasising the ways in which recipients differ from contributors).

In turn, perceptions of the type of relations that exist between individuals can alter attitudes about the appropriate way of sharing resources among a group. Social psychologists have often noted that the way in which people prefer to allocate resources in a group depends on the character of the group in question; for example, experiments show that the experience of working cooperatively helps to shift people from supporting allocation by desert towards greater support for equal allocation (Deutsch, 1985). In the same way, how welfare programmes cast the social relations between recipients and everyone else is of paramount importance in determining whether or not people think they are fair.

So this issue is ultimately about the way in which welfare programmes portray the recipients of welfare. Are they participating or failing to participate? Are they deserving or not? Are they receiving welfare for being full members of society or for falling short of full membership? Welfare programmes that fail to cultivate the perception that the system is fair actually do their beneficiaries a great disservice.

Research suggests that much opposition to welfare is driven by a perceived lack of reciprocity in the system: the sense that some people are taking out of the system without putting in – or without any intention of putting in.

Table 3 below (page 17) shows the results of a survey (Bamfield and Horton, 2009) testing the relationship between support for redistribution and beliefs about reciprocity. Overall, just 24 per cent of those in the survey agreed with the statement that ‘Government should spend more on benefits for the poor, even if it leads to higher taxes for everyone else’ (with 49 per cent disagreeing) (Bamfield and Horton, 2009). But of those agreeing that ‘most people who receive benefits now will make a contribution back to society in the future, through activities like employment or caring for others’, 49 per cent agreed that ‘Government should spend more on benefits for the poor, even if it leads to higher taxes for everyone else’ (with 27 per cent disagreeing).

By contrast, of those disagreeing that ‘most people who receive benefits now will make a contribution back to society in the future, through activities like employment or caring for others’, just 11 per cent agreed that ‘Government should spend more on benefits for the poor, even if it leads to higher taxes for everyone else’ (with 72 per cent disagreeing).

Focus groups conducted to follow up this survey confirmed that this lack of perceived reciprocity was a far stronger factor in driving support for (or opposition to) redistribution than any other beliefs or demographic factors, including measures of self-interest. Clearly, this is a crucial dynamic and, as we shall see, it can ‘trump’ negative views of immigration.

The figures in Table 3 show that reciprocity in welfare is incredibly important for creating a sense of public legitimacy.

**Reciprocity as a driver of inclusion and generosity**

Often, reciprocity in welfare, whether via insurance contributions or conditionality of benefit receipt,
Indeed, all participants in our focus groups said they would be happy to support an immigrant who had arrived in the UK to take up a job offer, only to find that the company collapsed almost on arrival. The key point here is that it is the intention to work, and not racial or ethnic identity, that counts when it comes to public support for welfare.

This is backed up by data from the 2005 British Social Attitudes Survey (National Centre for Social Research, 2005), which asked people about what kinds of factors might justify limiting a person’s access to unemployment benefit (see Table 4 below) (Sefton, 2005). The circumstance in which the largest number of people (78 per cent) thought it right to limit people’s access was if ‘they were not actively looking for work’; this dwarfed the effect of other factors, including those wanting to limit access if the individual was ‘not born in Britain, but settled here more that two years ago’ (22 per cent) or if the individual ‘recently came to Britain because they were in danger at home’ (21 per cent).22

As Table 5 (on page 19) shows, policies which are seen to satisfy the demands of reciprocity – even highly redistributive policies – can garner a huge depth of public support (and do so across the political spectrum).

To summarize, ‘playing by the rules’ and making a social contribution appear to remove concerns about undeserved dependence, and create a sense of entitlement that can quite easily trump racial or ethnic diversity.

What we owe to each other is central to any account of solidarity, as central as a common sense of identity. And it is precisely the apparent breakdown of mutual obligation that has done so much to undermine our welfare state and to inflame public hostility to immigrants.

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**Table 3. Support for redistribution and beliefs about reciprocity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Net agree (agree minus not agree) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Government should spend more on benefits for the poor, even if it leads to higher taxes for everyone else</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of those agreeing that most people on benefits will make a contribution to society in future</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of those disagreeing that most people on benefits will make a contribution to society in future</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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18 Runnymede Perspectives
Table 4. Attitudes concerning eligibility for unemployment benefit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under what circumstances would it be right to limit a person’s access to unemployment benefit?</th>
<th>Percentage agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They were not actively looking for work</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They had not paid much in taxes because they had been unemployed for a long time</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They were not born in Britain, but settled here more than two years ago</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They recently came to Britain because they were in danger at home</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They had not paid much in taxes because they were bringing up children</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Sefton (2005)

Table 5. Support for a higher minimum wage and more financial support for carers

|                                                               | All (% agree) | Conservative supporters (% agree) | Labour supporters (% agree) |
|                                                               |               |                                  |                             |
| Higher national minimum wage?                                | 81            | 75                                | 87                          |
| More financial support for carers?                           | 85            | 86                                | 88                          |

Source: Bamfield and Horton (2009)
4. Policy Implications

During 2010 and the first half of 2011 there has been a very rapid pace of policy development across a wide range of areas, most noticeably in the welfare system. A range of benefits are to be cut, social housing is being radically overhauled, and the NHS is about to undergo the biggest structural changes it has faced since its inception in 1948. At the same time, as we saw in the opening chapter of this essay, the issue of multiculturalism has once again apparently risen to the top of the political and policy agenda. It is this latter policy agenda that is the primary focus of the first part of this chapter. The remainder of the chapter looks at the intersection of multicultural policy and welfare policy, with a view to creating forms of welfare institutions that help create a common identity and strong social relations across different cultures.

The Legacy of 2001 & 2005

The UK’s current policy framework for dealing with multicultural difference is profoundly shaped by two key events: the race riots in the North of England in 2001 and the domestic terrorist attacks in London in July 2005. Significantly, policy change has been driven by two crises. In many respects the resulting policy frameworks are therefore reactive and driven by events. As such, there has been a tendency to miss the deeper issues underlying identity cleavages associated with the facts of multiculturalism.

This tendency was less marked in the earlier reaction to the 2001 riots. Following the riots, the Home Office commissioned an Independent Community Cohesion Review, led by Ted Cantle, which concluded that the ‘parallel lives’ lived by the white and Asian communities in some northern towns (such as Bradford, Oldham and Burnley) were embedded in the infrastructure of the area; schools and housing, in particular, were spatially segregated along ethnic lines (Home Office, 2001). Five years later Cantle followed this up with another report, commissioned by Oldham Council, which recommended the same kind of long-term structural changes to welfare and service provision advocated here – for example, the pursuit of genuinely mixed housing provision (both in terms of tenure and race), and a ‘similarly long-term, but determined approach – which goes beyond twinning and related activities… in tackling continuing segregation in schools’ (Institute of Community Cohesion, 2006: 9).

Unfortunately, this policy agenda seems to have been largely supplanted by the bombings of 2005. This led directly to the ‘Prevent Strategy’, which aims to prevent the radicalization of young Muslim men, in particular. This is of course a sensible approach to adopt in certain contexts. The local initiatives – for example, local mentoring schemes or sports schemes – funded under this regime are a good example of a well-targeted intervention.

However, as an over-arching strategy this approach has some serious problems. At the heart of these problems is the way in which Prevent has tended to lead to an elision of ‘multiculturalism’, ‘cohesion’ and ‘extremism’. In other words, there is a strong tendency since 2005 for community cohesion policy (and, by extension, multicultural policy) to be dictated by an agenda on extremism. This, as we have seen, is one of the key criticisms leveled against David Cameron’s recent assertion that ‘multiculturalism has failed’: it creates the impression that multiculturalism per se is inherently problematic, that it encourages a divisive sense of difference – of ‘them and us’ – in which extremism can breed. In part, this is because a large number of the initiatives funded under the Prevent agenda focus on ‘dialogue’ between groups; namely, bringing people together because they are different, to discuss and focus on their differences (and perhaps simply reinforcing them). This is not to say that a dialogue approach is always inappropriate, but we must recognize its real limitations, especially the impracticality of applying it as a more mainstream approach to cultural cohesion.

A different framework, developed by the 2007 Commission on Integration and Cohesion (CIC, 2007), is far more promising for our purposes. At the heart of is the presumption that integration cohesion is ‘everyone’s business’, even in relatively culturally homogenous communities. Though the Commission does not use the language of solidarity, it is inherent in its view of the intrinsic worth of social interaction and common belonging in any community. Crucially, this framework also recognizes that poverty is more destructive of social cohesion than ethnic or cultural difference, and that cohesion should not be left to ‘bolt-on’
Diversity and Solidarity

initiatives, but should instead be embedded in the mainstream provision of core services. Finally, there is a welcome emphasis on needs and services, rather than just on dialogue. For example, considerable emphasis is placed on the importance of social and ethnic mix in schools, recognizing the value of extended schools services in creating a degree of interaction between parents as well as children.

Moreover some key policies have actually been taken forwards. Schools now have a duty to promote community cohesion (Education and Inspections Act, 2006). In 2008 there was also a move to integrate adult language learning into a more coherent cohesion framework (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, 2008). Other developments include John Denham’s ‘Connected Communities’ programme, launched in 2009, which sought to engage with disaffected white communities in deprived areas, pursuing a cohesion strategy with all the residents of a neighbourhood – not just immigrants needing to be ‘integrated’.

Nevertheless, these kinds of ‘community cohesion’ policies are too often conceived as ‘special measures’ and are too focused on a naïve faith in the power of dialogue or intensive initiatives (e.g. DCLG, 2008). Whilst there is a time and a place for such measures, it is too ambitious to think that they can achieve the kind of normality we need. Few people want to spend their time in such discussions. Community leaders might do so, but for real solidarity we need something far wider and less intense. We can also add to this another objection to dialogue for its own sake: the very fact that these are seen to be special initiatives might only serve to accentuate a sense of difference. In fact, where social mix occurs in a more active way it is nearly always because groups of individuals coalesce around solutions to common problems, and not to discuss cultural differences.

It is also the case that our public policy debate here – and, inevitably, the actual policy framework – is driven too much by the language of crisis and the fear of extremism. Given the content of the Prime Minister’s recent speech, drawing a close parallel between multiculturalism and extremism, this looks set to be the default framework for some time to come. In contrast, in the remainder of this essay I set out some policy principles and objectives that build on some of the more positive and holistic policy thinking of the last ten years, and give some practical content to the argument of this essay: that strong welfare institutions can help build a common sense of identity and citizenship in a highly diverse society.

Diversity and Welfare: Lessons for Policymakers

1) Welfare systems should promote common identity and social citizenship

As argued throughout this essay, a shared sense of identity at some level is crucial if we want to live in a cohesive and solidaristic multicultural society. I have also argued that properly structured welfare institutions have a vital role to play in the creation of this identity. Thus the first principle is that, so far as is possible and appropriate, welfare institutions should tend towards inclusion in coverage and integration.

This does not mean that there is an equal distribution of benefits and services. Allocation on the basis of need will always be an important constraint. What it does mean is that instead of starting from a default assumption of narrow targeting, we should measure the wider social costs and implications of targeting and residualization. Targeting in some contexts, as in the case of the worst social housing, actually a self-defeating policy design, often ineffective at tackling social disadvantage and inadvertently contributing to social exclusion?

We see several areas where defending and promoting universalism could be very important for fostering social cohesion or – just as importantly – preventing the future development of politicized welfare cleavages. One is maintaining the near-universalism of the tax credit system, which has been such an important vehicle for giving financial support to families in a non-stigmatized way. Many aspects of our welfare state are already residualized far too much; it would be a catastrophe if tax credits became a stigmatized system ‘for the poorest’, their value stagnating through a lack of popular buy-in.

Free school meals (FSM) are another area where a more universal approach has great potential. In recent years, many schools have improved the administration of free school meals in order to reduce any stigma associated with claiming them (such as using common ‘swipe cards’, rather than vouchers or registration for FSM pupils).
Nevertheless, there is still further to go: around a third of a million pupils entitled to free school meals still do not claim them. Increasing the coverage of free school meals – eventually moving towards universality – would not only improve child health and address the disincentives for parents moving from out-of-work benefits and into work; it would help (in one important way) to foster social equality between schoolchildren.

There are also challenges in the coverage of public services. One real concern – discussed more in the next section – about cuts in financial support for Sure Start is that it will become a more targeted service focused only on ‘problem families’, which would bring with it a range of disadvantages. Looking to the future, another big challenge will be the future evolution of care services, where the Government does not seem to share the vision of a universal National Care Service. While the prospect of a significant expansion in free care services remains dim in the immediate term given the current state of the public finances, if state support for care services over the long term remains heavily means-tested, the risk is not simply that many will struggle to access the services they need, but that care becomes yet another site of social division.

None of these policy programmes has a specific ethnic minority dimension. That is precisely the point. What we desperately need to avoid is a future for the welfare state in which benefits and services such as these become part of a residualized set of institutions, surrounded by a toxic politics of ‘them and us’. That would create the conditions in which immigration and diversity interact with an underlying politics of grievances over welfare, setting already-low support for targeted services on a further declining path.

(2) Welfare institutions should promote mix and interaction

Where possible, our welfare institutions should promote mix and interaction. Mix has been a central feature of the account of social housing in earlier chapters. In Britain, the general impact of mixed tenure (and income) communities has led to similar conclusions in the context of social and economic status. The seemingly prosaic but important conclusion is that social proximity creates an environment in which people in different tenures and with different incomes regard one another as ‘ordinary’ (Allen et al., 2005).

When it comes to race, there has been too little attention paid to the role of housing mix in changing attitudes and creating these important perceptions of ordinariness. A notable exception is the work of Home Group (formerly Nashaymann Housing Association) in Yorkshire (see Box 3), which has consciously sought to use housing as a means of encouraging ethnic mix. This is an example of active intervention that is not naive or patronizing, and which could serve as a model for a more mainstream approach to housing and planning policy nationally.

One of the controversial developments at the end of the Labour Government’s last term in office was a move towards a ‘fair but flexible’ allocations system. The current Government is pursuing a similar strategy. In essence, the new system seeks to give local authorities permission to allocate houses to ‘local’ families who might not be allocated a home strictly on the basis of need. At the time, many critics voiced concerns that this was a policy pandering to the politics of race. However, a key aim of the policy was to create greater income mix in social housing, as part of a positive mixed-communities strategy in which needs-based rationing was relaxed in order to let more working households in. Given the high proportion of ethnic minority households in social housing, this has a direct and ultimately positive impact on racial and ethnic mix. It will help break down the stigma of social housing – sometimes associated with ethnic minority groups – and can potentially be used as a vehicle of ethnic and cultural mix. As such, this is a policy development we should support (even with caution) rather than oppose for fear that it is simply a response to anxiety about immigration.

There are lessons to be learned about mix and interaction in other areas too. Sure Start centres can play an important role here, as can a number of health services. The general point is that we need to encourage sites of face-to-face interaction between both the users of services, and between users and service providers. Sure Start, of course, is part of an early years strategy, aimed at improving child development and supporting parents. But its original conception was also driven by the desire to create greater social capital – greater social connection and interaction – in deprived areas (Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007). Later, these same principles were extended to all areas.

At present, in reaction to significant cuts in their
grant revenue, local authorities are cutting funding for Children’s Centres. Research suggests that this will cause a significant number to close or reduce their services. The Government is currently making a virtue of this apparent necessity by arguing that the Sure Start programme no longer serves the purpose it was designed for—a targeted intervention in the most deprived communities. Whilst it is true that the programme was designed with this aim, its evolution as a more mainstream service has been a highly positive development. In particular, as we see with many Children’s Centres, they can be highly effective in bringing different social groups together in a normal setting.

One of the keys to success was ensuring that at least some of the houses met the specific—and seemingly mundane—requirements of some Asian households. This included especially deep kitchen sinks to cope with the demands of cooking and washing up for large family gatherings, as well as (in some houses) a back and front sitting room for men and women to socialize separately at large gatherings in Muslim homes. Other relatively simple measures were to ensure that Asian families moved in blocks, to ease any sense of cultural transition and ensure that they immediately had familiar neighbours, as well as ensuring the local housing officer remained in close contact with new households to trouble-shoot any problems—and to act quickly in the event of any racist behaviour. The fact, however, is that after seven years the neighbourhood is cohesive and popular. Many of the original white residents have sought to buy their home off their social landlord, and residents report a happy sense of mix and interaction, with mothers being particularly keen for their children to mix and learn from other cultures. Crucially, none of this process was about ‘dialogue’ or explicit ‘understanding’. Instead the key to success is the simple formula of providing core services to a range of ‘ordinary’ people in a normal setting.

Social mix would also be lost—both mix between families from different socioeconomic groups, and mix between families from different ethnic groups.

So, it is an incredibly important social priority to keep Sure Start Children’s Centres open to all families. A recent survey of mums by parenting club Bounty asked people about the impact on them if access to Sure Start Children’s Centres were removed or restricted. Some 53 per cent of those using Sure Start said that they would find it harder to meet other families, and 35 per cent said they would feel more isolated. Yet it was clear that they also thought the element of social mix was a very important part of Sure Start: an enormous 80 per cent said that their child ‘would benefit from mixing with children from a range of different backgrounds’.

There is also a lot to be learnt from the Sure Start model in thinking about how to promote deeper social mix and interaction in schools. In recent years, this has been increasingly recognized, including through child and parent participation in extended school activities (CIC, 2007).
Box 4. Sure Start

A key example of everyday interaction at work can be found in the Longsight Sure Start Children’s Centre in Manchester. This centre is located in a truly mixed community, with around 40 per cent of the catchment area being white working class, and the rest a mixture of predominantly Asian communities. The centre has had contact with an impressive 3000 out of 7000 households in the target area, and its services are used in equal proportion by different ethnic groups. A lot of this contact has been through outreach, going door-to-door to make individuals aware of what is on offer. But the interesting form of contact is the interaction of users around the provision of core services. For example, there is a Citizens Advice Bureau located in the centre, and this draws a large number of fathers in. Other advisory and training services – such as parenting advice and support – are offered in a group setting.

This is where the model of interaction around practical issues is probably most powerful. Groups meet weekly for several months, during which time families from different ethnic groups interact in an intimate setting that concentrates on common problems and solutions rather than cultural differences. Staff at the centre report meaningful interaction between different groups where previously there had been very little. In terms of common identity and shared norms, one of the more important outcomes has been a shift in cultural attitudes to domestic abuse. Domestic violence would never be something women would acknowledge publicly or seek help for – they would just see it as something which they had to put up with rather than shame their families. Over time, a number of women from the different Asian communities have come to no longer regard this as a private matter. So respecting difference does not mean the abandonment of liberal values.

Local authorities should be encouraged to think much more proactively about how to use inter-school activities and extended schools networks as part of a broader cohesion strategy. This need not require extra funds or bureaucratic layers. The principle could be as simple as alternating the location of activities between two schools in relatively close proximity, or joining together the groups from the two schools. Targeting evening classes on parents could work in a similar way, with mixed groups alternating between two locations.

(3) Targeted policies should depict recipients as responsible, reciprocating members of society

Where targeting and selection on the basis of need is necessary, it is important for a sense of reciprocity to be built clearly into the system in order to foster a sense of equal citizenship. A primary cause of the difficult politics of welfare in the UK has been the decline over the last 30 years of a widely understood contributory system of unemployment and sickness insurance, where benefits paid out were seen to be balanced by contributions put in. Today, with the exception of the Basic State Pension (where the contributory basis remains well-understood, and the scheme remains highly popular), the contributory system has been allowed to shrink to the point that it fails to fulfil this important principle of reciprocity. Instead, out-of-work welfare is widely seen by the public as need-based transfers to a particular group.

Over the long term, a key strategy for reversing this declining faith in the integrity of the system must be to reclaim the principles of reciprocity and to reinvigorate the ethos of social insurance within our welfare system – not just in out-of-work benefits, but in services too, such as long-term care. Retaining welfare conditionality will also be important for fostering a sense of public legitimacy around welfare.

There are challenges here for both left and right. As we discussed in the previous chapter, though an insistence on reciprocity is sometimes controversial because it places conditions on the receipt of welfare, it is also an incredibly important part of a strategy of social inclusion. But the test must be whether or not it serves the purpose of inclusion. A key problem with our narratives of conditionality over the last decade is that they have been presented in the inflammatory language of welfare ‘crackdowns’. If we are to foster a sense of solidarity with welfare recipients, a crucial
priority must be changing our public language of welfare conditionality, which currently only serves to increase the social distance between claimants and everyone else, whilst deepening public anxieties around fraud. The welfare reciprocity we envisage would be a much more positive kind of social contract, one that could lead to increased public confidence in the integrity of the system, and thus would make an important contribution to de-fusing difficult debates around diversity and welfare.

The flip side of a social contract requiring a contribution to society is that Government has a role in ensuring people are able to make such a contribution. This means providing work opportunities in disadvantaged areas, support for childcare and transport costs so that parents can work, education and training so that people are able to take up employment opportunities, and so on. Yet many of these important areas are currently subject to cuts, which will make integration into society harder for many social groups.

In the context of promoting reciprocity and de-fusing the sense of ‘them and us’, if we were to single out a key area for attention it would be the proposed cuts to funding of English for speakers of other languages (Esol). The proposal is that free access to Esol lessons will be restricted to individuals on Jobseeker’s Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance, excluding those who rely on other assistance such as Housing Benefit or tax credits.

Restriction of Esol funding is short-sighted and runs counter to the Government’s claim that we need to do more to create a common sense of belonging and identity in Britain. One estimate is that this will lead to 70 per cent of students dropping out from such courses (Helm, 2011). This, of course, will have a negative impact on employment prospects and broader opportunities for these individuals – as well as on their opportunity to make a full contribution to British society. More generally, it will exclude them from a full sense of citizenship and their inability to speak English may well cause others to resent their presence.

Finally, given our belief in the importance of reciprocity within the welfare system, the proposal to merge income tax and National Insurance is misguided. Instead, we should use the opportunity of tax reform to increase this connection between contribution and receipt. Significantly, the Chancellor has said that the Government remains committed to the contributory principle. The challenge for tax simplification is to enshrine this principle in a clear and visible way. This does not necessarily require a separate payment system, but does require an element of hypothecation.
Conclusion

In this essay I have focused on the potentially negative impact that crudely targeted welfare systems can have on solidarity and cohesion, particularly where poverty collides with the politics of race. My aim in so doing has been to counter the potentially dangerous narrative of a ‘crisis’ of diversity and solidarity, and to argue against the thesis that ethnic diversity is incompatible with support for a strong welfare state. In this respect, much of this essay has been arguing against an unduly pessimistic politics of welfare.

But there is also a more positive message to be taken away from this essay. That message is that welfare can be about much more than the treatment of poverty; it can also – with the right kind of institutions – help shape a sense of national identity and citizenship. This does not mean that we have to pursue a naïvely utopian view of solidarity, in which we imagine ourselves all happily befriending our neighbours, no matter how different their status and background. The more modest objective should simply be to promote social proximity, rather than active interaction, and the sense that people from different backgrounds are simply ‘ordinary’ and ‘like us’.

Modest though this agenda may seem to be, it could and should also pave the way for a new, positive consensus on our ability as a society to embrace diversity without undermining solidarity. That consensus should include a majority of those who have suggested that there is a serious tension between diversity and solidarity – an argument that this essay has directly addressed. Their concern, largely, comes from the same source that has been motivating this essay: the desire for a cohesive society that values freedom and solidarity equally. It may well be the case that the real debate, once we have avoided the mythology of a ‘crisis’ of diversity, lies elsewhere, in the debate about the nature of collective institutions and what we can expect them to achieve.

This essay is of course open to challenge on the grounds that there may be other approaches to institutional structure that better serve the purposes of national collective solidarity. The role and limits of the ‘state’ will undoubtedly be central to this debate, especially in the context of the notion of the ‘big society’. I leave it open to others to make the case for a strong civic agenda based on alternatives to the strong welfare state I have described and advocated for here. But we should be confident that this is the basis for a positive, progressive debate, in which there is no need to fear diversity as an intrinsic problem for solidarity.
Diversity and Solidarity

Notes

1. See, for example, the debate in response to David Goodhart’s assertion that ethnic diversity is an ‘especially acute dilemma for progressives who want plenty of solidarity – high social cohesion and generous welfare paid out of a progressive tax system – and diversity – equal respect for a wide range of peoples, values and ways of life’ (Goodhart, 2004).

2. Conservative welfare states are also ‘universal’ in the sense of having (often insurance-based) welfare programmes that cover a majority of households.

3. Contemporary social psychological evidence suggests an important causal link between division into groups and the creation of separate social identities and stigmatization. We will describe some evidence for this in the next chapter.

4. In fact, this process had a direct impact on many black and ethnic minority households. Because the discount on council homes was proportional to length of tenure, white households tended to receive the steepest discounts. For those with shorter tenures, including most BME tenants, buying their home was less affordable.


8. See also http://www.economist.com/blogs/blighty/2011/02/attitudes_immigration


11. I do not deny that there was diversity in this period. Certainly the Jewish community was a significant presence, and there has been a very long tradition of Irish immigration. However, it would be a stretch to describe this as ‘multicultural’, and the volume of immigration in later periods was sufficiently bigger as to make the comparison tenuous.


13. Inside Housing, Renters cannot afford benefit cut’, 1 November 2010.


15. Goodhart argued that ‘sharing and solidarity can conflict with diversity’ and that ‘the tension between the two values is a reminder that serious politics is about trade-offs. It also suggests that the left’s recent love affair with diversity may come at the expense of the values and even the people that it once championed’ (Goodhart, 2004).

16. The effect of ethno-linguistic fractionalization turns out not to be significant.

17. Rather, Alesina assumes that the strength of the political left is simply a reflection of racial diversity. This makes sense in the context of his investigation of why the US doesn’t have a strong welfare state, since he argues that, historically, racial diversity in the US precluded the evolution of a strong political left that promoted state welfare (in other words, he places racial diversity as logically prior to the possible development of left politics). But, importantly, this means that his conclusions cannot necessarily be applied to European countries, where diversity is increasing in the context of countries with a strong and established left presence. To examine the impact of increasing diversity in a European context, one must take the impact of the political left into account.

18. This is perhaps not surprising, since history shows us that when a strong left-wing political presence is established within a country, it tends to exert an influence on the development of welfare institutions and political debate.

19. By ‘universalism’ we are referring to the proportion of the relevant population included within a policy, rather than a flat-rate of award or common level of service provision across
recipients. We use the term ‘universalism’ to describe those policies and institutions that cover all or a large majority of the population.

20. In another example, how people allocate bonuses to successful sports performers depends on whether the activity is seen as an individual event (like long-distance running) or a team event (like football). See Tornblom and Jonsson (1987).

21. Here, it is important to emphasize that the way in which welfare programmes portray recipients is more than simply an issue of public support for policy. How recipients are viewed by their fellow citizens is of profound importance for their own self-esteem, quality of life and treatment at the hands of others. Negative judgements about those receiving welfare can directly affect claimants through stigma and discrimination. For example, where social housing is spatially segregated and stigmatized, tenants can face ‘postcode discrimination’ where job applications are ‘filtered out’ based on area (Fletcher et al., 2008).

22. Also interesting in this context is a 2004 MORI study (Duffy, 2004), which asked people to choose between three different statements: (1) ‘Immigrants should get the same level of support as existing British citizens’; (2) ‘Immigrants should get less welfare support than British citizens’; and, (3) ‘Immigrants should only get the same level of welfare support as British citizens if they demonstrate commitment to the country (e.g. learning language and history)’. The majority of people chose the third statement (58 per cent), with only 18 per cent choosing (1) and 19 per cent choosing (2).

23. A recent survey of Children’s Centre managers by 4Children and the Daycare Trust suggests 250 Sure Start centres are expected to close, while 2,000 will provide a reduced service.
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