

## Tool four: Using data more effectively

This section provides some introductory material regarding:

- Using data sources to keep track of demographic changes and community dynamics
- Models to measure, assess or identify priority areas for attention

### Introduction

Knowing who lives in the community, their age and ethnicity, the faiths they follow and the languages they speak, their health and employment status, are integral to our understanding of and ability to serve communities. The primary purpose of this information is not in order to assess the tensions within communities, nor should it be. It is the basis of the delivery of services that best meet needs. However, in order to understand the community with a view to addressing current and potential tensions, this section describes how demographic data can help.

### Using data sources to keep track of demographic changes and community dynamics

The census still provides the most comprehensive snapshot of the population, but the 10 year cycle limits its usefulness. Keeping track of ongoing demographic change requires the use of other data sources. The sources in question are the administrative data sets held by a range of agencies locally and can include:

- GP registrations
- Council tax records and benefits
- Social housing records
- Private landlord registrations/orders
- Births, deaths and marriages
- Electoral register records
- Housing waiting list
- PLASC i.e. Pupil Level Annual School Census info gathered by schools
- Crime data
- Local property gazetteer
- National Insurance registrations
- Information from local employers

(for a full set of local data sources and agencies, see the iCoCo Cohesion mapping of community dynamics (COHDMAP) project)

In combination such data can provide rich and timely information on the composition and well being of a community. Because the data is available locally and by its very nature changes over time, it also provides a means of understanding local population mobility. However, whilst the information may help in providing cohesion information, it will not necessarily be a tensions predictor.

The following table shows how a range of data sources can be brought together to build a picture of an area. They are a selection of indicators to which those listed above could be added.

**Table 1: Specimen indicators, sources and spatial units**

Note: LSOA=Lower-tier Super Output Area PLASC=Pupil Level Annual Schools Census  
 RIMS=Racist Incident Monitoring System CDRP=Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership

Domain	Sub-category	Indicator	Source	Lowest spatial unit available
Social inclusion	Unemployment	Claimant count benefits	ONS/DWP DWP	Ward LSOA
	Labour market exclusion	Incapacity benefit	DWP	LSOA LSOA
	Teenage motherhood	Birth statistics Abortions	ONS ONS	Ward Ward
	Illness	Mortality statistics Disability benefit	ONS DWP	Ward LSOA
	Housing deprivation	Tenancies Homelessness House prices	CORE/LA CORE/LA Land registry/ banks/ODPM	District District Postcode sector
Segregation	Population	Census	ONS	OA
	School	PLASC	DfES/LEA	Unit postcode
Equal opportunities	Employment	Ethnic monitoring of all employment	ONS Annual Population Survey	Larger districts
Educational attainment	Percent achieving success	Key stage 1 & 2 GCSE A-level	DfES/LEA	School/ward/ LEA
Community Safety	Crime statistics	Type of crime by location	Police/CDRP	Varies – postcode for mapping
	Racist incidents	Type of incident	Police (RIMS)	District/Police Force Area
	Fear of crime	Perception of change	Best Value Survey	District
Population dynamics	Population turnover	Migration estimates Change in electoral register	ONS Local authority	District Ward
Social networks	Contact with neighbours/ other ethnic/social groups	How often talk to neighbours Which ethnic or social groups come into contact with	Community Cohesion Survey (sample)	District
Political participation	Electoral registration	Electoral register statistics	ONS./Local authority	Ward
	Voting patterns	Election results	Local authority	Ward
Community engagement	Volunteering	Membership of voluntary organisations	LOVAS surveys, HO citizenship survey	Some districts, otherwise national
	Density of community organisations	Database of voluntary bodies, clubs	Local authority	District
Identification with a locality	Neighbourhood identification	Which geographical scale Friends/family in area	Community Cohesion Survey (sample)	District

Source: Cohesion mapping of community dynamics (COHDMAP) – iCoCo

## Models to measure, assess or identify priority areas for attention

There are a number of academic studies and research programmes underway to explore whether community tension can be predicted from demographic information. In reality, data alone cannot predict community tension - it is the combination of quantitative and qualitative information which is valuable in enriching the picture of community dynamics.

The Home Office has published a review of GIS information systems developed by different regions and used generally in relation to crime though having some potential application to tensions monitoring. [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/rdsolr0206.pdf](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs06/rdsolr0206.pdf)

Three models are outlined here have been developed in partnership between academics and practitioners and one development with some commercial input.

### **The Vulnerable Localities Index (VLI)**

[www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk/crime\\_mapping/vulnerable\\_localities/index.php](http://www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk/crime_mapping/vulnerable_localities/index.php)

Police methods of mapping crime and cohesion have included an experiment with the Vulnerable Localities Index, developed by the Jill Dando Institute at the UCL Centre for Security and Crime Science, which selects six indicators for identifying neighbourhoods that required attention. While the research has not been widely published and the planned handbook has not yet appeared, certain areas have found this approach useful to assist their Neighbourhood Policing Initiatives.

The VLI does not just identify high crime neighbourhoods but was designed to help identify the worst affected communities for breakdown, tension, and fragmentation. This meant that deprivation, anti-social behaviour, disorder, socio-economic conditions and demographic characteristics were considered alongside crime data as indicators that could be used for identifying priority neighbourhoods.

Six indicators were chosen – two were crime-based and could be extracted from the local Police crime recording system (burglary to a dwelling and criminal damage to a dwelling); two were sourced from deprivation variables (income deprivation and employment deprivation available in the Index of Deprivation from the online Neighbourhood Statistics Service), one was based on educational attainment (also available from the Neighbourhood Statistics Service), and a demographic statistic on the population of young people (available from the Neighbourhood Statistics Service).

What the VLI aims to do is ‘point the suggestive finger’ to priority areas that can then be qualified with further analysis using additional locally accessible data and intelligence to understand and explain the problems that contribute to why a prioritised area may require specific attention.

The VLI was successfully pilot tested at eight sites and began to gain wider interest from those implementing neighbourhood policing programmes where there was a need to identify priority neighbourhoods. As a result, researchers say that the VLI is now seen as one of a number of measures that can be effectively used to support Neighbourhood Policing requirements. Some experience of using the VLI can be found at:

**Assessing the level of community cohesion within the Pennine Division of Lancashire Constabulary** by Mark Dallison, Lancashire Constabulary  
[www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk/downloads/conferences/third\\_nat\\_map\\_conf/mark\\_dallison.pdf](http://www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk/downloads/conferences/third_nat_map_conf/mark_dallison.pdf)

## Experian Mosaic

Mosaic Public Sector provides a classification system to support public sector policy decisions, communications activity and resource strategies. It provides a comprehensive analysis of citizens at postcode and household level providing insight into socio-demographics, lifestyles, culture and behaviour of UK citizens. It uses data from health, education, criminal justice and local and central government and can be used to give a clear picture of every citizen in terms of their requirements for these services. It aims to provide a 'common currency' that enables citizens to be served in a joined up way by partners.

Of particular interest in this classification are:

- Household type – this identifies 61 household types such as:
  - E28 – Neighbourhoods with transient singles living in multiply occupied large old houses
  - F35 – Young people renting hard to let social housing often in disadvantaged inner city locations
  - F36 – High density social housing, mostly in inner London, with high levels of diversity
- Ethnicity at the local level - this uses personal and family name and appends the most likely cultural, ethnic and linguistic type and group and a measure of the relative strength of association between the name and type, then the classification provides the most likely country of origin, cultural group and language. Alternatively the classification can provide a dominant cultural, ethnic and linguistic type at postcode level.
- Understanding deprivation and inequalities – at a much more local level than the Indices of Deprivation
- Police - identifying the characteristics of victims of specific crimes, knowing where fear of crime is highest – to inform strategic and tactical policing

**[www.business-strategies.co.uk/upload/downloads/mosaic%20public%20sector%20factsheet%20for%20website.pdf](http://www.business-strategies.co.uk/upload/downloads/mosaic%20public%20sector%20factsheet%20for%20website.pdf)**

The Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC) in practice example combines the Vulnerable Localities Index and the Mosaic method.

## **Neighbourhood security and urban change: risk, resilience and recovery**

This research develops an innovative framework for understanding with clarity and precision how the drivers of neighbourhood security and insecurity impact on urban neighbourhood change trajectories. It analyses the ways crime, disorder, fear of crime and social control impact on neighbourhood security, thereby influencing how places and the people in them change over time. To better understand such processes, the concepts of risk, resilience and recovery ('the 3Rs' of urban change) are introduced.

- **Risk** factors are insecurity-generating conditions that increase the likelihood of an area decaying and declining. They are risk factors because, while crime and disorder can corrode security leading to decline in some localities, in other areas this does not happen because of the presence of resilience factors.
- **Resilience** factors enable some places to withstand and mitigate the risks and threats to which they are exposed. A neighbourhood's resilience capacity reflects the distribution of economic and social capital, and is connected to the presence or absence of collective efficacy.
- **Recovery** factors promote and propagate enhanced security and in the process contribute to an overall material improvement in a neighbourhood's situation.

The data for the study are drawn from four of the 16 trial sites for the National Reassurance Policing Programme (NRPP) that ran in England between April 2003 and March 2005. Although both quantitative and qualitative data are used in this report, the qualitative findings are especially illuminating in detailing how respondents accounted for any changes they were experiencing in their neighbourhoods.

[www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1938-neighbourhood-security-change.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/1938-neighbourhood-security-change.pdf)

## In practice

### **In practice: Southwark Neighbourhood Analytical Project (SNAP)**

A partnership between Southwark Council, Southwark PCT and Mayhew Associates was established in 2006 to make better use of locally available administrative data to:

- Improve local knowledge
- Aid decision making, planning and policy analysis; and
- Support the provision of analysis and information required by central government.

A unique feature of Mayhew Associates' approach is the matching and geo-referencing of data at the household level. Systematic analyses are adopted to pinpoint key features of local areas in terms of services provided, crime, health, educational or other outcomes.

The first stage of the project was to acquire various datasets including: PLASC i.e. Pupil level Annual School Census, GP register, Council Tax, Local Property Gazetteer, Housing tenure, Electoral Roll and births and deaths.

The results are still coming through but so far the Southwark neighbourhood analytical project (SNAP) has provided a comprehensive demographic picture of the borough, which indicates that Southwark's population is higher than that estimated by the Office of National Statistics. This is an important finding not least because one of the factors that might account for the disparity is the way in which migration is estimated.

Southwark is now layering additional data on the basic population analysis to better understand its communities, particularly looking at children and young people.

In the medium term Southwark is building an enterprise data warehouse (EDW) which will be an integrated collection of historical data and associated applications across an entire organisation. This will enable Southwark to get a multiple view of the customer and will support an automated approach to understanding the composition of the community.

The administrative data discussed above provides a tangible evidence base. However, on its own it is not sufficient to satisfy the need to understand communities. Authorities need also to gather and use information on how communities perceive their areas and how relationships between communities are progressing. Typically this information would be gathered through an annual residents survey. However, in very diverse areas, there is an argument for undertaking 'cohesion' surveys more locally – say at estate level —to understand how people are feeling about their area in more detail.

In Southwark, 'cohesion' surveys are being piloted on two local authority housing estates. The aim is to interview as many residents on the estates as possible in order to develop a baseline and assess change over time. Residents are being asked questions relating to their sense of satisfaction with their community, life opportunities, respect for diversity, their sense of belonging and some demographic details. A tension question, 'How much tension between different people from different ethnic groups would you say there is in this estate?' is included and results will inform locality plans.

## **In practice: Greater Manchester Against Crime (GMAC): using the VLI and Experian Mosaic**

For the past 12 months GMAC have been piloting a project in Bolton to develop analytical techniques and new methods to understand communities. The project brief centred around the following statement:

“It is widely recognised that communities are not equally vulnerable to crime. However even after demographic and economic factors are taken into account, communities with similar population profiles still have different levels of vulnerability to crime, anti-social behaviour and feelings of insecurity. If these differences of vulnerability can be understood, more effective interventions can be implemented to reduce crime, improve security and improve cohesion with communities”

GMAC used both the Vulnerable Localities Index and Experian Mosaic to analyse their communities.

The GMAC system emphasises the generation of good quality analysis products. To do this GMAC has ensured the ingredients of appropriate resourcing are all in place; skilled and trained analytical staff, and training for decision-makers to ensure they understand the role of analysis; good quality data; and a robust IT solution and appropriate analytical tools. GMAC’s commissioning approach for the generation of analytical products is also providing an effective model for working:

- It helps to ensure that the focus of the analytical request is maintained on partnership priorities
- It ensures that careful and deliberate thought is given to identifying the questions that require answering from analysis
- It provides direction – the analyst is clear on what information is required
- It identifies which analytical resource is most appropriate to answer the question, or part of the question
- Commissioning helps to manage the workload of analysts

From an analyst’s viewpoint, commissioning also enables an analyst to identify and collect relevant data and information, identify relevant support from the panel of experts that exists across GMAC, identifies the limitations of data and can help point to the adoption of alternative methods of collating information. The strength in GMAC’s analytical framework is demonstrated by the content of its analytical products. These are already showing problem oriented content (rather than being purely descriptive reports).

GMAC has achieved a great deal in a short period of time. It has commendably captured a clear vision, achieved significant buy-in and enthusiasm from Greater Manchester’s CDRP partners and is effectively resourced for supporting the analytical requirements of the partnerships. Its comprehensive documentation provides a strong foundation and its planned evaluation is an example to other systems of the need for regular review.

## **In practice: Camden social capital survey 2002 & 2005**

The Office for Public Management carried out surveys in 2002 and 2005 to measure the impact of the Neighbourhood Renewal and Community Strategies on life in Camden, and particularly on levels of social capital. The key findings were:

**Quality of life:** Over half of Camden residents say that they feel that their neighbourhood is improving - car crime, volume and speed of traffic, and rubbish and litter all decreasing. Noise, however, is seen as an increasingly significant problem.

**Neighbourhood Renewal:** A majority feel that their area is improving. However, residents in Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (NRAs) still tend to experience more difficulties than those in non-NRAs eg drug use and youth-related problems

**Community Cohesion:** A sense of community appears to be growing across Camden. People generally wish to remain living in their neighbourhood and more people are interested in its long-term future.

**Neighbourhood Renewal:** Levels of satisfaction with local services are high. Trust in the council, police and GPs has risen and the number of people who know how to contact the council and the police has gone up. The visibility of the police has increased and some important public health and public safety messages appear to be positively affecting behaviour. [Summary of key findings \(PDF 51KB\)](#) [Full social capital report \(PDF 444KB\)](#)

**Using the research -** A joint publication with the IPPR (Institute for Public Policy Research) based on the Camden social capital surveys was published assessing the significance of the findings and ways to develop policies in response to them. It covers why social capital matters and what can be done to promote it.

[“Sticking Together: social capital and local government” \(PDF 356KB\)](#)