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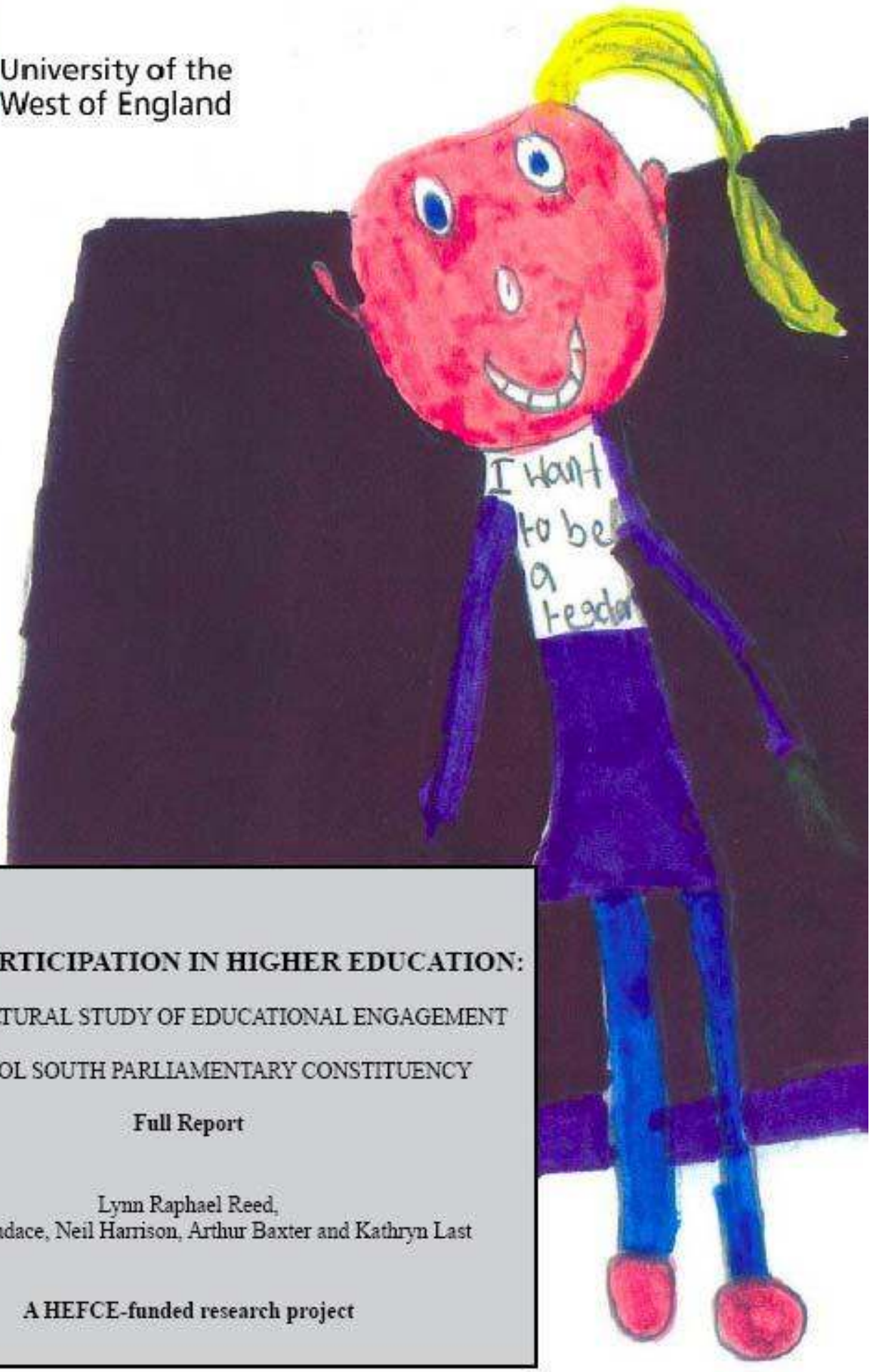

YOUNG PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

A SOCIOCULTURAL STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL ENGAGEMENT IN BRISTOL SOUTH PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY

Full Report

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Introduction

- This is a study of *why* so few young people in Bristol South[1] go into 'higher education' when they are 18 or 19 years old. By higher education we mean university level courses or qualifications.

- In some parts of the City of Bristol, 8 out of 10 young people go into higher education; in Bristol South only 1 out of every 10 young people does.

- Interviews were conducted with approximately 100 young people who live in Bristol South, and 50 adults who live or work there including teachers, parents and carers. Survey data from all young people in years 8 and 9 in Bristol South schools in 2003, matched to later outcomes, were also analysed.

The Main Findings

- The constituency can be divided into three zones on the basis of socio-demographic data, and the secondary schools into two broad groups (*Group A* and *Group B*) based on their intake and outcomes[2]. Where young people live, and where they go to school, impact on their experiences and educational outcomes.

- Employment in the area has been traditionally low-skill but plentiful, with some recent fragility in the youth labour market. Skilled labour has generally been concentrated in small businesses in the construction trades, where family connections are often more important than qualifications in securing work and work-based training tends to be informal.

- Approximately 25% of the secondary aged population in Bristol are educated outside local authority secondary schools, either in the independent sector or in schools outside the city; the figure for Bristol South appears similar.

- Bristol South secondary schools have relatively high of young people with special educational needs and with low levels of achievement on entry.

- Between year 8 and year 9, many young people's enjoyment of school declines and they disengage from education. This is associated with lack of ownership and *agency* in the learning process, and 'falling away' of parental support, as much as with their level of attainment. Decline in enjoyment is especially pronounced in *Group A* schools.

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[1] The area of 'Bristol South' is a parliamentary constituency. It covers the wards of Bedminster, Southville, Windmill Hill, part of Knowle, Hengrove, Filwood, Bishopworth, Hartcliffe, Whitchurch Park.

[2] *Group A* schools comprise Hengrove Community Arts College, Hartcliffe Engineering Community College, and Withywood Community School. *Group B* schools comprise Ashton Park School, Bedminster Down School and St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School, although Bedminster Down shares a number of characteristics with schools in *Group A* .

- By the age of 14, many young people in Bristol South schools have decided that they do not want to stay in education beyond the age of 16 or go on to higher education. This is especially pronounced in *Group A* schools

- By the age of 16, approximately 7 out of 10 young people in Bristol South schools have not achieved the qualifications needed to go to university in two to three years time; the underachievement of girls is a particular issue.

- More young people drop out of education aged 16 than elsewhere in the city, to go into work-based training or employment. In 2005, only 62% stayed in full-time education at age 16, compared with 70% across the city as whole and 77% nationally.

- The majority of young people who stay in education at age 16 go into college-based provision, with City of Bristol College as the main provider and almost half enrolled initially at level 2.

- There has been an absence of high quality work-based training in the city.

- Of those who do successfully apply to higher education from the constituency, a slightly higher percentage than the national average are mature learners.

- The explanations of the current situation given by young people, parents/carers and educational professionals are different in a number of important respects.

From the **young people**, many told us:

- They worry about moving away from the area, or from friends and family.
- Going into work, or starting a family, are readily understood, attractive and achievable options for many aged 16 and above.
- Jobs are available without getting any more qualifications.
- They don't enjoy school and feel disempowered by the experience.
- They would like more control over their learning; more creative learning opportunities; more appreciation for what they do outside school; and more respect from teachers.
- Working hard often does not lead to reward; it sometimes results in being 'outcast' by peers.
- The educational choices open to them at age 16 or 18 are not clearly enough understood, or where these choices might take them.
- Sometimes the courses they want to do are too far away, and travel is too hard.
- They sometimes feel unsafe about mixing with people from other areas in Bristol South, and people from outside the area tend to think they are 'stupid' if they come from the constituency.
- When they move between institutions they feel unsure about how to access help, or unconfident about how to work as more independent learners.
- There are not many people around them who have gone to university; where they know someone who has gone into higher education, this encourages them to see it as a possibility.

- They worry about getting into debt.

From the **parents and carers**, many told us:

- Parents/carers have often had a negative experience of education themselves.
- They often lack confidence or skills to help their children with their learning.
- It can be hard to make sense of all the written information that comes to them.
- Teachers sometimes communicate low expectations of them and their children and they sometimes feel disempowered in their contact with schools.
- Post-16 and higher education needs to be more visible in the local area.
- Most parents/carers don't have any experience of higher education; it helps to be given support in gaining greater understanding.
- They are worried about the costs of their children going to higher education.
- Support for young people at transition needs to be improved.
- 'Happiness' can be achieved without having to go to college or university.

From the **educational professionals**, many told us:

- In general young people and their families appear not to value education; professionals often interpret this as passivity or complacency.
- High levels of special educational needs, and/or difficulties with basic skills, mean working in Bristol South schools is very demanding; stretching young people at the highest end of the attainment scale can sometimes be especially difficult.
- Challenging behaviours by young people mean teachers often 'over-control' the classroom, or prioritise high trust caring relationships.
- As a consequence of this dynamic, young people often do not develop as independent learners.
- The curriculum is not relevant to many young people and intended reform of the 14-19 curriculum is anticipated to bring benefits.
- Greater personalisation is needed of the learning experience.
- Increasing access to timely Information, Advice and Guidance for all young people would be beneficial.
- *Aimhigher* interventions have been helpful, but have limited reach.
- Higher level employment and work-based learning opportunities in the local area would be helpful.
- Different sorts of higher education e.g. Foundation Degrees, or higher education in further education colleges, and vocational routes into higher education, need to be more widely understood, visible and accessible.

In conclusion

- Wider economic and social regeneration and development of the local area may change the context within which young people make decisions about their learning pathways.

- Aligning the interests and resources of schools, the local authority, further education, higher education, business – and young people, their families and the wider community, has the potential to improve educational outcomes and

progression. This is exemplified through a diversity of new interventions being planned in the constituency, including two 11-19 Academies, one all-age Campus, and the South Bristol Skills Academy.

- Approaches which increase the *confidence* and *engagement* of young people and their families with learning are a priority.

- These approaches need to be based on *respecting* young people and their families; acknowledging the importance of their *social relations* to their sense of well-being; making the learning experience more *relevant*; and building their sense of *ownership* and *agency* as lifelong learners.

Recommendations

1. Promote a sociocultural understanding of the dynamic development of learning cultures, identities and trajectories in Bristol South.

2. Develop a set of *respectful and relational practices* for enhancing the educational engagement of young people and their families.

3. Challenge deficit beliefs and encourage dialogue with young people, their families and communities about the means by which educational engagement may be improved.

4. Build 'agency' in the learning process as a priority for all learners - including at points of transition, at critical periods where disengagement occurs and in relation to 'information, advice and guidance'.

5. Explore new ways of engaging with parents and carers, and of enabling them to engage with their children's learning.

6. Recognise the powerful emotional, social and relational dimensions to experience that impact on the learning identities of young people in Bristol South, and adapt learning environments - including those in FE and HE - in response.

7. Acknowledge the significance of all forms of capital (economic, cultural and social) to the lives and learning pathways of young people in Bristol South – and promote financial support for learning, links to wider employment opportunities, access to new technologies, expanded pathways to qualification and enhanced social networks.

8. Raise awareness of re-conceptualised and diversified forms of higher education, including higher education in further education colleges, work-based learning and Foundation Degrees, and mature entry.

9. Utilise the evaluative framework (Table 6.6 main report) devised out of this research to develop effective *programmatic, systemic* and *agentic* interventions[3].

10. Improve data to facilitate analysis of progression routes and educational outcomes for individual young people aged 16-24 in the constituency.

[3] *Programmatic interventions* focus on specific tools or programmes to encourage engagement, participation and progression (e.g. ABLAZE, ASDAN, *Aimhigher*, Gifted and Talented activities; *systemic interventions* focus on change at the level of whole organisations and their practices, but in particular aligning new forms of partnership in support of engagement, participation and progression (e.g. Academies and Trusts); *agentic interventions* value community funds of knowledge and current forms of social capital in building individual and collective 'agency' through social action and educational change (e.g. KWMC and Success@ EiC Action Zone).

Further research

As a consequence of this study, we advise that **further research** be undertaken on the following:

1. The relationship between gender identities, cultures and educational outcomes, especially in relation to the underachievement of girls.

2. Parental perspectives on educational engagement, for themselves and for their children – and the development of innovative strategies to support their engagement.

3. An ethnographic account of the interactive contexts that sustain or transform learning identities and trajectories for young people in Bristol South.

4. The impact of new *systemic* interventions on engagement and progression, their relationship to each other, and their relationship to *programmatic* and *agentic* interventions.

5. A longitudinal study of a cohort of young people from Bristol South, from primary school into early adulthood.

6. A comparative study of issues of educational engagement in other white working class areas of Bristol, or elsewhere.

In addition to this Executive Summary the following material is available:

- Research Summary (40 pages)
- Full Report (338 pages plus Appendices)
- A short film from Knowle West Media Centre

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

Higher education is associated with a range of long-term advantages for individuals and society with current policy aiming to broaden participation to all those who have the potential to benefit, regardless of background. However, entrenched inequalities in access to higher education persist. In particular, participation rates are associated with where people live and acquiring a better understanding of the context-specific processes that lead to these associations is essential if we are to achieve the goal of widening participation.

The aim of this research project has been to establish in-depth and situated insights into the particular reasons for the low rates of participation of young people in higher education in Bristol South parliamentary constituency, in response to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) report *Young participation in higher education* (HEFCE, 2005a). Whilst we know a reasonable amount about generic reasons for low participation in higher education at a national level, this study attempts to identify and examine the impact of particular local characteristics. It is matched by parallel studies of Nottingham North, Sheffield Brightside and Birmingham Hodge Hill.

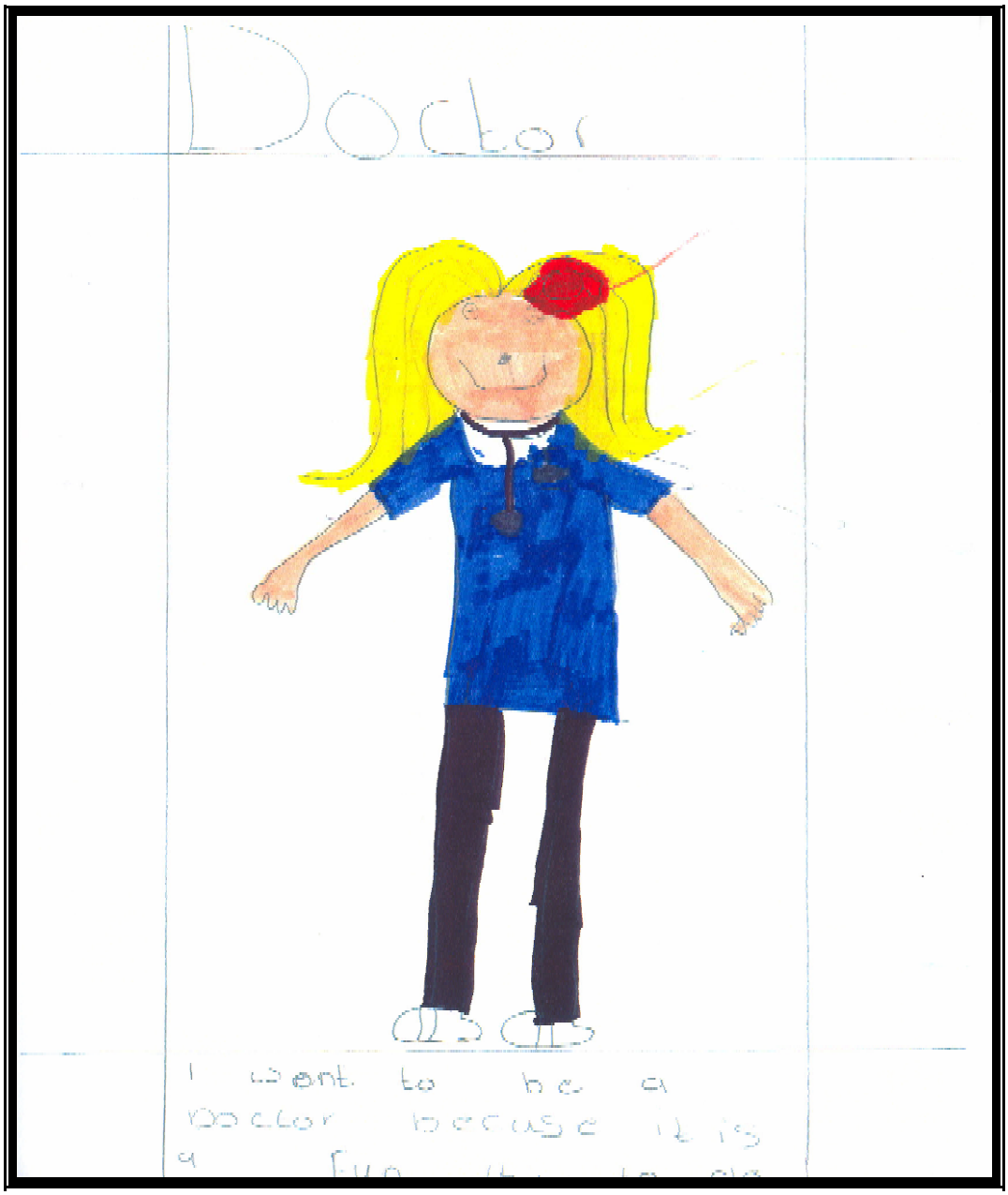
Objectives agreed in a common research framework (HEFCE, 2005b) included to:

- establish what is already known through a review of existing local literature;
- build on existing knowledge to determine attitudes, perceptions and experiences of young people that are not participating in education;
- establish the availability and the appropriateness of the post-16 educational offer;
- determine the nature of the information, advice and guidance that young people receive with regard to progression to post-16 provision and subsequently higher education;
- identify examples of good practice in reaching out and engaging young people in post-16 and higher education provision.

It is hoped that outcomes from the research will inform the development of interventions that may improve the current situation.

Chapter 2

Background to the Study



2. Background to the study

Following the Dearing Review *Higher Education in the Learning Society* (NCIHE, 1997), the White Paper *The future of higher education* (DfES, 2003a) set out a policy framework for higher education with key priorities. These included expansion of provision with the aim that 50% of those aged 18-30 participate by 2010 coupled with improvements in fair access such that 'the opportunities that higher education brings are available to all those who have the potential to benefit from them, regardless of their background'. Universities are seen as a 'force for opportunity and social justice' (DfES, 2003a, p67).

The current rate of participation of 18-30 year olds is around 42% and has remained relatively stable over recent years (DfES, 2006a). A large body of research however confirms enduring under-representation of certain groups and persistent polarisation of participation by socio-economic status (Gorard et al, 2006). Recent evidence indicates increasing stratification of the higher education market by institution and subject studied. Applicants from the highest socio-economic groups have increased their share of successful applications to the more selective universities and to certain courses e.g. Medicine and Dentistry (UUK/SCOP, 2005). Around half of the population in England belong to the lower socio-economic groups (Census 2001) yet they represent only 28% of young full time entrants to first degree courses (HEFCE, 2006a). Young people from professional backgrounds are over five times as likely to enter higher education than those from unskilled backgrounds (DfES, 2003a). In addition, younger students are more likely to be from high socio-economic groups and older students are more likely to be from low ones (UUK/SCOP, 2005).

In January 2005 HEFCE published *Young participation in higher education* (HEFCE, 2005a) that set out in detail patterns of young participation in higher education over the period 1994-2000 together with measures of the experiences of young people before, during and after their time in higher education. The study arose in recognition of the need for better measures of participation, sufficiently accurate to monitor inequalities in participation over short periods of time.

The focus on young participants (18 and 19 year olds) rather than mature entrants reflects a number of factors: firstly, the greater reliability of defining the cohort and calculating their rate of participation; secondly, the dominance and therefore significance of the young participant population in higher education; thirdly, the distinctive characteristics of this population e.g. in relation to their entry qualifications or non-completion rates (HEFCE, 2005a, Annex D).

Geographical analysis based on participation rates at ward level provides more robust and analytically useful measures of participation than have previously been available. The report identifies that 'there are broad and deep divisions in the chances of going to HE according to where you live' (p10) and that 'many cities and towns are educationally divided, containing both neighbourhoods where almost no one goes to university and neighbourhoods where two out of three or more will enter HE' (p11). Bristol is presented in the report as a case study city that illustrates such a division but in addition to exemplify the characteristic that high and low participation neighbourhoods may coexist 'cheek by jowl'.

Whilst the report confirms what might be expected e.g. that people living in areas of low young participation in higher education are also disadvantaged on many other social, economic and educational measures, it also acknowledges that further research is needed to elicit 'a fuller explanation and interpretation of the processes leading to these patterns of participation' (Forward: Sir Howard Newby) [4].

In order to investigate these processes further, local studies were commissioned in October 2005 of four parliamentary constituencies with some of the lowest young higher education participation rates in the country: Bristol South, Nottingham North, Sheffield Brightside and Birmingham Hodge Hill.

[4] One aspect to consider further relates to gender processes. The *Young participation in higher education* report highlights that that whilst the overall young participation rate had remained relatively steady over the period, there has been increasing inequality of the sexes with young women in England 18% more likely to enter higher education than young men and that 'this inequality is more marked for young men living in the most disadvantaged areas, and is further compounded by the fact that young men are less likely than young women to successfully complete their higher education course and gain a qualification' (p10). The significance of gender in Bristol South will be examined later in this study.

National Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) data on young participation by parliamentary constituency associated with the report[5] records their ranking out of 529 constituencies in England as follows:

Table 2.1: POLAR data on Young Participation in Higher Education by Parliamentary Constituency

Parliamentary Constituency	Mean YPR	Rank L→H
Nottingham North	8%	1
Sheffield Brightside	8%	1
Bristol South	10%	2
Leeds Central	10%	2
Kingston Upon Hull East	11%	3
Dagenham	12%	4
Salford	12%	4
Tyne Bridge	12%	4
Kingston Upon Hull North	13%	5
Birmingham Erdington	13%	5
Birmingham Hodge Hill	13%	5
Kingston Upon Hull West & Hessle	13%	5
Thurrock	13%	5
Kensington and Chelsea	69%	529

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/widen/polar/nat/data/parlcon

It is important to note at the outset that young participation rate here refers to those entering higher education rather than the concept of '*effective* participation rate' i.e. participation in higher education that leads to a qualification. Issues related to 'drop-out' of working class students and how that is understood (Quinn et al, 2005) are outside the scope of this research.

[5] The young participation rate refers to the proportion of young people in an area who go on to enter higher education aged 18 or 19. To increase the reliability of the participation rates, especially for small areas, the participation rates used in POLAR are formed by using three consecutive cohorts, referred to by the year in which they would have been 18 years of age (1997, 1998, 1999).

Chapter 3

Methodology

3. Methodology

Methodologically this study of Bristol South triangulates evidence from a variety of sources. Initially, a thorough review of pertinent local literature identified some key permeating themes. The literature review was then complemented by five strands of enquiry:

a) socio-demographic and educational statistical profiling of the constituency, identifying key variables at ward level as well as by educational institution, with Bristol wide and national comparators;

b) examination of an attitudinal and experiential dataset based on 'You and Your Future' questionnaires in 2003 to all young people in years 8 and 9 in schools within the constituency, matched to outcomes at KS3 and in GCSE, and compared with schools serving similar communities in north Bristol;

c) semi-structured interviews with relevant people, including: senior staff and teachers in local schools and post-16 settings; young people from Aimhigher cohorts in years 9, 11, 12, 13 including some being educated in out-of-school settings; young people not in employment, education or training (NEET); higher education students from the area and higher education students working as tutors and mentors in local schools; parents/carers; youth and community workers; Aimhigher co-ordinators; Connexions personal advisers; ASDAN staff[6]; local authority personnel; school governors; Learning and Skills Council and Regional Development Agency representatives; local business representatives; local politicians; higher education personnel including staff responsible for widening participation activity and teacher education[7].

d) production of a short film by an independent and well-regarded community organisation - Knowle West Media Centre – recording insights and capturing the 'voice' of local people;

[6] ASDAN (originally an acronym for the Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) is a registered charity developed to provide accreditation for a wide range of activities and achievements undertaken by young people (Chapter 7).
[7] We have interviewed approximately 87 young people (under 21) and 150 people in total.

e) case studies of two contrasting schools in the constituency to explore in more depth the situated and sociocultural processes that impact on young people's learning trajectories and identities.

Fieldwork has been guided by an explicit ethical protocol (Appendix A). Throughout we have sought specific evidence that goes beyond existing levels of generality to achieve the more in-depth and situated insights that are required. At the same time, we have been concerned to protect individuals and organisations from harm – especially in a context where the 'naming and shaming' of individual institutions is already perceived by some as counter-productive. Where information is already in the public domain, we have identified sources and cases. Elsewhere, we have ensured anonymity or obscured the identification of cases under discussion.

Inevitably as a relatively small-scale project certain conclusions need to be considered provisional in light of partial evidence. Researching 'absent voices' and those who tend to disengage from education is notoriously difficult (Davies and Lloyd-Smith, 1998). We have had to limit productive lines of enquiry that would bear further investigation and these are highlighted in the final section of the report. However, the main themes emerging appear to have a high degree of validity – tested out through rigorous triangulation of data and verified through two consultative events and our local project advisory group (Appendix B). In addition, the themes resonate with findings from previous studies of the local area identified as part of our review of existing local literature.

What remains to be done, and is beyond the scope of this study, is to establish the full relationship between area factors such as the deprivation index, school effects and the pattern of young participation, and to undertake detailed statistical modelling using multivariate analysis that would allow us to examine these factors across areas. Nor can we identify areas that may be doing better or worse than expected in terms of young participation in higher education given their relative profiles using such an analysis, or fully argue such a case in relation to Bristol South in comparison to other areas. However, some aspects of multilayered univariate and comparative analysis have been conducted in relation to the 'You and Your Future' survey.

In addition, we are conscious of the fact that apart from the re-analysis of the 'You and Your Future' survey, multiple data sources drawn upon in this study do not represent a longitudinal picture of the same cohort over a period of time. Census data from 2001 forms a substantial source of evidence in relation to the local context; educational data is drawn predominantly from 2003-2005. Neither are aligned with the POLAR data that triggered the research. A systematic longitudinal study of young people in Bristol South parliamentary constituency would be extremely valuable but has been beyond the scope of this research.

A further methodological challenge has been associated with changes to ward boundaries over time and in particular between 1991 and 2001 with ward boundary changes in 1998. These changes have altered the profile of some parts of the constituency and mean that in some cases the data at ward level taken from different years may not be comparing 'like with like'. Wherever possible data is based on the 1991 ward boundaries. We have tried to indicate where ward boundaries have changed and this has affected the data (Appendix C).

Notwithstanding these difficulties, we have attempted to provide a rich and complex picture of the processes involved. Low participation of young people in higher education in Bristol South reflects levels of aspiration, participation and achievement throughout the years of compulsory and post-compulsory education and training. As such, it is the tip of a much more significant 'iceberg'. Our arena for exploration therefore has been both deeper and wider than a narrow focus on young people's choices at 18 or 19 years of age.

We have enquired into the reasons for this systemic failure to engage many young people at all stages of education in the constituency and sought to understand better how educational outcomes reflect the dynamic interplay of cultural, social and economic factors across space and time. We have also interrogated a number of current and proposed local strategies aimed at enhancing educational engagement, including but not limited to strategies to encourage progression to higher education, to evaluate the extent to which they address the issues that underpin current patterns of participation.

Studies on widening participation frequently use the metaphor of 'barriers' to participation, citing 'situational', 'institutional' and 'dispositional' dimensions that need to be removed or alleviated for participation to occur (Gorard et al, 2006). Whilst the concept of barriers is a useful one - in particular because it locates the social factors that limit participation beyond the individual - in our view it provides rather limited purchase on the sociocultural dimensions to understanding behaviours and outcomes. Rather, we need to understand better from within any specific setting:

a) the *historical/material context* for contemporary cultural practices;

b) the *cultural resources* that people are drawing upon in constructing their learning identities and trajectories;

c) the *interactive* processes by which learning identities and trajectories are sustained or transformed over time;

d) the *dominant discourses* that shape perceptions of the issues and guide actions in response.

In relation to the last of these, it is important to recognise the multiple ways in which working class young people, families and communities are regularly positioned in policy texts, professional dialogue and popular culture as 'feckless', 'lacking moral responsibility', carrying some 'deficit' (Gewirtz, 2001; Gillies, 2005) or as a 'spoilt identity' i.e. an identity defined in terms of lack of certain qualities or of failure (Reay and Ball, 1997). In one conversation between two teachers in Bristol South, for example, the local community was referred to thus:

Teacher A: *It's a forgotten community – an excuse community*
Teacher B: *Yes...a Vicky Pollard*[8] *community.*

Or a rhetorical question heard in a school staffroom:

Teacher C: *Well what can you expect? They come from a limited gene pool on this estate.*

[8] 'Vicky Pollard' is a character in the television comedy series *Little Britain*; a caricature of a white working class Bristol girl with endless excuses for her behaviour and her failure at school.

Such discourses shape what we perceive, how we interpret what we see, and how we respond (Raphael Reed, 1999); they are constituted in relation to experience, but are profoundly constitutive of that experience. Reframing the narrative of working class engagement with education is – we would suggest – an essential part of transforming the current situation (Quinn et al, 2005).

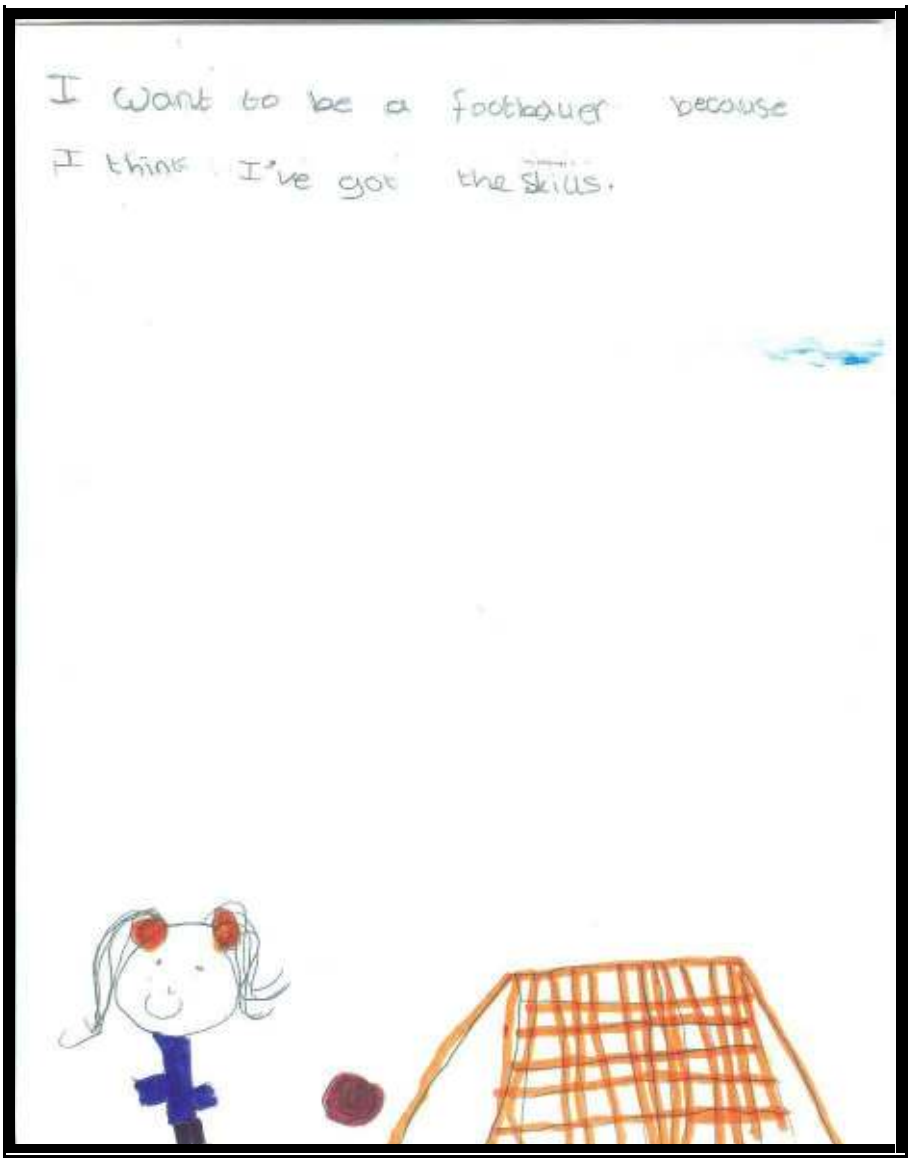
In conclusion this study proposes that we urgently need to develop not just new educational structures or opportunities but also a *set of respectful and relational practices* for enhancing the educational engagement of young people in Bristol South based on an understanding that the development of 'mind, culture and society' are intimately intertwined; a set of practices that manifest active, interactive and meaningful educational experiences fit for changing contexts (del Rio and Alvarez, 2002) and that build upon family and community 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al, 1992).

Education from such a 'Cultural Historical Activity Theory' perspective is about:

> the development of understanding and the formation of minds and identities: minds that are robust enough and smart enough to engage with the uncertain demands of the future, whatever they may be, and identities that are attuned to the changing communities of which they are members, and able and willing to participate effectively and responsibly in their activities and thus to contribute to, and benefit from, their transformation. (Wells and Claxton, 2002, p2)

Chapter 4

The Local Context



4. The Local Context

4.1 The City of Bristol

Bristol is the largest city in the South West region and the eight largest in the country. In 2003, Bristol's Gross Value Added (GVA) per head was £22,900, fifth highest in England. The English and South West equivalents were £16,500 and £15,000 respectively. In recent years Bristol's GVA per Head has risen faster than that of the region or England as a whole (GOSW, 2006). Bristol is highly competitive when compared to other UK Core Cities and comparative cities in the European Union (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2004). In the last decade the Bristol city-region has witnessed a real urban renaissance, especially in the northern fringe, harbourside and city centre, and currently major reconstruction of the main shopping area in the heart of the city is underway.

Map 4.1 The Location of Bristol

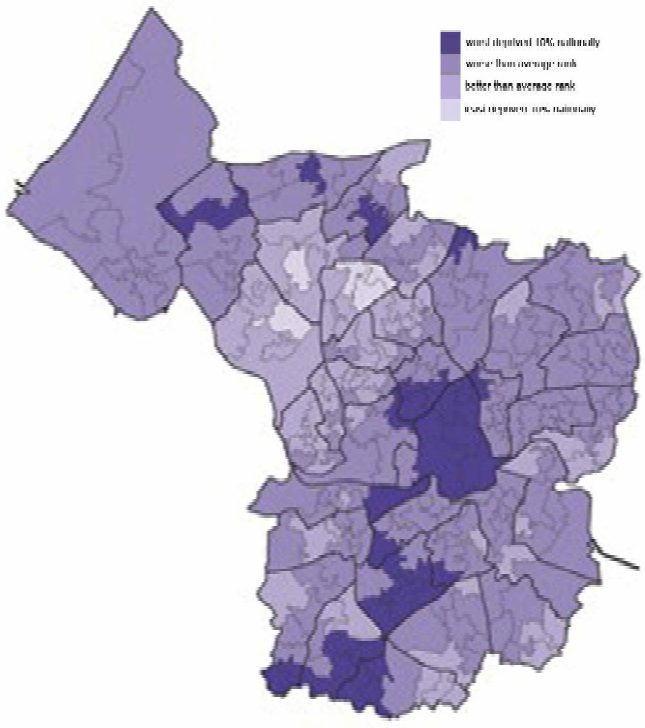
Source: http://www.gosw.gov.uk/gosw/OurRegion/geographicareas/bristol/

Key business sectors in the sub-region include banking, financial services and insurance; aerospace and defence; printing and packaging; electronics and electrical engineering; and creative industries. A number of hi-tech businesses have invested in the region in recent years, including Orange, Hewlett Packard and Toshiba. Bristol has a growing international reputation for aspects of its media industries, in particular for wildlife film-making and animation. Environmental technologies and services are

being developed and other expanding sectors include retail, construction, tourism and the social economy (Bristol City Council, 2006a). The city has two universities: the University of Bristol (one of the Russell Group of universities) and the University of the West of England, Bristol (a post-1992 university).

However, although the City of Bristol is a relatively wealthy city, that wealth is unevenly distributed and the city is characterised by extremes of affluence and deprivation (Map 4.2). Two of the wards in Bristol, Lawrence Hill and Filwood (a Bristol South ward), are in the bottom 1% of the most deprived wards in the country. Bristol has 252 Super Output Areas (areas of several thousand population showing greater detail than wards) and 41 of Bristol's Super Output Areas (16%) are in the worst 10% nationally (Bristol City Council, 2005).

Map 4.2 Multiple Deprivation in Bristol[9] (2004)

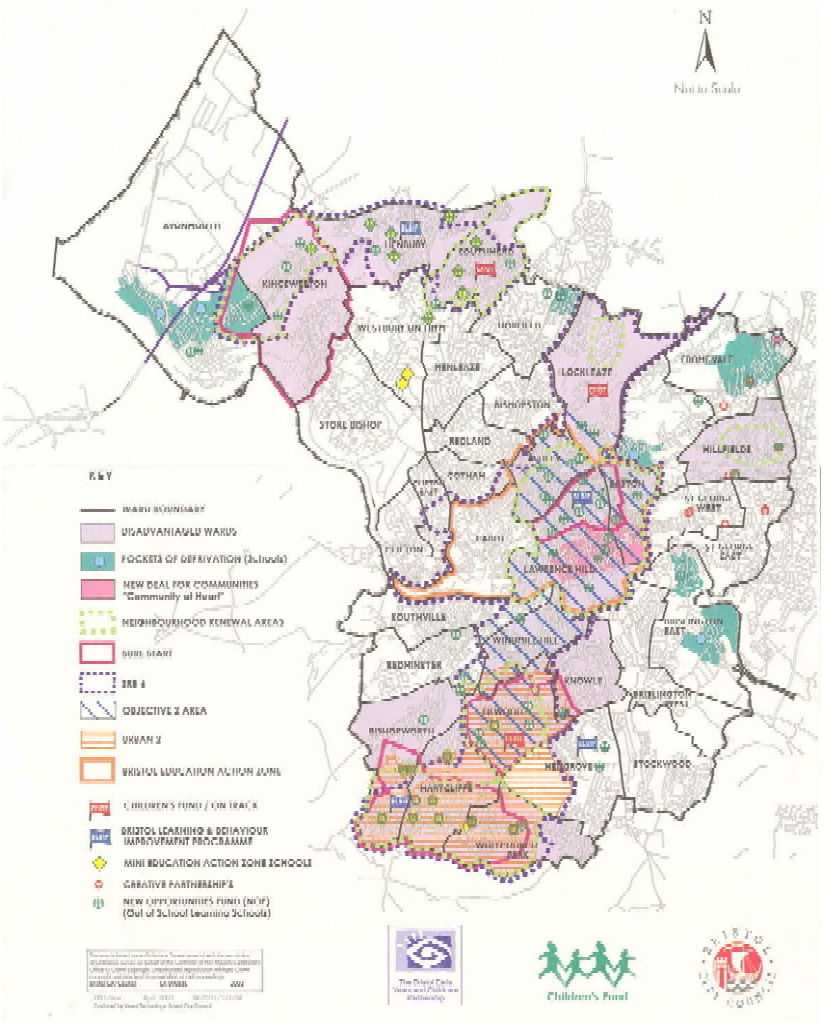


Source: ONS, Super Output Area Boundaries Copyright 2004

[9] The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2004) is based on assessment on deprivation under seven domains: income; employment; health and disability; education, skills and training; housing; barriers to housing and services; crime.

As a consequence Bristol is one of 88 local authorities eligible for Neighbourhood Renewal funding to tackle the renewal of the most disadvantaged communities and has 10 neighbourhoods that are seen as priority for neighbourhood renewal and regeneration funding (The Bristol Partnership, 2004). All of Bristol's Neighbourhood Renewal areas include wards within the top 20% most deprived wards in England. Two of these Neighbourhood Renewal areas are in Bristol South (Knowle West and Hartcliffe & Withywood). Mapping the range of regeneration initiatives across the city in the recent period highlights the concentration of deprivation in particular areas, and reveals the diversity and complexity of schemes devised to address associated needs (Map 4.3).

Map 4.3: Recent Regeneration Initiatives in Bristol: Children and Young People



Source: Bristol City Council (2003)

More recently the Regeneration Delivery Group of the Bristol Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership for Bristol) in the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy for 2006-2008 has identified three priority regeneration areas in the city for strategic resource allocation based on evidence from Super Output Area data and indices of multiple deprivation. These priority areas are:

- Northern Arc (Southmead, Kingsweston, Lockleaze);
- East Central (Ashley, Easton and Lawrence Hill);
- South Bristol (Bishopworth, Filwood, Hartcliffe and Whitchurch Park).

There has been a degree of recognition in the city that previous regeneration interventions in the city have been funding driven and piecemeal and that whilst outcomes of specific initiatives have been positive, interventions have been spread thinly and not fully aligned with emerging possibilities (Bristol City Council: 2006a). Indeed some analyses of the recent political history of the administration of Bristol claim a legacy of complacency combined with political in-fighting and a failure of the business community to engage collaboratively with civic purpose, have hampered the city's ability to adequately address emerging social and economic challenges. Many suggest that there has been a significant pattern of previous regeneration failure (Bassett, 1996; Malpass, 1994; Stewart, 1996).

A longer term and more co-ordinated vision characterises recent planning. Of special significance for Bristol South is the *South Bristol C21 Regeneration Programme* - an integrated approach to development of land use, housing, employment, education and training, shopping, community and cultural facilities, and improved transport links (Bristol City Council, 2006b). At a regional level, the *Vision for the West of England 2026* expresses similar strategic commitment to co-ordinated development of the region and confidence in 'closing the gap between disadvantaged and other communities' including particular reference to the development of South Bristol (The West of England Partnership, 2005).

A number of landmark projects that aim to transform the landscape of South Bristol are underway - some of which have been a long time in the making (Lambert et al, 1998). These include:

- final approval for the £20 million redevelopment of the rundown Symes Avenue area in Hartcliffe providing 350 new jobs in a new supermarket (opening 2007) and other retail units together with a library, community advice centre, crèche, meeting and function rooms to hire and space to train local people in office and IT skills;

- the Healthplex redevelopment of Hengrove Park – the largest regeneration site in Bristol – to include a new South Bristol Community Hospital (opening 2008), swimming pool and sports centre, 690 new homes, office and light industrial space, public park and nature reserve;

- conversion by 2007 of the old headquarters of the former Imperial Tobacco factory into commercial space and 358 flats through the Lake Shore scheme.

Together with the planned expansion of Bristol International Airport to the south of the city (with an increase in employment opportunities in FTEs from 2,300 currently to 3,800 in 2015 and 5,700 in 2030) these redevelopment and regeneration initiatives create a new sense of optimism and energy around future improvements in the local economy in South Bristol. The context for educational aspiration and achievement may well be about to change – the significance of which we will return to later in this report.

4.2 Recent Social and Economic History: a Tale of Two Cities?

A brief social and economic history reveals how Bristol has become such a polarised city and forms a starting point for understanding the particular characteristics of the Bristol South constituency. Whilst other areas of the city also experience significant levels of deprivation south Bristol has developed in such a way that there are more extensive areas of deprivation with fewer accessible educational, training and employment opportunities, less social mix, and greater isolation from the rest of the city. These factors make south Bristol distinctive in scale rather than kind when compared to certain other parts of the city.

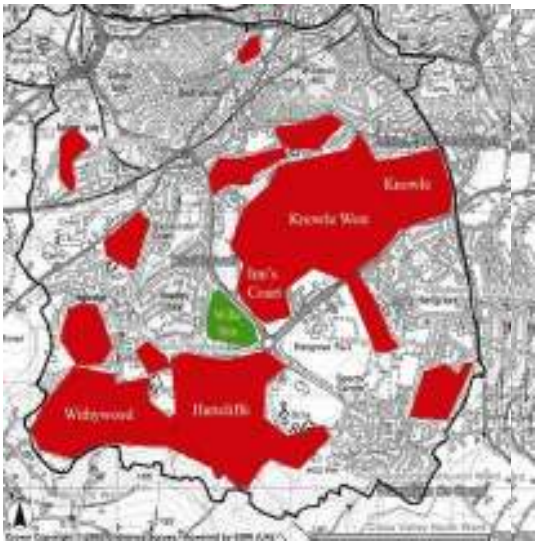
The decline of city centre heavy industries (docks, factories and coalmines) in the early 20th century (originally located around the River Avon that bisects the city into north and south) was matched by the establishment of new industries on the northern

fringes of the city. The first, and possibly most totemic of these, was the Bristol Aerospace Company which opened in Filton in 1910. Engineering works associated with the automobile and aircraft industries began to congregate along a wide arc around the northern and eastern outskirts of the city. These new major employers differed from the older industry in Bristol in demanding skilled labour. The area is now known for its hi-tech and financial services operations, with many major graduate employers (e.g. Hewlett Packard, Rolls Royce, AXA).

The skilled labour demand in the north of the city in turn sparked a demand for training. The major sites of the two main further education colleges are located in the northern part of the city with Bristol Polytechnic, later the University of the West of England, on the northern fringe. The economic dominance of north Bristol was further assured by the provision of major transport routes (M4 and M5 motorways and Parkway Station with a high speed rail link to London).

At the same time as the locus of mass employment was shifting northwards, a significant proportion of the working class population from the city centre was moved southwards into new council estates. Estates were established in Knowle and Knowle West (a series of Housing Acts in 1919, 1923, 1924 and 1930 transforming the area) and later in the 1950s and 1960s in Hartcliffe and Withywood - areas that had previously been farmland, where there were few employment opportunities and a degree of dislocation from the rest of the city (Map 4.4).

Map 4.4: Council Housing Estates in Bristol South



Source: adapted and simplified from Malpass and Walmsley (2005)

The major employer in the Bristol South parliamentary constituency for most of the 20th Century was Wills (later Imperial) Tobacco. Their operation had originally been based at a number of sites in Bedminster, close to the river, and the company employed an estimated 30,000 people at its peak. As with other manufacturing concerns in the city, the workforce began to dwindle and the manufacturing and administration base was moved to a new factory and office complex situated mid-way between Hartcliffe and Knowle West in 1974 (Map 4.4). 12,000 people were employed in south Bristol in 1971, falling to 4,000 in 1988 and slightly less at the time of the site's closure in 1990 (Bristol City Council, 1989). The Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership (HWCP) estimate that a further 20,000 jobs were lost in related industries as a result (HWCP, 2006).

The decline in manufacturing in Bristol South is far from unique, with the same pattern being repeated across the city over the last twenty-five years (Table 4.1). The proportion of the working population employed in manufacturing in Bristol dropped from 29% in 1981 to just 12% in 2001.

Table 4.1: Employment by sector of working population 1981-2001

Employment by sector of working population (16 to 74)	All Bristol			Bristol South[10]		
	1981	1991	2001	1981	1991	2001
Manufacturing, mining & energy	29%	17%	12%	31%	20%	13%
Construction	6%	7%	6%	8%	10%	9%
Retail, wholesale & catering	20%	20%	21%	23%	23%	23%
Transport	9%	7%	8%	10%	9%	9%
Other services	35%	45%	53%	26%	37%	46%

Source : 1981, 1991 and 2001 Census

This was met by a rise in the service industry, which now accounts for over half of the city's employment, and nearly half of Bristol South employment. The largest service employers are drawn from the public sector, including the council, the two

[10] It is important to note that the boundaries of the Bristol South constituency have changed during this period (Appendix C).

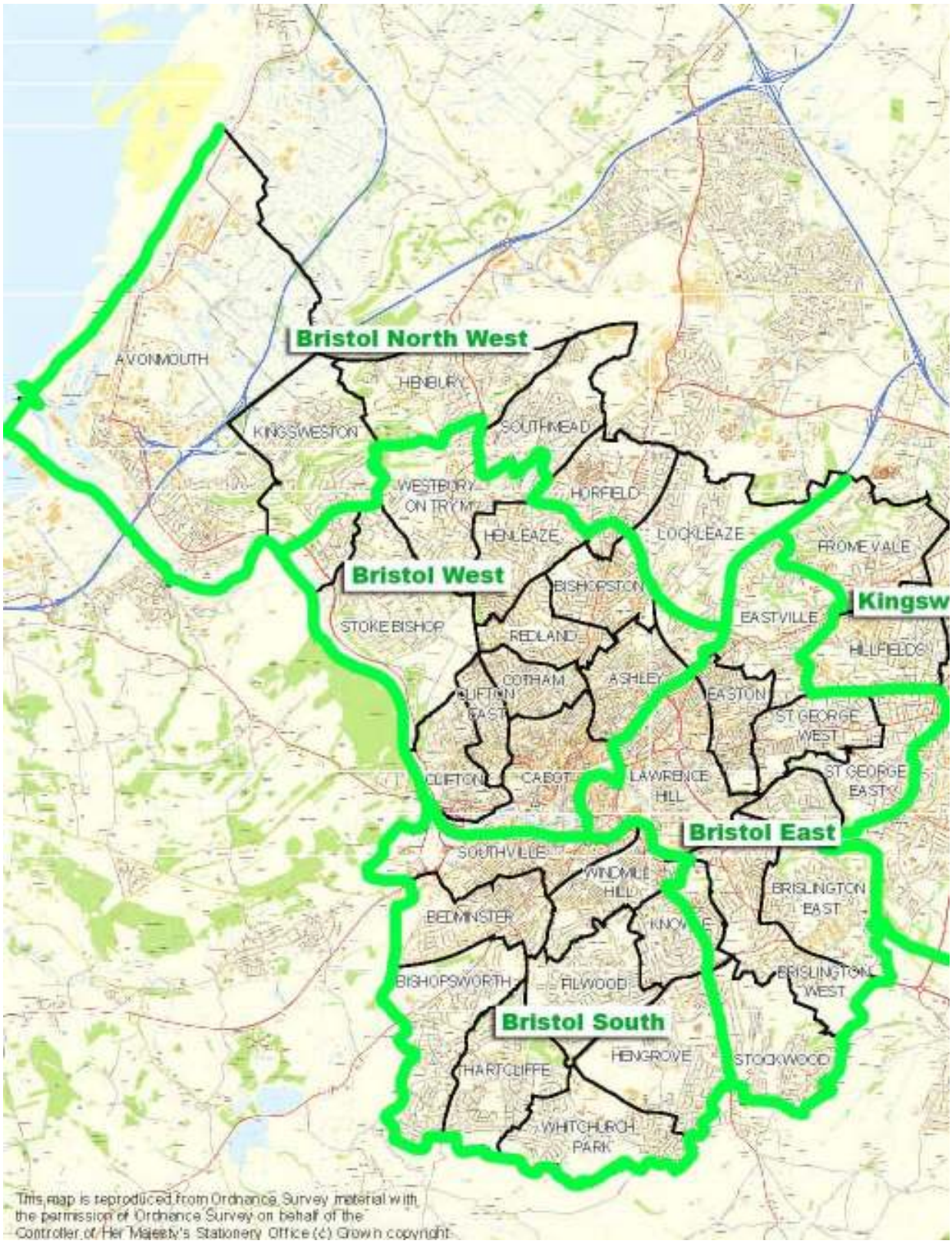
universities and various hospitals. All of these are primarily based in the centre or north of the city and the growth of this sector has driven much of the population influx into the northern third of Bristol South. The financial sector in the city has also grown rapidly in recent years, primarily in the centre and Redcliffe, with a number of call centres offering semi-skilled non-manual employment.

The story of Bristol's economy is thus one of deep division. Bristol South's population was growing exponentially, largely at the council's behest, at just the point when its traditional industrial base was declining. Employment in the area was traditionally low skilled but plentiful, breeding a multi-generational disjuncture between education, training and employment. Even the skilled labour has been generally concentrated in small businesses in the construction trades, where family connections are often more important than qualifications in securing work and work-based training tends to be informal.

The educational deficit within the area was heightened by the early concentration of further and technical education in the north of the city, where it grew up in close proximity to the burgeoning engineering and hi-tech industries. The supremacy of the northern industrial base was secured in the 1960s by the decline in demand for tobacco products and the building of effective transport links. The latter factor must be one explanation for the lack of private investment in south Bristol. The area remains associated with poor transport links with no motorway connection, little suburban rail and a long-delayed ring road project. High travel costs and long journey times have long acted as a barrier to workforce migration, especially to the northern part of the city (Bristol City Council, 1985).

Bristol's shift from manufacturing to the service sector over the last twenty-five years has heightened the south's difficulties further. Little has been based within the constituency and the local population's dissonance with education has made competing for jobs harder still, where qualifications are vital for securing well-paid service sector employment. With an increasing concentration of graduate level jobs in the occupational structure of the West of England (LSC, 2006) addressing qualification and skill levels remains a key priority.

Map 4.5: Map of Bristol showing ward and constituency boundaries



Source: Adapted from Ordnance Survey (2006)

4.3 Bristol South Parliamentary Constituency

Bristol South is one of four parliamentary constituencies in the city. The other constituencies are: Bristol East; Bristol North West and Bristol West. In addition, two wards of Kingswood parliamentary constituency are within the city boundary. Bristol South comprises nine council wards: *Bedminster*, *Bishopsworth*, *Filwood*, *Hartcliffe*, *Hengrove*, *Knowle*[11], *Southville*, *Whitchurch Park* and *Windmill Hill* (Map 4.5).

Having presented a contextual picture of Bristol overall that draws a broad distinction between the northern and southern parts of the city, it is important to look in more depth at the socio-economic profile of Bristol South itself. In particular it is worth noting against a range of indicators drawn from the 2001 Census (Appendix D), from indices of multiple deprivation and more specifically in relation to educational deprivation how the constituency compares to the rest of Bristol and the rest of England/Wales.

Census data (Table 4.3) shows Bristol South has a smaller population of 16-24 year olds than Bristol as a whole (10.9% compared with 14.5%) though it has a higher percentage of under sixteens (21.2% compared with 19.2%) and the population is less ethnically diverse (4.2% from Black and ethnic minority groups compared with 8.2%). A higher percentage of the population in Bristol South report a limiting long-term illness (19.8% compared with 17.8%) and this rises to 23.1% of the population in Filwood, with 65.8% of the constituency reported general good health compared with an average of 68.8% across the city.

Of the population of 16-74 year olds in the constituency 40.4% are from socio-economic groups (NS-SEC) 4-7 compared with 32% for Bristol as whole[12]. At the point of the last census, the unemployment rate amongst the economically active was

[11] A small section of public sector housing in the east of Knowle ward is currently placed within Bristol East parliamentary constituency, although it is planned that this will be moved into Bristol South. This area comprises around one quarter of Knowle ward.

[12] Information on socio-economic classification is taken from the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification (NS-SEC). The classifications used are: (1) higher managerial and professional occupations; (2) lower managerial and professional occupations; (3) Intermediate occupations; (4) small employers and own account workers; (5) lower supervisory and technical occupations; (6) semi-routine occupations; (7) routine occupations.

similar to the wider city – though as will be noted, it has had spikes of higher unemployment since then. Bristol South has proportions of the population aged 16-74 who are economically *inactive* comparable to the rest of the city (33.2% compared with 33%) though with higher proportions in this category looking after family/home (21.2% compared with 17.7%) or permanently sick/disabled (18.9% compared with 15%). This profile is especially pronounced in Filwood ward.

More people have no qualifications compared with Bristol as whole (36.6% compared with 26.1%) and fewer people have degree level qualifications or equivalent (14.1% compared with 24.5%).

Bristol South has a higher proportion of households in rented homes than the Bristol average (21.8% compared with 17%) and a higher proportion of lone parent households with dependent children (8.5% compared with 7.4% for Bristol as whole). Data reported in the Bristol City Council *Catching in the Rye* report (2005a) indicates that six out of nine wards in Bristol South have above ward average number of 'children looked after', five wards above ward average number of children referred to social services and three wards have particularly high rates of children on the child protection register.

Looking at data from the Index of Multiple Deprivation (Table 4.4) Bristol South wards are amongst the most deprived in the city (five of the bottom eight wards are in Bristol South) – but not exclusively so. It is also worth noting that Bristol South wards score extremely poorly on the education, skills and training deprivation domain score[13] (with four of the most education deprived wards in the South West in Bristol South) but less starkly on the employment and income deprivation domain scores.

In addition, using identifications based on the Opinion Research Business (ORB) surveys in 1996 and 1997 for the Basic Skills Agency (BSA), Bristol South parliamentary constituency is shown to have serious challenges in relation to basic skill levels amongst its adult population. Six wards in the constituency have poor

[13] The education, skills and training domain deprivation domain includes indicators related to outcomes for children and young people in the area and level of skills and qualifications among the working age population.

literacy and/or numeracy figures greater than the Bristol average with Filwood, Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe, Knowle and Whitchurch Park showing more than 30% of the adult population with low levels of basic skills (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Education domain score and population with poor Adult Basic Skills

Rank South West Region	Ward Name	Education Domain Score	Rank of Education Domain England	BSA % with poor literacy	BSA % with poor numeracy
1	Filwood	2.81	7	36.3	42.3
2	Bishopsworth	2.19	51	28.0	31.7
3	Hartcliffe	2.17	56	28.3	31.2
4	Knowle	2.04	83	33.7	38.6
10	Windmill Hill	1.67	234	23.7	25.2
15	Whitchurch Park	1.49	378	31.9	34.8
21	Bedminster	1.32	582	25.2	27.5
58	Southville	1.02	1086	21.7	21.9
100	Hengrove	0.82	1519	22.6	22.7
	Bristol City of			24.6	26.0
	South West Region			23.8	22.9
	England			24.0	24.0

Source: South West Learning and Skills Intelligence Module (2005)

The significance of these figures becomes apparent when we look in more detail at the capacity of adults in parts of the constituency to support their children with their learning (Chapter 6). It also establishes an agenda for adult learning opportunities linked to community regeneration (Chapter 7). Census data from 2001 identifies that 36.5% of the population aged 16-74 in the constituency have no qualifications, 18.3% are qualified to level 1, 18.2% to level 2, 6.4% to level 3, and just 14.2 % to level 4/5 (6.4% unknown).

Table 4.3: Comparative Census Data for Bristol South (2001)

Indicator	Data for constituency	How does the constituency compare?
COMMUNITY MIX		
Ethnic Mix	4.2% from Black and Minority ethnic backgrounds	Bristol average 8.2% England/Wales average 9.1%
HEALTH		
Limiting long-term illness	19.8% of population reported illness	Bristol average 17.8% England/Wales average 18.2%
General health good	65.8% reported good general health	Bristol average 68.8% England/Wales average 68.6%
ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (of economically active 16-74 year olds)		
In employment	91.7%	Bristol average 89.8% England/Wales average 91.0%
Unemployed	4.9%	Bristol average 4.6% England/Wales average 5.0%
Full-time student	3.4%	Bristol average 5.7% England/Wales average 3.9%
ECONOMIC INACTIVITY (of economically inactive 16-74 year olds)		
Economically inactive	33.2%	Bristol average 33% England/Wales average 33.5%
Looking after home/family	21.2%	Bristol average 17.7% England/Wales average 19.5%
Permanently sick/disabled	18.9%	Bristol average 15% England/Wales average 16.5%
QUALIFICATIONS (people aged 16-74)		
No qualifications	36.6%	Bristol average 26.1% England/Wales average 29.1%
With at least a degree or equivalent	14.1%	Bristol average 24.5% England/Wales average 19.8%
NATIONAL STATISTICS SOCIO-ECONOMC CLASSIFICATION (people aged 16-74)		
from social classes 4-7	40.4%	Bristol average 32.0% England/Wales average 35.0%
TENURE (all households)		
Owner occupied	63.4%	Bristol average 63.0% England/Wales average 68.9%
Rented from Council (Local Authority)	21.8%	Bristol average 17.0% England/Wales average 13.2%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN		
Households with dependent children	29.5%	Bristol average 26.8% England/Wales average 29.5%
Lone parent households with dependent children	8.5%	Bristol average 7.4% England/Wales average 6.5%

Source: 2001 Census

Table 4.4: Bristol Wards UK-ranked by Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2000)[14]

Multiple Deprivation	Rank	Education	Rank	Employment	Rank	Income	Rank
Lawrence Hill	133	Filwood	7	Lawrence Hill	143	Lawrence Hill	108
Filwood	221	Bishopsworth	51	Ashley	550	Filwood	258
Southmead	628	Hartcliffe	56	Filwood	673	Southmead	548
Knowle	733	Knowle	83	Kingsweston	1191	Ashley	620
Ashley	756	Southmead	101	Whitchurch Park	1226	Lockleaze	720
Whitchurch Park	921	Windmill Hill	234	Southmead	1558	Kingsweston	865
Bishopsworth	935	Easton	361	Knowle	1584	Knowle	1006
Hartcliffe	1036	Whitchurch Park	378	Hartcliffe	1705	Easton	1007
Easton	1043	Hillfields	382	Easton	1708	Whitchurch Park	1059
Lockleaze	1095	Lawrence Hill	439	Windmill Hill	1856	Bishopsworth	1328
Kingsweston	1207	St. George West	508	Bishopsworth	1917	Henbury	1369
Windmill Hill	1278	Bedminster	582	Lockleaze	1929	Hartcliffe	1808
Henbury	1423	Lockleaze	647	Henbury	2022	Windmill Hill	1809
Hillfields	1596	Henbury	656	St. George West	2581	Hillfields	1935
St. George West	1783	Avonmouth	746	Cabot	2582	St. George West	2030
Avonmouth	1955	Eastville	798	Avonmouth	2718	Avonmouth	2199
Eastville	1998	St. George East	846	Southville	2724	Eastville	2215
Southville	2496	Southville	1086	Eastville	2788	Frome Vale	2415
Horfield	2504	Horfield	1211	Hillfields	2857	Horfield	2530
Frome Vale	2765	Ashley	1469	Frome Vale	2874	Brislington East	2567
Bedminster	2951	Hengrove	1519	Horfield	3012	Southville	2654
Brislington East	3040	Brislington East	1777	Bedminster	3481	St. George East	3375
St. George East	3168	Brislington West	1815	Brislington East	3731	Bedminster	3532
Stockwood	3713	Frome Vale	2503	Stockwood	3821	Stockwood	3594
Hengrove	3911	Kingsweston	2552	St. George East	4414	Cabot	4002
Cabot	3970	Stockwood	2691	Hengrove	4782	Hengrove	4085
Brislington West	4485	Stoke Bishop	3210	Clifton	4887	Brislington West	4287
Stoke Bishop	5819	Cabot	6736	Brislington West	5138	Stoke Bishop	5640
Bishopston	6897	Bishopston	6775	Stoke Bishop	5164	Westbury-on-T	5721
Clifton	7172	Westbury-on-T	7394	Redland	5171	Bishopston	5797
Cotham	7295	Clifton	7775	Bishopston	5375	Clifton	6435
Westbury-on-T	7363	Cotham	8112	Cotham	5721	Cotham	6776
Redland	7367	Redland	8200	Westbury-on-T	6006	Redland	7055
Henleaze	8065	Henleaze	8250	Henleaze	6240	Henleaze	7286

Source: ODPM Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2000)

[14] This data is based on pre-1998 electoral ward boundaries. The profile of Knowle in particular has changed significantly between this data and the 2001 Census (Appendix C).

In terms of labour market opportunities in Bristol South, especially for young people, the initial job opportunities at age 16 to 19 for young people in the constituency are in line with their peers elsewhere in the city (Appendix E). 62% of those entering the workforce at age 16-19 are employed in NS-SEC 4-7 occupations with a further 11% never having worked. Jobs are concentrated in retail and wholesale, which accounts for around one third of the market. Within this overall similarity with the rest of the city Bristol South does have a distinct pattern of employment for this age group with construction and manufacturing (especially for young men) and financial intermediation including call centres (especially for young women) being relatively more important than the city as a whole.

However, this equity declines as the young people age. While there is a shift to higher status occupations in Bristol South, this is more marked elsewhere in the city, to the point that 33% of 20 to 24 year olds in the city as a whole are in professional or managerial occupations, compared with 24% in Bristol South. There are a number of possible explanations for this pattern of declining relative labour market status in the constituency:

1. better qualified young people who leave education at 19 enter immediately into higher status work in comparison to those leaving school earlier;

2. an influx of graduate and other young professionals into the other parts of Bristol from elsewhere, attracted by the job opportunities and potentially as a by-product of the two universities;

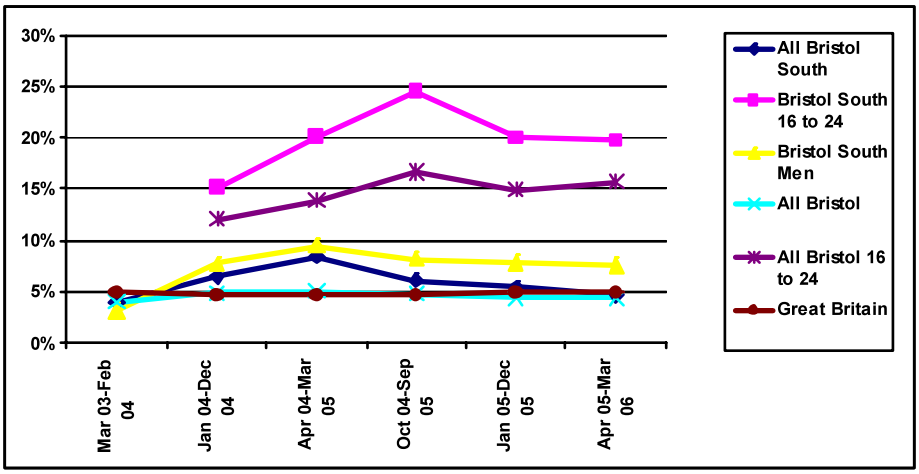
3. an 'outflux' of better qualified or employable young people from Bristol South, either to other parts of the city or outside the city altogether;

4. work opportunities available in Bristol South do not offer good progression, such that young people are unable to achieve as rapid socio-economic advancement.

Without a focused longitudinal study, it is impossible to disentangle these different effects in relation to Bristol South and it is likely that they all have a part to play in explaining why young people in the area have a very different labour market experience by their mid-twenties. Furthermore, Fenton and Dermot (2006) found that the youth labour market in working class areas of the city was marked by instability, low pay and frequent job changes, which would also act to suppress career progression and social mobility.

One particular component of this may be the heavy reliance on the construction and manufacturing industries for young men in Bristol South. 32% of 16 to 19 year olds are employed in these industries, which are notorious 'bellwethers' for the economic health of an area, reliant as they are on wealth, investment and business confidence. It is probable that a pattern of fragility in the youth labour market in the constituency, and particularly amongst men, is closely related to the current and historic importance of these sectors to Bristol South. Such an unpredictable or volatile labour market may well send confusing messages to young people – especially about the importance or otherwise of qualifications to their employment prospects.

Figure 4.1: Unemployment Trends (2003-2006)



Source : Annual Population Survey (NB : data by age not available for March 2003 to February 2004)

4.4 Ward Level Differentials in Bristol South

Having drawn a broad profile of Bristol South compared with the rest of the city, it is equally important to acknowledge that Bristol South parliamentary constituency is not homogenous, and differentials at ward level are significant. In particular, census data (Appendix D) and indices of multiple deprivation show significant contrasts between different parts of constituency. In a number of ways there is not one single 'community' but multiple 'communities' operating within the constituency boundary, reflecting their recent social and economic histories (Aughton, 2000; Dresser and Ollerenshaw, 1996; Everleigh, 2003).

Using data from the 2001 Census, it is possible to present a working segmentation for the constituency into three zones with similar socio-economic profiles:

a) Northern zone: *Bedminster*, *Southville* and *Windmill Hill*[15]. Nearly all private sector housing, with traditionally affluent working class populations being recently supplemented by public sector professionals, with low unemployment and relatively high levels of qualification.

b) Eastern zone: *Knowle and Hengrove*. Mainly private housing including substantial 'Right to Buy', with mixed employment patterns and qualification levels, low unemployment and low benefit dependency although there are some significant differences between the two wards.

c) Southern zone: *Filwood, Bishopsworth*, *Hartcliffe* and *Whitchurch Park*[16]. Mainly council built housing estates, much still under council control, with low skill and manual employment, poor qualification levels, above average unemployment and high benefit dependency.

4.4.1 The Northern Zone: Bedminster, Southville and Windmill Hill

Bedminster had a long history as a quiet rural village before being propelled upwards by the industrial revolution. The first phase was stimulated by the exploitation of the Ashton Vale coalfields from the 1830s, creating a crowded urban working class community, with associated 'cottage' industries. A second phase came when major industrial powers moved into the area from the 1850s onwards, culminating in the late 1880s with the arrival of Wills tobacco and Robinsons printers providing employment for many local residents, increasingly including unmarried women.

The lure of work opportunities provided the impetus for a population explosion in Bedminster, growing from 19,000 in 1851 to 70,000 by 1901. This was serviced by a private housing boom running through to the 1910s and expanding Bedminster into the areas now known as Southville and Windmill Hill. Houses were generally low-cost lines of terracing with small or no gardens, built by private developers and inhabited by the working population associated with mining, factory work and the dockyards. Bedminster underwent limited slum clearance activity in the 1930s and

[15] Windmill Hill is anomalous in some respects as it has pockets of high deprivation within the ward, as well as a more ethnically diverse population that the rest of the constituency.
[16] Witchurch Park is anomalous in some respects as it has a degree of polarisation between the east of the ward with greater affluence and the western part of the ward associated with high deprivation.

1950s, focused around the previous industrial areas. Relatively small pockets of council housing were built in the area in the interwar years (Bantock, 2004).

The area remained one of stable working class 'respectability' and prosperity even after the decline and final disappearance of heavy industry from the area. The terraced housing, whilst small, remained popular and Bedminster in particular developed a strong community cohesion and identity that lasted through to recent times. Sufficiently close to the city centre, the area has consistently been seen as a pool of semi-skilled and unskilled labour for the wider city since the tobacco industry left the immediate vicinity in 1974 (Bristol City Council, 1989). A number of retail and light industrial developments characterise the area.

In the last twenty years, the area has attracted a growing population of public sector and 'young' professionals attracted by low house prices and easy access to the city centre. This 'gentrification' by teachers, social workers, nurses and lecturers continues apace, supplemented by students from both the city's universities. The community is now heavily socially-mixed, often within individual roads, though the area remains predominantly white by ethnicity.

The three northern wards fall in the middle of the Bristol rankings across the range of measures of deprivation. Benefit dependency and unemployment are lower than Bristol South as a whole and broadly in line with the city-wide figures. Employment patterns are markedly different from the southern wards, with over twice the proportion of higher managerial and professional workers and far fewer people in routine unskilled work. Public administration, education and health and social work are important sources of employment. Qualification levels are significantly higher and in line with city-wide averages. Well over 50% of residents are qualified to at least level 2 and around a quarter have degree level qualifications or equivalent.

4.4.2 The Eastern Zone: Knowle and Hengrove

The development of the Knowle area began with the 1919 Housing Act, under the 'Homes for Heroes' scheme promoted by Lloyd George. It began with the eastern portion of the area immediately to the west of the Wells Road (A37) providing large

houses in broad avenues with spacious gardens. The first of these received tenants in 1920. The primary purpose of this phase of housing, which lasted through into the late 1920s, was to reduce population densities in the existing working class areas of Bristol.

Whilst the homes themselves were of a high standard, there was little attempt to provide further infrastructure lacking shops, public houses and other facilities, though Merrywood School had been built in 1919. The council housing of this period (1920 to 1925) was a considerable improvement on the private sector rented housing of the time (e.g. such as in nearby Windmill Hill). However, due to the high building costs of the immediate post-war period, the rents were similarly high. The first immigrants into Knowle (and adjacent parts of Bedminster) were therefore from the skilled and artisan working classes who could afford the payments.

In the early 1980s, Knowle was renowned for deprivation in line with neighbouring Filwood. However, since the 1980s the housing stock in Knowle has proved very popular under 'Right to Buy' with relatively little now remaining in council ownership. Knowle has also undergone a partial process of gentrification similar to Bedminster, Southville and Windmill Hill, particularly associated with the proximity to the city centre and the A37 arterial route.

A series of interwar and postwar private housing developments in-filled to the south of the Knowle council estates, attracting mainly middle class owner-occupiers to the areas of Hengrove and Whitchurch. Hengrove School was added in 1955. Hengrove is a long-standing area of working and lower middle class affluence. It ranks as the lowest ward within Bristol South in terms of deprivation and amongst the ten most comfortable in the city.

Employment profiles for the eastern wards fit between the northern and southern clusters and unemployment and benefit dependency are well below Bristol averages. Knowle's employment profile is closer to the northern zone wards (more public and service sector employment) while Hengrove echoes the southern cluster (more construction, wholesale and retail). Whilst the area has a number of light industrial and commercial centres, it has never had a strong local employment base. Many

residents have traditionally looked towards the city centre, Bedminster or Brislington to the east for their employment, as well as at the Wills site in Hartcliffe. There are also relatively high rates of self-employment, especially in the building and related trades.

37% of residents in Knowle are educated just to level 2 and fewer than 20% hold degree level qualifications or equivalent compared to 44% and fewer than 10% in Hengrove. Once again, these figures place the eastern wards in an intermediate position within Bristol South.

4.4.3 The Southern Zone: Filwood, Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe & Whitchurch Park

Filwood ward includes Knowle West and Inns Court estates. A further phase of council housing development was stimulated by the 1924 Housing Act, spreading the original Knowle estate further to the south and west. These houses tended to be smaller and have lower rents, but it was those built under the 1930 Housing Act in what is now known as Knowle West which saw a radical departure. Firstly, they were built to lower standards than previous developments in the area, with appreciably lower rents. Secondly, their residents were drawn from enforced slum clearance schemes in Bedminster, St Philips, St Judes, the Dings and the Temple areas of the city, where housing standards had remained deplorable since the Victorian period, with overcrowding and poor sanitation. The tenants were predominantly drawn from the unskilled working classes or the long-term unemployed who had not been able to afford the rents of the previous council housing developments. Development continued through until 1939, with Inns Court estate to the south west of Knowle of the 1970s finally completing the council housing stock in the area. The lower quality housing in Knowle West has proved less appealing to the 'Right to Buy' market and 41% remains in local authority ownership.

Filwood ward (which covers the Knowle West and Inns Court estates) remains the second most deprived in the southwest of England with 24% of the population dependent on benefits. This includes a particularly high number claiming incapacity benefit (14%).

The area was strongly affected by the closure of the Wills factory and unemployment has remained high ever since, with 7.5% being recorded in 2001. Only 4% of people are employed in higher professional or managerial occupations, whilst 28% are in routine work (compared with Bristol South averages of 8% and 16% and city wide averages of 15% and 12% respectively). Employment is predominantly in wholesale and retail, manufacturing, construction and transport.

Over 50% of the population in Filwood ward have no qualifications, with 33% qualified only to level 2 and just 6% holding a degree level qualifications (compared with 14% in Bristol South and 25% across Bristol as a whole).

Bishopsworth had a long history as a prosperous rural village community which remained largely in place until the early 1950s. The first stage of development in the area was private and focused on 'modern' family homes on the Headley Park estate (1934 to 1938) attracting a small middle class population from Somerset and the city centre to the northern edge of the village.

The southern fringe of the city was then chosen to be the centre of Bristol City Council's last major phase of house building, with the 1948 compulsory purchase of the farmland which would subsequently become the Hartcliffe, Withywood and Highridge estates. The programme was conceived partly to re-house families made homeless during the war, partly to relieve general overcrowding and partly to complete the slum clearance programmes begun fifteen years early, this time focused around Redcliffe and Barton Hill.

The estates were conceived in the modernist tradition as model 'neighbourhood units' with relatively high-quality and spacious housing in a range of configurations (houses alongside low-rise and high-rise flats), good local amenities and indigenous industry and commerce. Perhaps most importantly, they were intended to house a strong social mix. This idealist vision, as with many experiments in council housing from this period (Hanley, 2007), was never realised.

The first homes in the Hartcliffe estate, encompassing the western part of Whitchurch Park ward, were occupied in 1951 with building continuing until 1958 when it moved

first to Highridge and then on to Withywood, with a total of 10,000 dwellings being completed over three decades. Three schools were built in quick succession; Hartcliffe (1952), Bedminster Down (1955) and Withywood (1959) (Bantock, 1996).

There were considerable problems with the estates from the outset. They were very isolated from the remainder of the city, with insufficient transport links, especially to other areas of working class employment. There were no large scale local employers until Wills tobacco production moved from Bedminster to Hartcliffe in 1974, initially providing employment for around 5,000 local workers. Amenities did not materialise, with the area seeing little private sector investment. The high-rise flats proved unpopular with tenants, and while many residents took advantage of the 'Right to Buy' this was focused mainly on the houses (Lambert et al, 1998). These difficulties were later exacerbated by informal housing policies of moving a high proportion of vulnerable young people and lone parents into the estates (Malpass, 1994).

By the early 1980s, the Wills operation was already scaling down and few other employment opportunities had materialised in the Hartcliffe and Withywood area (Bristol City Council, 1983). When the Wills factory finally closed in 1990, 3,500 jobs were lost with many more affected across southern Bristol in associated industries. Unemployment in the area had risen at that point to 12%, with a high incidence of benefit dependency, especially amongst young people (Bristol City Council, 1991). The population of the area had declined by 8% between 1981 and 1991 (Lambert et al, 1998).

It was at this time that two unsuccessful bids (1991 and 1992) were submitted to the *City Challenge* initiative. This initiative was designed to provide a focus for multi-agency renewal in the UK's most deprived urban areas and was worth £37.5 million over five years. Despite being part of a small group of cities invited to bid there was a failure to forge effective partnerships particularly in relation to the vacant Wills site which was seen by the initiative's assessors to be the key to regeneration (Malpass, 1994). Hartcliffe saw rioting soon after the second *City Challenge* rejection, causing long-term physical and social damage to the Symes Avenue commercial area.

The period since 1992 has been one of upturn and limited renewal for the Hartcliffe and Withywood area, with successful bids for a number of regional, central government and European funding streams. The *Estate Action* scheme funded improvements to the housing stock, providing employment through an active policy of using local labour (Lambert et al, 1998). Parts of the Wills site have come back into use for light industry and a high-status private housing development is now planned there. The area was awarded £12 million in 1999 under the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), funding a range of employment and education initiatives, environmental improvements and community cohesion projects (HWCP, 2006). Unemployment in the area was around 6% in 2001, compared to a city-wide average of 5%. Employment is predominantly in wholesale and retail, manufacturing and construction.

Like Filwood, the other wards in the southern zone have significant numbers of people with no qualifications at all, relatively few people (6 to 7%) qualified to degree level and around 38% qualified only to level 2. Filwood, Bishopworth and Hartcliffe are ranked as the three most educationally deprived wards in Bristol, with Whitchurch Park ranked eight.

However, in terms of income, these wards are doing slightly better than a number of comparable wards elsewhere in Bristol. Hartcliffe, for example, is ranked as twelfth most deprived in terms of income (out of 34). A picture thus begins to emerge of communities where education and qualification may be viewed as somewhat disconnected from future work possibilities. Notwithstanding the fragility in the local labour market discussed earlier, the lived experience for many families is that making a living is possible without prior qualification.

4.5 Family and Community Cultures, Values and Attitudes

Despite a profile of relatively high levels of social deprivation, particularly in some wards in the constituency, this is not clearly associated with resident dissatisfaction. Indeed strong community bonds and stable extended family networks appear to frequently generate positive attitudes to living and working in the area.

In one survey conducted by a social action organisation *Involving Residents in Solutions (IRIS)* drawing on interviews with 158 residents in Knowle West and focus groups discussion with 77 others, people felt very positive about living there. Respondents valued strong family and friendship bonds and appreciated increasing facilities and support from a range of services (IRIS, 2004) with some concerns about aspects of crime, drug use, safety and anti-social behaviour. Overall, residents expressed fairly high degrees of satisfaction with local schools, with some concerns around bullying and poor behaviour. These generally positive findings about parental attitudes to school are backed by outcomes from a parental survey undertaken by the local secondary school (Centre for Successful Schools, 2004) despite the fact OfSTED soon after identified the school as 'failing'.

In another study undertaken to establish a baseline for Hartcliffe and Withywood Community Partnership (established under SRB5 in 1999) face-to-face interviews were conducted with a representative sample of 515 local residents combined with confidential self-completion questionnaires returned by 94 people. Only 9% of people held a negative view of the local area – with 51% describing it as 'a nice place to live' citing positive aspects as 'community spirit', 'family living nearby', 'easy access to open space and countryside', and being a 'quiet area'. Concerns related specifically to crime, drug use, poor shopping facilities and lack of leisure activities. 80% of those surveyed identified themselves as unlikely to move out of the area and of those who had children in local schools, 70% said that the standard of education in those schools was excellent or good (RBA Research, 2000).

A further study examined patterns of social support for families with young children in a 'high risk' neighbourhood[17] on a South Bristol estate, conducting extensive interviewing with a sample of 62 mothers (Gill et al, 2000). This report found that whilst for the majority of the families in the study there were strong three-generational patterns of support based on proximity and frequent contact, for a minority of families (who defined themselves as having family difficulties and

[17] The classification of 'high risk' neighbourhood was based on high indices of social deprivation and a disproportionate amount of childcare referrals. The neighbourhood also had a high number of lone parents and an unbalanced age structure.

needing more support) they felt disconnected from wider community and family networks. This included families who had moved frequently and been recently re-housed in the area.

Whilst the last of these studies reminds us to avoid over-simplification in representations of local communities, and to recognise that even within particular estates the community is heterogeneous, they all point to the strength of family and community bonds in shaping local cultures and attitudes. This is reinforced in an evaluation of Sure Start in Hartcliffe, Highridge and Withywood, where a successful programme of early years' and family support was built upon a strong community infrastructure and deep-rooted tradition of community activism, especially amongst women (Boushel, 2004).

Such studies resonate with findings from a number of city communities in deprived areas across the country. Robson et al (2000) in *The State of English Cities*, note:

> Even in the most deprived communities, there are considerable social strengths on which policy could build. Social surveys consistently show that high proportions of residents in deprived areas speak warmly of the 'quality' of the people in their neighbourhoods and argue that the problems of crime, dereliction and social disruption are caused by a small minority of residents. This suggests that almost all deprived communities still retain elements of their traditionally strong community structures. Much of this is maintained by women, and particularly middle-aged and elderly women. (p25)

Their conclusion, which is one we might consider in relation to policies for educational change in the area, is that we need to build upon these community strengths and 'put local communities at the heart of decision-making about neighbourhood management and change' (p25). There are also some specific pointers to the role of women in this process.

On the other hand whilst one might see such stable community cultures as a positive feature, there is also some evidence that such cultures may be associated with a degree of reluctance to engage in certain forms of social action. For example, in the school-based parental survey referred to earlier (Centre for Successful Schools, 2004) most parents were not particularly interested in becoming more involved with the school. In the Hartcliffe and Withywood SRB5 Baseline Survey (RBA Research,

2000) residents expressed a willingness to become more involved in 'low effort' community activities e.g. Neighbourhood Watch meetings but were not interested in more extended involvement citing lack of interest, lack of time and a belief that it would not make a difference.

The latter point may well reflect a degree of community cynicism in light of local government failure to deliver on key regeneration plans in the area over an extended period of time (Stewart, 1996). These attitudes may equally reflect the difficulties families regularly experience at engaging with organisations or institutional processes that appear middle-class in their values or judgemental in their style (Plumb, 2000). However, there may also be some association with levels of satisfaction with the 'status quo'.

Such community attitudes to 'satisfaction' versus views of 'change' and one's potential role in that change appear matched to some extent by young people's views. Bristol City Council in their *Catching in the Rye* report (2005a) present outcomes from the 'Young Person's Quality of Life Survey' conducted in Bristol secondary schools between 2002-2005 with analysis of findings by ward. Approximately 5000 young people aged 11-18 have responded over that time.

Asked about degree of satisfaction with their local schools, children living in Whitchurch Park and Hartcliffe were more satisfied than the ward average across the city with Windmill Hill and Southville not far behind. Other indicators e.g. degree of satisfaction with cultural, recreational and leisure facilities show an even more pronounced pattern with young people in seven of the constituency wards indicating relatively high levels of contentment.At the same time when surveyed on attitudes to aspects of active citizenship, young people in some parts of the constituency (particularly in the southern zone) expressed greater reluctance to see themselves as agents of change – at least through formal channels.

Bristol City Council, in its bid for Local Economic Growth Initiative funding (Bristol City Council, 2006a) claims an absence of a 'can-do' enterprising culture in the constituency – with few local enterprises or successful business start-ups, low rates of self-employment or interest in self-employment. In a study of barriers to employment

and enterprise in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas in Bristol (Herbert and Dando, 2006) those from South Bristol (202 respondents) were more likely than respondents from the Northern Arc or East Central areas to say that self-employment seemed to 'involve too much work and effort' (22% as against 10% and 9%) and that it is 'too risky' (15% against 7% and 5%). Of those who are currently economically inactive only 35% in South Bristol indicated they would like to work (compared with 50% in the other two areas). This is in part explained by higher levels of those on incapacity benefit or being at home with children but not entirely so. Other explanations highlight the culture created by previous intergenerational experience of 'employment for life' in the tobacco industry building dependency on a local 'benevolent employer' (SHM, 2004a).

The picture emerging here is one which suggests that local community cultures may be operating to retain a degree of stasis in individual lives in relation to social, economic or educational change. Attitudes reported above also reflect some sense of 'absence of *agency'* i.e. unwillingness to take risks or to seek empowerment and control over aspects of one's life, at least in the ways that are assumed by policy makers to underpin social improvement.

One must of course be cautious in drawing such a conclusion – since the indicators being used are profoundly class-based. Like the concepts of 'aspiration' and 'deferred gratification' (Lucey and Reay, 2002) the concept of 'enterprise' is modelled on middle-class preconceptions of success. 'Risk', 'power' and 'agency' may be sought and attained in variety of ways e.g. through 'offending behaviours' (and high levels of youth offending in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas indicate this is a option a number of young people choose). Equally a sense of 'satisfaction with the status quo' and contentment with one's place in the world is something missing for children in many aspirant and high-achieving middle class families (Lucey and Reay, 2002). However, notwithstanding this note of caution, such a perspective on community cultures resonates with other evidence on young people's orientations to learning (Chapter 6).

Such attitudes coalesce with strongly 'tribal' attitudes to identity and place; some parts of the constituency appear predominantly inward-looking and self-sufficient

with a strong sense of literal and symbolic boundaries between self and others. Concepts of space and distance are mediated by this.

St *I don't want to move.*
Yeah but that is just coz you don't want to leave your mates.
Na, I like living here – I likes my mates and I like the shops…

In So for those of you who would like to leave the area do you have any idea where you'd like to go?

St *Yeah, Headley Park.*
You muppet!
That's just round the corner, that's not moving out of the area[18].

(Interview with Year 11 students in southern zone school)

Views of place are sometimes characterised by anxiety about mixing with people outside the community with a strong sense of territory regulated by force.

St *Yeah, well I wouldn't go down Hartcliffe, not on my own anyway. Sometimes I go visit my cousin but if I do I say I go to Hartcliffe or something because if you say you're from Ashton they're like 'He's an Ashtoner, beat him up'.*

(Interview with Year 9 students in northern zone school)

St *You're not welcome if you goes somewhere else.*
Too right.
Knowle like calls Whitchurch stuck up and Whitchurch calls Hartcliffe scabby.
Yeah, Hartcliffe and Knowle are where all the chavs live…
You always get Whitchurch against Stockwood, but it's more like schools against each other.

In Is that more like at sports?

St *It used to be….*
Now it is just fights.

(Interview with Year 11 students in southern zone school)

[18] Transcribing focus group discussions especially with young people is notoriously difficult as there is a tendency for more than one person to be talking at once. The convention we have used here is to begin a new line to indicate a change of voice, and to use […] to indicate that the reported speech is an extract from a longer utterance. 'St' indicated student voice; 'In' indicates interviewer voice. Whilst there is some risk that this de-personalises the student voice, it is also a more accurate representation of the data. It also acknowledges the fact that in group interviews a collective rather than an individual set of dynamics and discourses emerge. Where reported interviews have been one-to-one or in very small groups we have provided pseudonyms.

Lack of awareness of the geography of the city and its wider resources is also sometimes an issue.

> Lucy *It's a really enclosed area. Young people I work with, they might go as far as Bedminster but no further. They think of that as 'town'. I remember doing a girls' group with some girls from south Bristol and north Bristol – where the point was to get them to mix – and there was a conversation when one girl said to another girl 'I'm going to town on Saturday' and the other girl said 'Is your town the same as my town?'*
>
> (Interview with Connexions Personal Adviser working in Bristol South)

In the southern part of the constituency in particular, this tendency is reinforced by limited transport links with other parts of the city or the cost of travel.

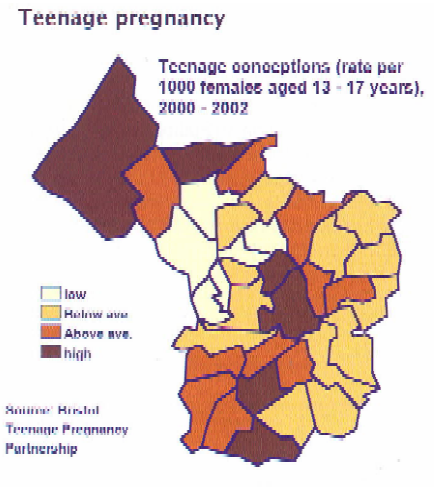
> In Do you ever go into town?
>
> St *I goes in after school. It's only 20 minutes on the bus.*
> *Yeah but I don't like paying the bus fare…*
> *…It goes up all the time.*
> *I don't like paying the bus fare.*
> *…I's been going in since I were 13 or 14.*
> *I would if I had a car…but I gotta wait till I'm 17.*
>
> (Interview with Year 11 students in southern zone school)

There are also for some families well-rooted traditions of supporting self-sufficiency by looking outwards as part of a semi-rural economy rather than inwards to the rest of the city reflected for example in reference to the keeping of animals, growing vegetables and hunting with dogs (Knowle West Media Centre *Show Reel Vol 11*). The enduring impression is one where many people in the constituency live intensely 'localised lives' (Connolly and Healy, 2004; Reay and Lucey, 2000).

A further significant dimension is characterised by 'traditional' gender discourses and cultures. In interviewing young people many boys we spoke to saw themselves following in their fathers' footsteps quite literally – often going to work alongside them as employees in manual trades or joining the family business. For many girls a life trajectory of early motherhood, unpaid domestic work and later low skilled employment once their children have grown up reflects their family narrative. Teenage conceptions, the first step of that journey, are generally higher than average across parts of the constituency and in some wards significantly so (Map 4.6). Across

the city 20% of teenage mothers have a second baby before they reach the age of eighteen (OfSTED, 2006a). When girls we interviewed articulated a vision of future employment it frequently involved 'working with children', 'working with animals' or 'working in health and beauty'. In addition, the number of young people with unpaid caring responsibilities is above ward average in six of the nine wards in the constituency and we know that this is more likely to be undertaken by girls than boys (Bristol City Council, 2005a). Support for young carers across the authority is 'inadequate' (OfSTED, 2006a).

Map 4.6



It is notable that the educational performance of girls in the area in general does not reflect the 'gender gap' in favour of girls noted as a national trend (Chapter 5). Given the significance of gender to the changing face of young participation in higher education, where generally young women are more likely to enter higher education than young men and especially in the most disadvantaged areas (HEFCE, 2005/03) this local characteristic may be important and would bear further investigation.

In our interviews family and peer expectations tended to reflect the dominant life stories of those in their local communities. Where transition to employment and to family life has high value, progression to further and higher education or extended qualification has less appeal. More immediate benefits, including early earning potential, have greater attraction than investing in deferred gratification, even where this is based on a degree of fantasy or misinformation.

Phil What would you say if I said I'd give you a small amount of money to train now but in two years time you'd be earning really good dosh, like £600 a week but your mates are like working now and earning a couple of hundred pounds a week?

Sean *I'd say sod off. Anyway, I can get a job now with my uncle – he's working on the stadium down in London and bringing home £800 a week.*

Steven *But money's not the only thing. I want to do scaffolding. If someone offered me a job now doing scaffolding at £25 an hour or work at Macdonalds for £45 an hour, no £35 an hour, I'd still do scaffolding.*

(Discussion between year 11 young people educated out of school and their key worker)

Finally, notwithstanding the generally positive attitudes to living in the area, there is recognition that others from outside the constituency generally view it, and particularly parts of it, in a negative light and that this may lead to lowered expectations and stereotyping of people who come from the area (IRIS, 2004; Gulati et al, 2002).

Maggie *There's the message when you're going round places, you know. I was taking my son round to look at post-16, eighteen months ago and we were standing at one post-16 centre and the people in the front were asked 'What school are you from?' and I think they said they're from X School or somewhere like that and 'That's fantastic, really like to see you here, you won't have any trouble with your grades, you'll get in.' My son comes up. 'What school are you from?' 'I'm from Hartcliffe.' 'Well you do realise you need two Bs for you to get in here.' And straight away - that he wouldn't have the brains to do it - and he said to me that 'There was no way that even if they offered me a place and they were the only place to offer me a place, would I come here.' He just felt so degraded because of the way they were speaking to him.*

(Interview with parent/carer)

There is also some evidence that levels of stated satisfaction decline once individuals become aware of the conditions pertaining in other parts of the city e.g. in relation to educational standards.

Kay *And I started to realise, and I hadn't realised until that point, that... well I didn't realise until a teacher told me bluntly, that education in South Bristol, it just performed much less better than it did in the rest of the city and I was completely unaware of that. And to me, as a parent, my concerns were - yes are my children achieving - that was important to me, but they had to be happy and their social context and being in a local school and all those things are really important to me and have remained so. But it was one teacher who ... said 'Do you know (your son's) going to find it a bit different when he goes to secondary school, because he's going to be more or less in the middle of the class really, rather than top of the class.' And I couldn't understand why because I just didn't understand the differences. And he said about results in South Bristol etc ... and I just found that quite shocking because I hadn't known and it's*

> *interesting, I listen to parents in this area and head teachers from this area are very good at saying this, particularly primary heads – 'When we talk to parents, they say they're very, very happy with the education the children are receiving.' And I said 'that's because they don't know any different.' And I know that because that's happened to me.*

(Interview with parent/carer)

4.6 Conclusions on the Local Context

We have spent some time researching and representing the complexities of the local context of Bristol South, since that context has such profound impact on the life chances and life choices of the young people we seek to better understand. We have noted how Bristol itself is a city of extremes, with areas of affluence contrasted with areas of profound material deprivation. Bristol South as a geographical area has been constructed over time - as a consequence of a number of policies and trends in employment, education, housing, and transport.

Whilst the constituency itself is not homogenous, and we note important variations at ward level, overall we have demonstrated how the economic, social and cultural infrastructures in the area inter-relate with each other to configure relatively restricted 'horizons for action' (Hodkinson et al, 1996) for many young people living there. This is important in making sense of why so few young people in the constituency participate in higher education. By 'horizons for action' we mean:

> … the arena within which actions can be taken and decisions made. Habitus[19] and the opportunity structures of the labour market both influence horizons for action and are inter-related, for perceptions of what might be available and appropriate affect decisions, and opportunities are simultaneously subjective and objective. (Hodkinson and Sparkes, 1997, 34)

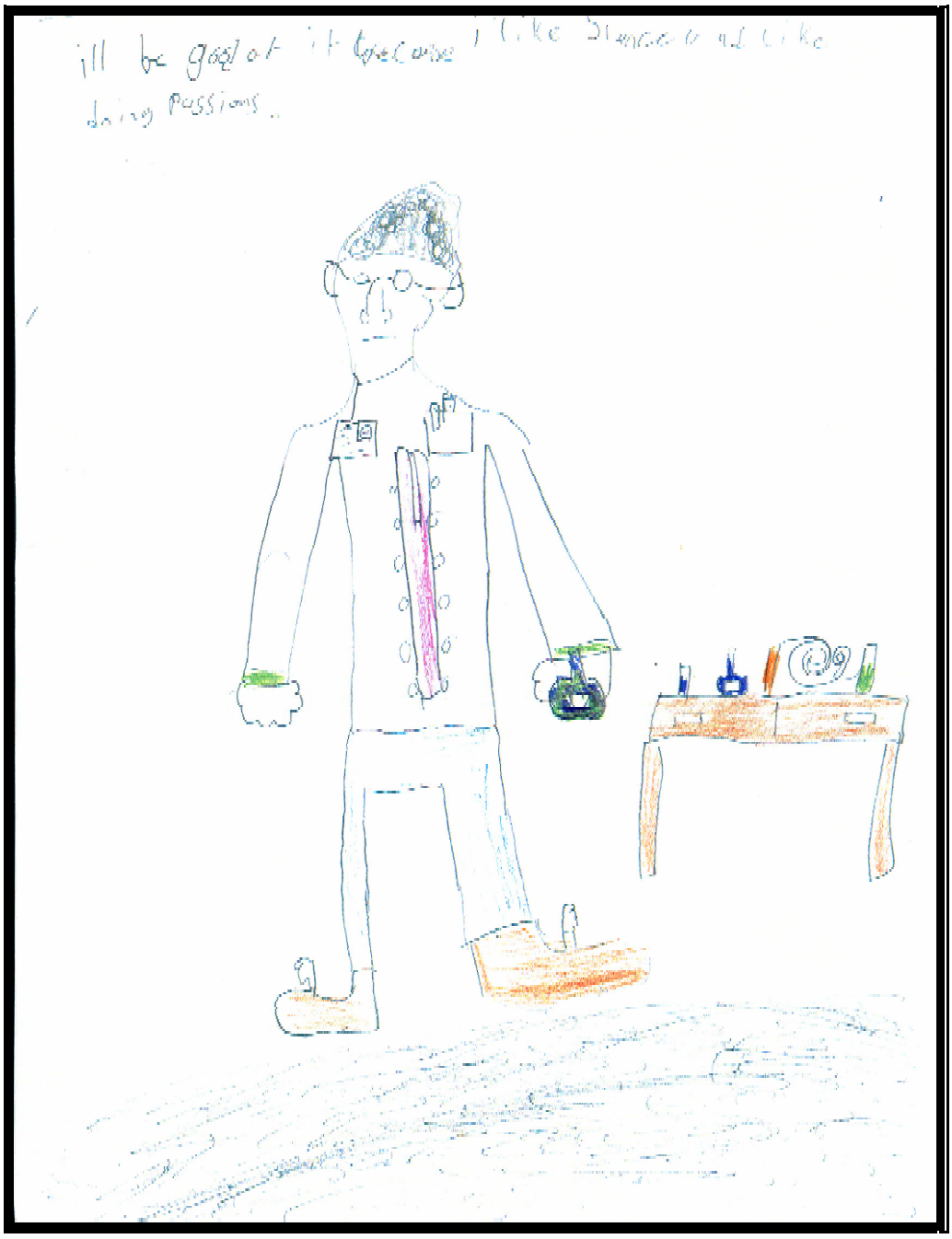
With relatively low unemployment for parts of the recent period (albeit with much employment in low-skill jobs and a degree of fragility in the local labour market) and with pathways into adulthood that do not depend on educational success e.g. employment in small businesses alongside family and friends, or early motherhood,

[19] Habitus is 'that system of dispositions which acts as a mediation between structures and practice' (Bourdieu, 1977, p487) i.e. habitus refers to the interplay between people's values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours and the social, economic and cultural context within which they live.

the motivation to aspire to higher level qualifications is not always obvious. Indeed, with stated high levels of satisfaction with how things are, reinforced by strong social bonds and 'networks of intimacy' (Fuller et al, 2006) within well-bounded geographic areas – there is a powerful force field maintaining the status quo.

Chapter 5

The Educational Landscape in Bristol South



5. The Educational Landscape in Bristol South

5.1 Local Government and Education in Bristol

Recognising the impact of local governance on the education service in Bristol together with understanding the local context (Chapter 4) are both essential to understanding educational achievement, aspiration and progression for young people in Bristol South and the associated issue of participation in higher education.

Public education in Bristol has been subject in recent history to different forms of local governance. Bristol is unusual in having been a city with county status since medieval times and it was named a county borough in 1889 when the term was first introduced. However, on 1 April 1974 it became a local government district of the short-lived county of Avon. On 1 April 1996 it once again regained its independence and county status, when the county of Avon was abolished and Bristol became a Unitary Authority. Initially a Labour led authority, since 2003 no single political party has had an overall majority on the council. Following a period when various political parties shared control, the Liberal Democrats currently lead the council as a minority administration.

In 1902 Bristol City Council became responsible for public education in the city. The Education Act in 1944 required the council to assess its requirements for education and plan accordingly. Rising birth rate, movement of populations to the new housing estates, loss of buildings during the war and the raising of the school leaving age to fifteen in 1947 made the building of new schools a priority. Between 1945 and 1951 fourteen new schools were built and by 1973 sixty-eight primary schools and twenty-three secondary schools had been built since 1946 (Everleigh, 2003).

One key feature of the Bristol City Council post-war plan was its decision to provide four types of secondary school: grammar, technical, secondary modern and bilateral (secondary-modern and grammar streams on one site). Bristol was one of only a few local authorities to adopt this approach. Ten bilateral schools were established between 1954 and 1963 to serve the post-war peripheral housing estates. Five of these

schools were in Bristol South. Whilst some have claimed the Bristol bilateral schools were an early form of comprehensive schooling, life histories of those who attended these schools reveal how a form of educational apartheid operated (Brine, 2006a: 2006b). Movement between streams was virtually unheard of. Instead children learned through a complex set of social signifiers and educational practices how to *know their place* in relation to each other in terms of gender and social class. Rather than extending educational opportunities, the bilateral schools in Bristol consolidated fixed, reified and socially constructed concepts of innate ability with stratified access to leaving qualifications and enduring impact on future life choices and pathways. Many of those educated in the 'modern' streams of Bristol South bilateral schools have not moved out of the area; family histories have been shaped by these local policies and practices with family members still attending the same school sites[20].

In terms of contemporary educational provision in Bristol, there are currently 160 local authority maintained schools including sixteen secondary schools. Many of these secondary schools remain located in the post-war housing estates on the outskirts of the city; six of them are in Bristol South. Education in Bristol has long been affected by the polarisation of the city into areas of affluence and deprivation. At present the city has eleven independent schools serving the secondary age range; many of these schools are of ancient foundation and have a long history. Approximately 25% of the population of secondary age young people living in Bristol are educated outside the local authority maintained schools in either the independent sector or in schools outside the city. The proportion of children with statements of special educational need in the city maintained schools is well above the national average (OfSTED, 2006a).

One consequence of this contextual situation has been that the local authority maintained secondary schools in Bristol face particular challenges in supporting young people to achieve. For a number of years, Bristol has performed very poorly against national standards and whilst there has been some improvement, the rate of improvement in most measures has been less than the national trend (Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1)

[20] All five community comprehensives in Bristol South (Section 5.2) were originally bilateral schools.