

Andrew Dixon

Ethnicity and the Share of Social Housing for Older People in the Metropolitan West Midlands

Abstract. *This paper draws on research on ethnicity and equity in the uptake of housing for older people provided in the (non-commercial) social sector, and on data collected to inform the case for sensitivity in the planning and delivery of housing and related services for minority ethnic older people. The study area comprised five metropolitan districts in the West Midlands – Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton. The research focused on older people from the White British, White Irish, Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Indian communities. In this paper an estimate of minority ethnic representation in municipal housing for older people relative to the incidence of White British occupancy is presented. Estimates are prepared with respect to the districts of Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. Additionally, an interpretation of the estimated representation patterns is sketched out, drawing on the reported responses of people in later life from White Irish, Black Caribbean, Pakistani and Indian communities; respondents were asked about what they know of housing for older people provided by social sector landlords, and what they want from housing as they become older.*

Keywords: *housing for older people, estimated representation, differential use, minority ethnic people in later life.*

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: *socialinis būstas, etninės mažumos, senatvė, socialinė diferenciacija, socialinė statistika.*

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to report and discuss the pattern of estimated representation in stocks of local authority-owned

housing for older people between and within five ethnic groups (White British, White Irish, Indian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean)¹. This is undertaken for three local authority (LA) areas in the metropolitan

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West Midlands – Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. An estimation of representation was necessary in the absence of published occupancy data, a matter likely to remain a research concern today. Some discussion is ventured on the patterns of representation shown. Other key areas of the research concerning cultural competence in service planning and delivery are recognised but not elaborated here.

The paper is developed as follows. The aims of the research are noted along with data quality, methodological and definitional issues. The approach taken to estimate ethnic group representation in housing for older people is then described. A brief ‘people and housing’ profile of the study area follows. Estimates of minority group representation in the stock of LA housing for older people are presented and discussed. Material selected from completed fieldwork is then drawn on to address the question: ‘Can talking to minority ethnic people in later life help us understand differentiated occupation in housing for older people?’

2. The research task: aims, methods and data

Three connected points of focus reflected the aims of the research task: (a) a concern to show and explain differential patterns of occupancy in and access to housing for older people; (b) an assessment of what individuals in later life know about housing provided for older people in the social sector; and (c) what people say is important for them about housing in later life.

The study area comprised the metropolitan district of Birmingham (with a population of close to one million) and four neighbouring metropolitan LA areas – Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and the city of Wolverhampton, each with populations of between 235,000 to 305,000.

Distributional issues were addressed through an analysis of secondary and primary data. These included: locally sourced information on the allocation and occupancy of LA housing for older people – some figures on occupancy were provided by non-statutory sector housing associations active in the study area; comprehensive data on access to housing for older people owned and managed by study-area housing associations, supplied by the National Housing Federation; and qualitative findings from the fieldwork undertaken to advance the ‘awareness of’ and ‘perspectives on’ aims of the study. Commissioned data tables from the 2001 Census were used to show older person households in terms of selected ethnic group by tenure in each of the five study districts. These tables provided contextual information, and can be used to inform the construction of estimates of minority ethnic representation in housing for older people.

Overall, the study methods were largely qualitative, involving the completion of around to 80 semi-structured questionnaires through face-to-face or in some instances telephone-based interviews with older people living in general-needs social housing, and also the moderation of ten discussion groups with older people resident in the private

(typically owner-occupied) sector. Resource limitations and issues of 'reach' influenced a reliance on opportunistic (non-random) sampling. Material from the survey of older general-needs tenants and from the discussion group exercises can be expected to provide a secure platform of reported commentary on preferences for housing in later life, and on housing options provided for older people by social-sector landlords.

As well as supporting 'explanations' of the distributional outcomes, information collected on what people in later life say they know about social housing for older people, and on what they want (or expect) from their housing later in the life course, opens the way for discussion on cultural sensitivity in the provision of housing and support services for older people, and on processes and systems of access – two key domains with clear significance for service planning, service delivery and the realisation of well-being gains for older people from minority ethnic groups.

2.1. Contexts

With reference to the literature, contexts relevant to this work are: the demographics of ageing and housing as they concern the general population and, specifically, minority ethnic communities (Katbamna and Matthews 2006; Clarke and Markkanen 2008; Markkanen et al., 2008); recognition of the role that culturally sensitive/competent service planning/delivery can play in meeting the preferences, expectations and well-being of older people from minority ethnic communities (Chahal 2004, 2006;

Notter 2004); and questions and debates on minority ethnic group access to housing for older people provided in the social sector (Jones 1994; Blackaby and Chahal 2000; Jones 2006; PRIAE Policy Response 2007). These are themes reflected in the literature on ethnicity and housing for people in later life (Arber and Evandrou 1997; Somerville and Steele 2002; HOPDEV 2006), and in recent state policy on housing in later life – for example *Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods. A National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2008).

2.2. Definitions

Housing for older people

In defining 'housing for older people', the research drew on an understanding of this form of provision as used by the Housing Corporation – a (now former) state agency with responsibilities for funding and regulating the activities of housing associations, bodies that own and manage just over 40% of the social rental housing stock in England (DCLG 2007a, 2007b). The Housing Corporation described housing for older people as properties 'intended for older people' where two general forms are emphasised: housing for older people with 'special design features' and 'designated supported housing' for older people (p. 5).

Housing designed or designated for older people remains commonly known as sheltered housing (or ordinary sheltered housing) and emergently, as extra care housing (Housing Learning and Improvement

Network 2008). Defined negatively, housing for older people is neither residential care nor is it general needs housing.

Four standardised categories of provision, arranged under these two general headings – ‘ordinary sheltered housing’ and ‘extra care housing’ – were used in the research to differentiate the social stock of housing for older people. Table 1 in the appendix summarises the range of provision within the stock of LA housing for older people in the three social housing agencies focused on in this paper – the local housing authority in Birmingham and the Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMO) agencies in both Sandwell and Wolverhampton – and notes whether categories of housing for older people are provided or not. The data presented in Table 1 was collected during 2007-2008. Typically, ordinary sheltered housing is rental housing. Extra care housing may be available for purchase from social sector housing providers. Extra care housing, as noted in Table 1, is provided as rented accommodation.

Sheltered housing is generally understood as self-contained, purpose-built or designated accommodation provided (although not exclusively) for older people with residential or remote ‘warden’ support, and also often communal facilities (Mackintosh et al., 1990; Elderly Accommodation Council 2007). Extra care housing can be seen as a ‘concept rather than a housing type’, combining ‘quality of life’ as well as ‘quality of care’ for people in later life by providing housing and dedicated support and care services to secure independent living through ‘self-care’ (Housing

Learning and Improvement Network 2008). An ALMO is an agency ‘set up by a LA (local authority) with a remit of managing and improving all or part of its housing stock... ownership of the stock remains with the LA’ (DCLG 2007a; 8).

Despite evidence (at the time of this study) of some difficulties in letting accommodation in social stocks of ‘housing for older people’ (Housing Learning and Improvement Network 2005), it may be reasonably held that housing for older people results in important later life well-being gains, associated with security, care and domestic support, and freedom from isolation. Differential representation in this sector raises equity questions and can present itself to service planners as a matter for action. A central concern of this enquiry was to ask who gets what, and how and why: this is a concern that remains very pressing today.

Older people

The term ‘older people’ identifies individuals to have progressed through the life course into ‘later life’: it is ‘a phase that begins for most around 50 and may then cover five decades of varied experience...It is the latter part of life, after a maximum expected life span has been reached’ (Heywood et al., 2002; 3). Analysis and discussion in this study centres on four broad age groupings within the later life phase: ‘new entrants to later life’ (from 55 to 64 years of age); and, following Mackintosh et al. (1990), the ‘young old’ (from age 65 to 74 years of age; the old (from 75 to 84 years of age) and the ‘old old’ (from 85 years and older). When

combining local study information with commissioned 2001 Census data, some adjustment of data is made to reflect gender differences in the age of retirement in Britain (until very recently age 60 for women, 65 for males). Further, qualitative material has been gathered to capture the perspectives of older people from age 50 and above. Some non-commissioned 2001 Census material is presented for an extended 'new entrant' or 'approaching elderly' cohort, from age 50 to 59 for women, and 64 for men.

Minority ethnic groups

In this paper the term minority ethnic group is used to distinguish the majority White British population from other (minority) ethnic groups: and to recognise the place of diversity in an enquiry such as this, one concerned with distributional issues centred on ethnicity and equity. Reference is made to seven selected minority ethnic groups, White Irish, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African and Chinese, with particular focus given to the larger of the groups, White Irish, Indian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean, for which data is more readily available.

2.3. Occupancy in and access to housing for older people – explaining the patterns

Commonly, explanations of differential residential outcome in the literature recognise the interplay between the constraints encountered by households and the opportunity to realise housing preferences or to meet changing housing needs. This focus

brings into relief a dualism between agency and structure (or choice and constraint) informing the work of many commentators in the field of ethnicity and housing (Rex and Moore 1967; Karn and Hendersen 1987; Sarre et al., 1989; Howe and Mullins 1997). Drawing on relevant literature, Tomlins (2000) provides a useful summary of housing studies research that has operated within a choice and constraint framework. This work typically aims to address 'the causes of differential housing outcomes within ethnically diverse communities' by asking, 'do (differential housing outcomes) reflect the preferences of particular minority ethnic groups or the constraints of housing providers?' (p. 164). The degree to which choice and constraint interact to influence housing outcomes, however, remains a central question for research. As Tomlins points out: 'it is still not clear whether the relative concentration of Indian households in the owner-occupied sector, and the relative concentration of Black Caribbean households in the social sector are a product of choice or constraint' (p. 164).

Although Tomlins notes that much research in the field has focused on the constraints facing minority ethnic households, he suggests a 'current academic consensus' centred on work (in particular, Sarre et al., 1989) that recognises the scope for households to exercise 'some freedom of housing choice within a system of constraints' (Tomlins 2000; 165). This idea of 'choice within a system of constraints' can operate as a compass to guide enquiry into the 'why'

of differential housing outcomes, allowing scope to focus on the stated preferences, actions and declared intentions (to act or not to act) of older people in relation to moving home in later life. When contextualised within a 'system of constraints', insights into these questions offer the opportunity to develop explanations for differential housing outcomes – in this case differences in the relative representation of minority ethnic people in later life in the uptake of accommodation services for older people provided in the social sector.

Choice-constraint informed or 'bounded decision' explanations of differential outcomes in the uptake of housing for older people by different ethnic groups can be found in Jones (1994) and others including Blackaby and Chahal (2000) and Harrison (2002). Drawing on research by Jones (1994), Julienne (1994) identifies 'barriers' (constraints) distinguished as being either 'exterior' or 'internal', barriers which, for Julienne, 'go some way to explaining' the differential uptake of housing services for older people among minority ethnic older groups. Exterior factors limiting the use of housing for older people include 'hostility from residents and staff, lack of consultation and encouragement from providers, ignorance of black elders' language, customs and preferences and concerns, location of schemes and size of dwellings'. Internal factors centre on 'negative images of sheltered accommodation from elders themselves and their families, reluctance to change status from owner-occupier to tenant, and falsely

equating sheltered accommodation (housing for older people) with institutional care' (p. 5).

Exterior or contextual factors such as those by Julienne listed above, are reflected in the idea of an 'ethnic penalty' – a term, which as Karn (1997) notes is 'broader than 'discrimination', and which can be used to 'refer to all factors that might lead a minority ethnic group to fare less well than the White population' (p. 266). Where Julienne (1994) stresses as constraints on minority ethnic group uptake of services (fear of) hostility, the non-provision of accommodation in recognised 'safe' neighbourhoods, and the 'mono-cultural' provisioning of services (Chahal 2004) which fail to offer 'familiar and understood' or culturally sensitive provision (Notter 2002), Karn (1997) would also identify housing market position, household type, gender, economic position and locality effects as factors reinforcing 'systems (or contexts) of constraint'.

In distinguishing barriers as 'internal' Julienne (1994) directs focus to the individual and for some, their families, in explaining uptake patterns. The 'bounded decisions' older people make about when (or when not) to move home in later life also matter in explanations of distributional outcomes. And questions to be addressed in the analysis of the fieldwork to inform the main report include: are moves planned or reactive? (Heywood 2002); how significant are relatives (or others – friends, community figures, practitioners, known 'role model' residents living in accommodation

for older people) in influencing, assisting or restricting a move? (Harrison 2002). How informed are older people? (Blackaby and Chahal 2000). What do older people do with the information they have? (DCLG 2008). What do older people living in general housing say they want or would not want from accommodation for older people? Are some older people reluctant to 'put themselves forward' for re-housing and if so why?

3. Estimating representation

At the time of the study, information on ethnic group occupancy in housing for older people provided by local authorities and local housing associations (and hence data on representation) was not systematically collected or published. This contrasts with official nationwide data – from for instance the 2001 Census and more recently the 2011 Census, and the 'rolling' English House Condition Survey – showing differentiation between different ethnic groups in the occupancy of dwellings across the wider housing system by tenure, age and condition. Here patterns of representation for minority ethnic groups skew towards low market value home ownership or rates of representation greater than those for White British households in an increasingly residualised social rental sector (Howes and Mullins 1997).

Information gaps on representation in social housing for older people have meant that commentators and researchers in the field have typically initiated or relied on

locally generated data. Examples include Jones (1994), findings reported in Blackaby and Chahal (2000), and Bright (1996) in Dickinson and Whitting (2002). These studies have reported representation at the local scale. They generally show (but not in all instances) the under-representation of minority ethnic groups in housing for older people relative to the White British population. Where data is missing, local strategic policymakers appear to fall back on speculation rather than hard information, as an example from outside of the study area illustrates: 'the number of BME citizens living in sheltered housing (housing for older people) is thought to be low in comparison to the (general) population' (Black and Minority Ethnic Housing Strategy, Cambridge City Council 2007).

In this paper the question of representation in the occupancy of and, selectively, in waiting for LA housing for older people is developed with reference to sets of estimates. Estimates were produced by matching local counts of occupancy in housing for older people by ethnic group against a reference population based on commissioned tabulations of data from the 2001 Census. Available data is used for LA-owned stocks of housing for older people in Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. Three reference populations were prepared to reflect each of the household types for which representation in the stock of housing for older people is estimated. Household types are: Single Males (aged 65+); Single Females (aged 60+) and two-person households (old-

est member aged 60+). Each of the reference populations is grounded in data drawn from commissioned Census material, which shows the incidence of households with at least one pensioner by selected ethnic

group, by tenure and by district. This data has been used to prepare a series of 'look-up' tables. Table 1 presents two examples for Black Caribbean and Pakistani households with at least one pensioner in Sandwell.

Table 1. **Households with older people (five categories): percentage share of all 'with at least one pensioner' households by tenure and ethnic group.**² Sandwell, 2001.

Sandwell: Black Caribbean							
Household Type	Households Number %	Tenure (row %)					
		OO	LA	HA	PR	RF	All
M 65+	193 (16.5)	40.4	39.9	14.0	0.0	5.7	100
F 60+	282 (24.0)	57.1	25.9	9.9	1.4	5.7	100
2 or >P	217 (18.5)	76.0	17.1	2.8	4.1	0.0	100
1 or >P +1 nP	311 (26.5)	67.5	23.5	1.6	3.9	3.5	100
1 or >P +2 or >nP	170 (14.5)	75.3	19.4	1.8	3.5	0.0	100
All	1,173 (100)	63.3	25.0	5.9	2.6	3.2	100
Sandwell: Pakistani							
Household Type	Households Number %	Tenure (row %)					
		OO	LA	HA	PR	RF	All
M 65+	17 (5.2)	23.5	41.2	17.6	17.6	0.0	100
F 60+	24 (7.4)	45.8	12.5	16.7	25.0	0.0	100
2 or > P	19 (5.8)	84.2	0.0	15.8	0.0	0.0	100
1 or >P +1 nP	68 (20.9)	63.2	11.8	0.0	16.2	8.8	100
1 or >P +2 or >nP	197 (60.9)	88.8	4.6	0.0	3.0	3.6	100
All	325 (100)	76.6	8.3	3.1	8.0	4.0	100

Source: 2001 Census [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]. Crown Copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO.

In calculating a reference population for single males, the approach taken was to subtract the number of households known to be resident in LA housing for older people from the total number of households

with at least one pensioner net of all single female pensioner households. This routine was undertaken using ethnic group and district specific data for Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton. The calculation of a

² The five 'with at least one pensioner' categories (with abbreviations as used in Table 4 shown) are: single males, aged 65+ (M65+); single females aged 60+ (F 60+); households with two or more pensioners (2 or >P); households with one or more pensioner and one non-pensioner (1 or >P +1 nP); and one or more pensioner with two or more non-pensioners (1 or >P +2 or >nP). Rent-free includes households reported as 'living rent-free' in social sector housing.

reference population for single females and two-person households follows similar lines, with the necessary gender adjustments made to the data in the case of single females, and the subtraction of both single male and single female household totals in the case of two-person households.

All measurements of representation in the stock of LA housing for older people are presented here as estimates, and should be treated as 'first attempt' assessments of relative shares between selected ethnic groups. They are estimates because:

- There is a mismatch of up to six years between the two sets of data used.
- Detailed occupancy data are missing in some instances, most notably in Birmingham (see Table 7).
- Occupancy data for single female households from age 60 and above are estimated. The approach taken to produce the figures used in the calculation of representation is explained below. In outline, occupancy data are available for single females across five age groups: younger than 55, 55 to 64, 65 to 74, 75 to 84 and 85 and above. To estimate the number of single female households at age 60 or more we multiply by 0.5 the number of observations in the age group 55-64, and add the result to the total number of older females aged 65 or above.
- Occupancy data for two-person pensioner household is also presented as estimates. This is because we count the oldest household member from the age of 60 years or above not to exclude female-headed households (Table 14).

Data is not available for an analysis of the representation of two-person households in Birmingham.

4. The local context – people and housing

Ethnic group populations – in terms of numbers and percentage share of the total population – from Birmingham, Sandwell, Wolverhampton and England appear in Table 1 in the appendix. The data refers to the position in 2001. Close to 35% of all people living in Birmingham (population 977,000) were of an ethnic group other than White British, compared with proportionate shares of non-White British populations in Sandwell (population 283,000) and Wolverhampton (population 237,000) of 22% and just under 25% respectively. The proportionate share of the general population in England for all ethnic groups other than White British was 13%.

After the White British population, the Pakistani community are the next largest ethnic group in Birmingham, representing just over 10% of the local population. In both Sandwell and Wolverhampton, the Indian community represents the next largest ethnic group after the White British – in Sandwell just over 9% of the general population is Indian; in Wolverhampton, the proportion of the local population comprising Indian people is just over 12%. The proportion of Black Caribbean people in Birmingham (at 4.9% of the local population) is lower than that for the Indian ethnic group (5.7%), but higher than the White

Irish share (3.2%). In Sandwell less than 1% of the population is White Irish compared with 3.3% for the Black Caribbean community. The Black Caribbean community has a marginally stronger representation than does the Pakistani population (2.9%), while Wolverhampton presents a similar profile to Sandwell.

The percentage share of households in selected ethnic groups by tenure is reported in Table 2 and shows minority ethnic household tenure representation as a ratio of tenure representation for White British households. Data is presented for Birmingham and Sandwell only. A ratio of 1.0 for a minority ethnic group signifies equivalence of representation with the White British group.

Selectively, Table 2 shows that Black Caribbean households are less likely to be owner-occupiers in Birmingham (44%) than they are in Sandwell (58%). Black Caribbean representation in LA housing in Birmingham (1.3) is above that found for White British, in contrast to Sandwell where representation relative to the majority population is 0.7. This pattern is similarly reflected for the White Irish between the two districts. Tenure position in both Birmingham and Sandwell is skewed towards owner-occupation for both Pakistani and Indian groups. Census data alone is unable to explain factors resulting in these distributions. However, the outcomes observed can be expected to result from past episodes of the interplay between choice and constraint

Table 2. Percentage share of households in selected ethnic groups by tenure; and minority ethnic household tenure representation as a ratio of tenure representation for White British Households. Birmingham and Sandwell 2001.

Birmingham										
	OO		LA		HA		PR		All	
	%	ratio	%	ratio	%	ratio	%	ratio	%	number
WB	62.3	1.0	20.1	1.0	6.8	1.0	10.8	1.0	100	279,564
WI	57.8	0.9	23.8	1.2	8.8	1.3	9.5	0.9	100	18,579
I	77.3	1.2	5.5	0.3	4.7	0.7	12.6	1.2	100	15,837
P	66.9	1.1	11.4	0.6	6.2	0.9	15.5	1.5	100	24,318
BC	44.2	0.7	25.6	1.3	22.3	3.3	8.0	0.7	100	24,107
Sandwell										
	OO		LA		HA		PR		All	
	%	ratio	%	ratio	%	ratio	%	ratio	%	number
WB	58.8	1.0	29.0	1.0	3.3	1.0	8.9	1.0	100	95,480
WI	63.6	1.1	23.1	0.8	3.9	1.2	9.5	1.1	100	1,551
I	84.4	1.4	4.5	0.2	2.5	0.8	8.6	1.0	100	7,203
P	69.1	1.2	11.7	0.4	3.4	1.0	15.7	1.8	100	1,974
BC	58.3	1.0	23.4	0.8	11.0	3.3	7.3	0.8	100	4,688

Source: *Census 2001* (Nomis).

within local housing systems (Howes and Mullins 1997).

The number of people in four later life cohorts by selected ethnic group and as a percentage of total ethnic group population

is presented in Table 3. The four cohorts are: 'later life entrants' or the 'approaching elderly', aged 50-59/64; the 'young old', aged 60/65-74; the old and 'old old', aged 75+; and 'all pensioners', aged 60/65+.

Table 3. Number of people in four later life cohorts, by selected ethnic group and as a percentage of total population by ethnic group and district. 2001

Birmingham								
	WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C
50-59/64	92,209 (14)	7,568 (24)	5,595 (10)	5,293 (5)	1,149 (6)	4,417 (9)	409 (7)	419 (8)
60/65-74	69,803 (11)	8,400 (27)	3,127 (6)	4,445 (4)	921 (4)	5,775 (12)	214 (3)	328 (6)
75+	58,314 (9)	3,724 (12)	1,290 (2)	1,478 (1)	113 (1)	1,582 (3)	80 (1)	137 (3)
60/65+	128,117 (20)	12,124 (39)	4,417 (8)	5,923 (5)	1,034 (5)	7,357 (15)	294 (4)	465 (9)
N =	641,345	31,461	55,749	104,017	20,836	47,831	6,206	5,106
Sandwell								
	WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C
50-59/64	34,240 (16)	587 (23)	2,561 (10)	421 (5)	131 (4)	949 (10)	31 (5)	69 (14)
60/65-74	27,531 (13)	675 (26)	1,352 (5)	339 (4)	143 (4)	1,217 (13)	20 (4)	34 (7)
75+	20,102 (9)	314 (12)	586 (2)	96 (1)	18 (1)	294 (3)	5 (1)	5 (1)
60/65+	47,633 (22)	989 (38)	1,938 (8)	435 (5)	161 (5)	1,511 (16)	25 (4)	39 (8)
N =	220,542	2,597	25,855	8,342	3,432	9,403	578	485
Wolverhampton								
	WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C
50-59/64	27,259 (15)	538 (22)	3,158 (10)	171 (5.8)	18 (9)	899 (10)	37 (5)	46 (6)
60/65-74	22,826 (13)	584 (24)	1,814 (6)	161 (6)	4 (2)	1,388 (15)	25 (4)	35 (4)
75+	16,508 (9.3)	361 (14.9)	665 (2.3)	34 (1.2)	0 (0.0)	401 (4.4)	5 (0.7)	6 (0.7)
60/65+	39,334 (22)	945 (39)	2,479 (9)	195 (7)	4 (2)	1,789 (20)	30 (4)	41 (5)
N =	178,319	2,422	29,153	2,931	211	9,116	690	843

Source: *Census 2001* (Nomis).

In outline, excepting the case of Black Caribbean cohorts who show a 'mid-point' position, data presented in Table 3 demonstrates the 'youthful' age structure of minority ethnic group populations in relation to the proportion of White British older people of 'retirement' age (60/65+). In some cases (Bangladeshi, Black African and Chinese) populations of older people are numerically small – especially beyond Birmingham. For example, in the 2001 Census only four Bangladeshi older people were counted as resident in Wolverhampton. In this paper, with its focus on four selected minority ethnic groups – White Irish, Indian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean – discussion centres around populations of older people of more than 1,500 in eight out of twelve cases (Table 3). Numbers of the 'approaching elderly' or new entrants to later life indicate an increase in the number and population share of older people from minority ethnic groups over the next ten years (see Katbamna and Matthews 2006).

5. The representation of selected minority ethnic groups in social housing for older people

5.1. Data

This section details estimates of representation in LA housing in Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton for older people among three household groups: single males (aged 65 and above), single females (aged 60 and above) and two person households (where the older member of the household is aged 60 and above).

As a share of all social housing for older people, LA housing (in 2006-7) provided in the three districts ranged from 31% (622 units) in Wolverhampton to 72% (2,402 units) in Sandwell. The largest stock of LA housing for older people is in Birmingham (4,930 units), representing a 48% share of all social housing for older people in the city (Table 3 in the appendix).

Provision skewed to accommodation with a single bedroom in Birmingham (73%) and Sandwell (83%); in Wolverhampton, with a smaller total stock of housing for older people, the share of one-bedroomed accommodation (47%) is just below that for provision with two bedrooms (50%). Smaller units of bedsit accommodation represent just 2% of stocks in both Birmingham and Sandwell. There was no bedsit accommodation to note in Wolverhampton. The provision of extra care housing is marginal in both Birmingham (2%) and Wolverhampton (4%). There was no extra care housing reported for Wolverhampton (Table 4 in the appendix).

Data collected on occupancy was available for 79% of the stock in Birmingham (3,879 units) and for a similar proportion in Wolverhampton (80%). A mismatch between stock and occupancy data in Sandwell shows marginally more households resident in housing for older people than there is reported stock (Table 5 in the appendix). In all, populations on which to draw from to inform an analysis of representation are 3,879 in Birmingham, 2,430 in Sandwell and 496 in Wolverhampton.

Table 4. Households in LA-owned housing for older people (for which occupancy is reported) by household type. 2006-7.

	Single males		Single females		All single households		Two person		All	
	n	%	n	%	(n)	(%)	n	%	n	%
Birmingham	1,779	45.8	2,081	53.6	(3,860)	(99.5)	19	0.5	3,879	100
Sandwell	687	28.3	1,498	61.6	(2,185)	(89.9)	245	10.1	2,430	100
Wolverhampton ³	135	27.2	277	55.8	(412)	(83.1)	84	16.9	496	100

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

Table 5. Percentage share of LA/ALMO housing for older people, selected ethnic groups and districts⁴

	Single males			Single females		
	Birmingham	Sandwell	Wolverhampton	Birmingham	Sandwell	Wolverhampton
WB	60.6	87.2	84.4	64.5	90.5	92.4
WI	7.9	1.7	0.7	4.4	1.9	0.4
I	1.0	1.9	3.0	0.8	1.5	1.4
P	1.4	3.9	0.7	0.8	2.6	0.4
BC	7.9	1.2	8.9	4.1	1.8	2.9
Others	21.2	4.1	2.3	25.4	1.7	2.5
	100.0 N = 1,779	100.0 N = 687	100.0 N = 135	100.0 N = 2,081	100.0 N = 1,498	100.0 N = 277

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

Typically, single households occupy LA housing for older people (Table 4). The data available for Birmingham shows that virtually all known occupiers are single people (99.5%). In Sandwell, single households represent nine out of ten of all households: in Wolverhampton the proportion is closer to four in five. Where one quarter of all city-owned accommodation for older people comprises two-bedroomed properties (1,231 units), it is likely that the data skewed towards single persons would lessen if occupancy data were more complete, even

when recognising the possibility that some single people will occupy two-bedroomed accommodation. Of the single households, more than half in each district are female.

The representation of single males and females occupying LA housing for older people is shown in Tables 5, 6 and 7. Data for all single males and females by selected ethnic group for each of the three districts appears in Table 5. In Table 6 data is presented for pensioner age (aged 65+) single males. Data on single females of pensioner age (60+) is shown in Table 7. Values for

³ If 45 single males are 'counted in' then shares = male 33%; female 51%; two-person households 16%.

⁴ Unknown cases are excluded.

Table 6. Occupation of LA-owned housing for older people by single males age 65+ by selected ethnic group and district. 2006-7

Birmingham					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of single males 65+	695	95	10	19	108
Single males 65+ as % of all single males in LA-owned housing for older people.	65 N = 1,077	68 N = 139	59 N = 17	76 N = 25	77 N = 140
Sandwell					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of single males 65+	490	7	12	27	6
Single males 65+ as % of all single males in LA-owned housing for older people.	82 N = 599	58 N = 12	92 N = 13	100 N = 27	75 N = 8
Wolverhampton					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of single males 65+	82	1	3	0	11
Single males 65+ as % of all single males in LA-owned housing for older people.	72 N = 114	100 N = 1	75 N = 4	0 N = 0	92 N = 12

Sources: Questionnaire 1.1.

Table 7. Estimated occupation of LA-owned housing for older people by single females age 60+ by selected ethnic group and district. 2006-7

Birmingham					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of single females 60+	1,132	79	12	11	74
Single females 60+ as % of all single females in LA owned housing for older people.	85 N = 1,340	87 N = 91	80 N = 15	69 N = 16	86 N = 86
Sandwell					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of single females 60+	1,172	25	22	39	21
Single females 60+ as % of all single females in LA owned housing for older people.	85 N = 1,356	89 N = 28	100 N = 22	100 N = 39	78 N = 27
Wolverhampton					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of single females 60+	241	1	4	0	8
Single females 60+ as % of all single females in LA owned housing for older people.	94 N = 256	100 N = 1	100 N = 4	0 N = 0	100 N = 8

Source: Questionnaire 1.1.

single females aged 60+ are estimates prepared, once again, by adjusting the number of single females aged 55 to 64 by half. Values produced by these calculations are then added to counts reported for all single fe-

males aged 65 or above. These adjustments are made so that measurements of representation can be calculated making use of reference populations constructed using Census data for households with pensioners.

In many cases non-pensioner aged single people occupy LA housing for older people (see Tables 6 and 7). In Birmingham 35% of single males living in such accommodation had not reached the official retirement age of 65 at the time of the survey. In general, housing for older people is proportionately typically occupied by more single males of pensioner age in both Sandwell and Wolverhampton when compared with Birmingham. Some numbers are small so caution is required when reading the data, but a skew can be noted in favour of pensioner-age Indians, and more evidently pensioner-age Pakistanis and Black Caribbean single males occupying accommodation for older people, suggesting that access to housing for older males in these three groups may occur later in the life course than for White British later life males. The position for White Irish pensioner-age males is similar to that for White British single males aged 65 or above in Birmingham; at variance is Sandwell where housing occupancy for the older White Irish single male group is skewed towards males yet to reach pensioner age – more so than is the case for the White British. A profile of occupancy for single females estimated to be at age 60 or above in housing for older groups in each of the three districts shows a greater general proportionate incidence of pensioner-age residency. Work is required to adjust the data available to assess whether there is a divergence in patterns of occupancy between single males and single females for similar age groups.

In terms of the share of accommodation for older people by selected ethnic group for

single households, including non-pensioner age occupiers (Table 5), White British single households are represented more strongly in Sandwell and Wolverhampton than in Birmingham, reflecting a pattern found in the general populations in each district. Occupancy shares and in particular representation in the stock of housing for older minority ethnic groups in relation to occupancy for the White British group can be read with reference to ethnic group shares in the general population. However, as discussed above, a higher degree of precision may be possible to achieve when reference populations are prepared which exclude young people and ‘mid-lifers’, and which are adjusted, in part, for gender (where relevant) and occupancy for those already living in accommodation for older people. Variations in occupancy shares for minority ethnic groups within and between districts, as reflected in Table 5, and in relation to shares for White British occupiers, are explored next.

5.2. Estimates of representation in the stock of LA-owned housing for older people.

Assessments of representation pensioner-age single males living in LA housing for older people in Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton for White Irish, Indian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean groups are presented in Table 8.

Representation estimates have been prepared by showing occupancy as a percentage of a reference population for the four minority ethnic groups and for the White

Table 8. Estimates of representation of selected minority ethnic group single males aged 65+ occupying LA-owned housing for older people.

Birmingham					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	56,355	5,970	1,480	4,195	3,968
Number of single males occupying LA-owned housing for older people	695	95	10	19	108
Percentage share of reference population	1.2	1.6	0.7	0.5	2.7
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	1.3	0.6	0.4	2.3
Sandwell					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	20,058	435	1,228	229	849
Number of single males occupying LA-owned housing for older people	490	7	12	27	6
Percentage share of reference population	2.4	1.6	1.0	11.8	0.7
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	0.7	0.4	4.9	0.3
Wolverhampton					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	17,993	503	1,626	136	1,037
Number of single males occupying LA-owned housing for older people	82	1	3	0	11
Percentage share of reference population	0.5	0.2	0.2	0	1.1
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	0.4	0.4	0	2.2

Sources: Questionnaire 1.1, 2001 Census [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]. Crown Copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO (see Table 1 in the appendix).

British group, and then by expressing minority ethnic group/reference group percentage shares as a ratio of White British percentage share. A representation ratio of 1.0 for single males from a minority ethnic group signifies representational equivalence to White British single males. Ratios of less than 1.0 mean representation below that identified for White British single males; ratios of more than 1.0 show representation above. Once again, small numbers are used

in some instances. The ratios prepared for White Irish and Indian single males in Wolverhampton in particular should be read with caution, although small numbers do usefully indicate the marginal occupancy of LA housing for older people.

Some key points to note from Table 8 are:

- There is an apparent skew towards the under-representation of minority ethnic group single males relative to White British groups in each of the three districts.

- In only four out of twelve cases, representation is above that for White British single males. Minority ethnic group single male households with representation ratios above 1.0 are White Irish (1.3) and Black Caribbean (2.3) groups in Birmingham; Pakistani single males (4.9) in Sandwell and Black Caribbean (2.2) single males in Wolverhampton.
- Excepting the position of Pakistani single males in Sandwell (4.9), Indian and Pakistani groups are most likely to be under-represented relative to White British single males. Ratios for Indian single males are 0.6 in Birmingham, 0.4 in Sandwell and 0.4 in Wolverhampton. The Pakistani ratio is 0.4 in Birmingham and zero in Wolverhampton.
- At 0.3, the representation of single Black Caribbean single males in Sandwell is significantly lower than that found in both Birmingham (2.3) and Wolverhampton (2.2).
- Only in Birmingham are White Irish males, at 1.3, more strongly represented than White British single males. In Sandwell the ratio is 0.7 and in Wolverhampton 0.4.

Some questions arising from the description of relative representation above are:

- What factors influence the general under-representation of Indian and Pakistani single male households in all three districts, excepting the case of Pakistani single males in Sandwell?
- Beyond an error in data and/or calculation, what factors might explain the outlier representation ratio of 4.9 for Pakistani single males in Sandwell?
- What 'local' factors might be found to apply to explain why the representation of single Black Caribbean males at 0.3 in Sandwell is significantly below that found in Birmingham at 2.3 and in Wolverhampton at 2.2?
- What factors influence the 'high' representation ratios for Black Caribbean single males in Birmingham and Wolverhampton?
- Why are White Irish single males almost half as likely to be living in LA accommodation for older people in Wolverhampton compared with Sandwell, where each district has similarly sized populations of White Irish households with at least one pensioner?

Table 9 presents a set of estimated representation ratios for single women aged 60+ in each of the three districts. The estimates show a broad correspondence in the pattern of representation relative to the White British cohorts across female and male groups both within and between the districts. Some differences, especially in relation to same-district female and male comparisons are:

- Only in three out of twelve cases are women from minority ethnic groups more strongly represented than White British females: in Sandwell Pakistani women show a ratio of 4.0 and White Irish women a ratio of 1.1; in Birmingham, the ratio of Black Caribbean women is also 1.1.
- In Sandwell, Black Caribbean and White Irish females are more strongly

Table 9. **Estimated representation of selected minority ethnic group single females aged 60+ occupying LA-owned housing for older people**

Birmingham					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	80,424	7,285	3,178	4,303	4,510
Number of single females occupying LA owned housing for older people (e)	1,132	79	12	11	74
Percentage share of reference population	1.4	1.1	0.4	0.3	1.6
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	0.8	0.3	0.2	1.1
Sandwell					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	28,904	581	1,308	236	938
Number of single females occupying LA owned housing for older people (e)	1,172	25	22	39	21
Percentage share of reference population	4.1	4.3	1.7	16.5	2.2
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	1.1	0.4	4.0	0.5
Wolverhampton					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	24,381	558	1,721	143	1,074
Number of single females occupying LA owned housing for older people (e)	241	1	4	0	8
Percentage share of reference population	1.0	0.2	0.2	0	0.7
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	0.2	0.2	0	0.7

Sources: Questionnaire 1.1, *2001 Census [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]*. Crown Copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. (see Table 1 in the appendix.)

- represented than males in each respective ethnic group – a position reversed in Birmingham. In Wolverhampton, White Irish females are represented more strongly than males but representation for Black Caribbean females is not as strong as it is for males.
- Indian females are less strongly represented than males in Birmingham and Wolverhampton. In Sandwell representation is equally matched.
- Pakistani females are not represented in Wolverhampton. Their strong representation in Sandwell relative to the White British female cohort is exceeded by the very strong representation of Pakistani Males. In Birmingham representation between Pakistani females and males favours the latter.

Questions which can be posed about these patterns of representation (as with single males) turn on reasons for the general

Table 10. **Estimated occupation of LA-owned housing for older people by two-person households aged 60+ by selected ethnic group. Sandwell, Wolverhampton**

Sandwell					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of two person households 60+	143	10	43	6	7
Two person households 60+ as % of all two person households in LA owned housing for older people	90 N = 159	91 N = 11	98 N = 44	100 N = 6	100 N=7
Wolverhampton					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
Number of two person households 60+	74	1	2	0	1
Two person households 60+ as % of all two person households in LA owned housing for older people	95 N= 78	100 N = 1	100 N = 1	0 N = 0	100 N = 1

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

Table 11. **Estimated representation of selected minority ethnic group two-person households (where the oldest household member is age 60+) occupying LA-owned housing for older people. Sandwell**

Sandwell					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	17,902	383	1,156	278	691
Number of two person households occupying LA owned housing for older people (e)	143	10	43	6	7
Percentage share of reference population	0.8	2.6	3.7	2.2	1.0
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	3.3	4.6	2.8	1.3

Sources: Questionnaire 1.1, *2001 Census [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]*. Crown Copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. (see Table 1 in the appendix)

tendency for older minority ethnic females to be under-represented in LA housing for older people. Gender distinctions in these patterns of representation also raise questions. For example why are single Black Caribbean males more strongly represented than Black Caribbean females in Birmingham and Wolverhampton? Inter-borough variations raise questions too. Can we, for instance, find out why White Irish females

are more than twice as strongly represented in Sandwell, as is also the case with Black Caribbean females? And (excepting the case of Sandwell for Pakistani females), why are there generally low representation rates for Indian and Pakistani females?

Data (see Table 10) on the estimated occupancy of two-person households in LA housing for older people can be shown for Sandwell and Wolverhampton, two districts

Table 12. **Representation of selected minority ethnic households in general-needs LA-owned housing on waiting lists for housing for older people. Sandwell, July 2007**

Sandwell		
	WB	BC
'All' reference population: number	11,729	281
Number of applicants or ALMO housing for older people (adjusted)	1850	113
Percentage share of reference population	15.8	40.2
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	2.6

Sources: Questionnaire 1.1, *2001 Census, [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]*. Crown Copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO (see Table 1 in the appendix).

with available information on populations of two-person households living in accommodation for older people.

Ratios of representation relative to White British cohorts for two-person households are shown in Tables 11 and 13.

In the Sandwell borough, representation ratios were above 1.0 for each of the four minority ethnic groups. Representation for Indian two-person households is particularly strong (4.6); White Irish and Pakistani two person households are also strongly represented with representation ratios of 3.3 and 2.8 respectively.

Excepting the position already reported for the representation of Pakistani single males and females in accommodation for older people, these values suggest an 'openness' of the stock to older two-person households from across the community in Sandwell, and generally contrast with those estimated for single people. But is 'choice' or 'constraint' at play in explaining why it is that the estimated occupancy ratio for Black

Caribbean two-person households (1.3) is lower than the representation scores for White Irish, Indian and Pakistani groups?

Among applicants living in LA general-needs housing in Sandwell, waiting-list data for housing for older people (not disaggregated by household type) shows that where Black Caribbean households are under-represented, especially single male and female groups, Black Caribbean applicants for accommodation are represented strongly (Table 12). This is perhaps a marker that Black Caribbean households do 'put themselves forward' for re-housing in later life but that other factors influence the flow from waiting list to allocation. A focus for further research (but beyond the scope of this paper) is the possible impact of a 'choice-based' system of property allocation in Sandwell, which requires individual households to bid for accommodation as it becomes available.

The pattern of representation for minority ethnic two-person households in Wolverhampton contrasts strikingly with that

Table 13. **Estimated representation of selected minority ethnic group two-person households (where oldest household member is age 60+) occupying LA-owned housing for older people. Wolverhampton**

Wolverhampton					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
'All' reference population: number	14,814	378	1519	132	766
Number of two-person households occupying LA owned housing for older people	74	1	2	0	1
Percentage share of reference population	0.5	0.3	0.1	0	0.1
Minority ethnic group percentage share of reference population as a ratio of White British percentage share	1.0	0.6	0.2	0	0.2

Sources: Questionnaire 1.1, *2001 Census, [Key Statistics for Local Authorities]*. Crown Copyright 2004. Crown copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO (see Table 1 in the appendix).

Table 14. **Numbers of selected minority ethnic households on waiting lists for LA-owned housing for older people. Wolverhampton, April 2007⁵**

Living in LA-owned accommodation and on waiting list					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
All households	172	1	2	0	11
Living in housing association general-needs accommodation and on waiting list					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
All households	153	0	5	1	11
Living in owner-occupied housing and on waiting list					
	WB	WI	I	P	BC
All households	417	1	6	0	5

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

found for Sandwell: none of the minority ethnic two-person households have ratios at 1.0 or above. Numbers with which to work are small and some caution is required in reading the values prepared, but what we know from the local survey informing this analysis is that in April 2007 there were no Pakistani two-person households living in

LA accommodation for older people; also, there was only one Black Caribbean and one White Irish two-person household resident in the stock, along with two Indian two-person households, compared with 74 White British 'couple' households.

Table 14 suggests a correspondence between low numbers waiting for accom-

⁵ Data on households living in the private rental sector is not available.

modation and low numbers in accommodation for older people. Typically unregistered households will not be made offers of accommodation. Low rates of registration relative to numbers of potential 'candidate' households require an explanation. For instance, in a White Irish population of just under 700 households with at least one pensioner, is it a consequence of choice or constraint that only two White Irish households were registered as waiting for LA housing for older people?

6. Can talking to older people help us to understand differential occupation?

Under conditions where people have scope to make choices and where their preferences can be realised, the actions of individuals – mediated by situation and circumstance ('systems of constraint', and additionally 'systems of support') – do matter in the elaboration of explanations of differential occupation. The qualitative component of this study aims to gather insights from older people to advance this task. There follows a brief preliminary review of the qualitative survey of residents in general-needs housing, together with some thoughts drawn from the discussion groups run with older people (mostly owner-occupiers) living in the private sector. Data reflecting material collected by the author in LA general-needs housing on two estates in Birmingham and one estate in Wolverhampton is shown under selected thematic headings. All respondents were aged 50 or above, and typically

were aged 60 or older. Around 20, 50-minute face-to-face interviews were completed. No systematic distinction is made between observations reported and the individual study districts from which they are drawn. Some material informing the review focused on the private sector is taken from research undertaken in the two study districts not focused on in this paper – Dudley and Walsall. In nearly all cases the insights presented are not shown for individual minority ethnic groups, but all are insights from minority ethnic respondents.

In this exercise we wanted to find out about what people want when they are asked to think about housing in later life, and about what people know about housing for people in later life provided by councils and housing associations. Typical responses centred on: confirmation that people – especially single people – had 'no plans' to move from where they were presently living; and on reference to accommodation corresponding to residential care 'when the time comes'. Some respondents noted the value of 'sheltered housing' and/or thought that they 'might move in with family'. Most respondents reported that they knew 'nothing or almost nothing' about housing for older people, or about how to access it. To become informed about opportunities to access 'housing for older people' respondents reported that they would ask: housing workers; staff at community advice agencies; family/friends. A very small number of respondents said that they would try to

find someone they could talk to for information who was presently living in housing for older people.

Typically older people are not 'active planners' in preparing for a move from general housing into more supported housing settings for older people. Most know very little about 'sheltered housing'. For some, 'sheltered housing' was understood as residential care – in one case, accommodation for the 'street homeless'. However, after the interviewer had described some of key features of accommodation for older people, very few of the respondents seemed to remain completely unaware of this form of provision. It is likely that the terms 'housing for older people' and 'sheltered housing' have little immediate meaning for many. A few older people knew of others of a similar cultural and ethnic background living in sheltered housing. Of these, none reported that they had heard that the older person in question was 'unsettled' in where they were living, although one respondent remarked that his companion considered the scheme he was living in as 'too regimented'.

None of the older people interviewed in rental housing indicated a rejection out-of-hand of the idea of moving from their present home into sheltered accommodation. This seems an important observation as low representation (where we find it) in the stock of housing for older people may not readily be explained as a consequence of 'understandings of concern' on the part of older ethnic minority people who are active in staying away from such provision.

However, for all older people it is very likely that being able to judge that a sheltered housing setting is familiar, understood and 'welcoming' will be important. To be able to do this, information is required. And information requirements are high. Declared (rather than practiced) strategies to inform currently skew towards asking for assistance from others. 'Others' generally divide between practitioners and relatives. A few 'self-directed' older people suggested 'self-help' strategies to find out more – finding someone in sheltered housing to ask questions of was one strategy noted. Variation in the 'capacity' to trigger or to direct a search (with the assistance of others) was noted. Where family members are relied upon for help, questions of 'capacity' immediately arise (see England et al., 2002). Throughout, the role of the LA bureau can be expected to be an important variable.

7. Conclusion

This paper has outlined the aims and the approach of research centred on ethnicity and equity in the use of social housing for older people. A key element of the study has been given emphasis – the measurement of minority ethnic group representation in housing for older people. Assessments made showed considerable variation in representation rates between and within local areas, and between household types within ethnic minority groups. From and beyond the (low-level) analysis to be found in this paper, factors to be explored in relation to

service uptake are: stymied opportunities for the would-be 'self-directed' to inform themselves through informal networks based on 'word-of-mouth' communication, where few exemplars exist; the reliance of older people on 'others' – family, the bureau, community figures; and the idea of 'shame' associated with moving from an extended family setting recognised by some elders. On the planning and delivery of

housing services, focus is likely to centre on: location, living space, culturally competent service provision, preservation of independence, and gender issues. Were differential use patterns as estimated a few years ago to be recognised today, the interplay between choice and constraint in the uptake of housing for older people would similarly present as a topical and policy-relevant area for social enquiry.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. **Recognised categories of ‘housing for older people’ in three social-sector housing agencies. 2007-8⁶**

	Birmingham (LA)	Sandwell (ALMO)	Wolverhampton (ALMO)
Ordinary sheltered housing			
Sheltered housing - purpose built	yes	yes	no
Sheltered housing - designate	yes	yes	yes
Very sheltered housing	no	yes	yes
Extra Care Housing			
Extra Care Housing	yes	yes	no

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

Table 2. **Population (all people) by selected ethnic group and district: numbers and percentages. 2001**

Birmingham									
WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C	Other	All
641,345 (65.6)	31,461 (3.2)	55,749 (5.7)	104,017 (10.6)	20,836 (2.1)	47,831 (4.9)	6,206 (0.6)	5,106 (0.5)	64,530 (6.6)	977,087 (100)
Sandwell									
WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C	Other	All
220,542 (78.0)	2,597 (0.9)	25,855 (9.1)	8,342 (2.9)	3,432 (1.2)	9,403 (3.3)	578 (0.2)	485 (0.2)	11,670 (4.1)	282,904 (100)
Wolverhampton									
WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C	Other	All
178,319 (75.4)	2,422 (1.0)	29,153 (12.3)	2,931 (1.2)	211 (0.1)	9,116 (3.9)	690 (0.3)	843 (0.4)	12,897 (5.7)	236,582 (100)
England (Thousands)									
WB	WI	I	P	B	BC	BA	C	Other	All
42,747 (87.0)	624 (1.3)	1,029 (2.1)	707 (1.4)	275 (0.6)	561 (1.1)	476 (1.0)	221 (0.4)	2,499 (5.1)	49,139 (100)

Source: *Census 2001* (Nomis)Table 3. **Stock of social sector housing for older people, units by district, 2006-7**

	RSL 2006/7	LA/ALMO 2006-07	All ‘sheltered’ 2006/07	LA/ALMO as % share of all
Birmingham	5,348	4,939	10,287	48
Sandwell	914	2,402	3,316	72
Wolverhampton	1,377	622	1,999	31

Sources: *Housing Corporation RSR* (Datastream, Cambridge University); Questionnaire 1.1.⁶ LA (Local Authority); ALMO (Arms-Length Management Organisation).

Table 4. The stock of LA-owned housing for older people by type and bed size. 2006-7

Birmingham					
	Bed sit	1 bed	2 bed	> 2 bed	All (%)
Ordinary sheltered	103	3,506	1,220	5	4,834 (98)
<i>Of which, very sheltered</i>	-	-	-	-	-
Extra care	-	94	11	-	105 (2)
All (%)	103 (2)	3,600 (73)	1,231 (25)	5 (0.1)	4,939 (100)
Sandwell					
	Bed sit	1 bed	2 bed	> 2 bed	All (%)
Ordinary sheltered	37	1,881	383	-	2,301 (96)
<i>Of which, very sheltered</i>	22	81	116	-	291
Extra care	-	101	-	-	101 (4)
All (%)	37 (2)	1,982 (83)	383 (16)	-	2,402 (100)
Wolverhampton					
	Bed sit	1 bed	2 bed	> 2 bed	All (%)
Ordinary sheltered	-	292	310	20	622 (100)
<i>Of which, very sheltered</i>	-	17	17	-	34
Extra care	-	-	-	-	-
All (%)	-	292 (47)	310 (50)	20 (3)	622 (100)

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

Table 5. Number of units within LA-owned housing for older people for which occupancy is reported. 2006-7⁷

	Stock	Occupancy data available for analysis (less 'status unknown' occupiers)	Net data as % of Stock
Birmingham	4,939	3,879	79
Sandwell	2,402	2,430	101
Wolverhampton	622	496	80

Source: Questionnaire 1.1

⁷ Notes on status unknown: Birmingham, 3; Sandwell, 1; Wolverhampton, 50 (includes 45 single males).

SANTRAUKA**ETNIŠKUMAS IR PAGYVENUSIŲ ŽMONIŲ ĮTRAUKIMAS Į APRŪPINIMO BŪSTU PROGRAMAS METROPOLINĖJE VAKARŲ MIDLANDSO GRAFYSTĖJE**

Straipsnyje pristatomas tyrimas apie etniškumą ir pagyvenusių žmonių galimybes gauti socialinį būstą; svarstomi socialinės informacijos prieinamumo klausimai planuojant socialines paslaugas etninėms mažumoms priklausiantiems pagyvenusiems žmonėms. Tyrimo akiratyje yra pagyvenę žmonės, priklausantys baltųjų britų, baltųjų airių, juodaodžių karibų, pakistaniečių ir indų bendruomenėms, gyvenančioms penkiuose Didžiosios Britanijos Vakarų Midlandso grafystės – Birmingemo, Dadlio, Sandvelo, Volsolo ir Volverhamptono – regionuose. Straipsnyje atskleidžiama, kokia yra etninė pagyvenusių žmonių struktūra savivaldybėms priklausančiuose būstuose. Analizuojami ir interpretuojami pagyvenusių airių, juodaodžių karibų, pakistaniečių ir indų pasakojimai apie tai, ką jie žino apie socialinį būstą pagyvenusiems žmonėms ir jo paskirstymo sistemą, ko senstant jie tikėtusi.

School of Social Sciences,
Birmingham City University
andrew.dixon@bcu.ac.uk

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