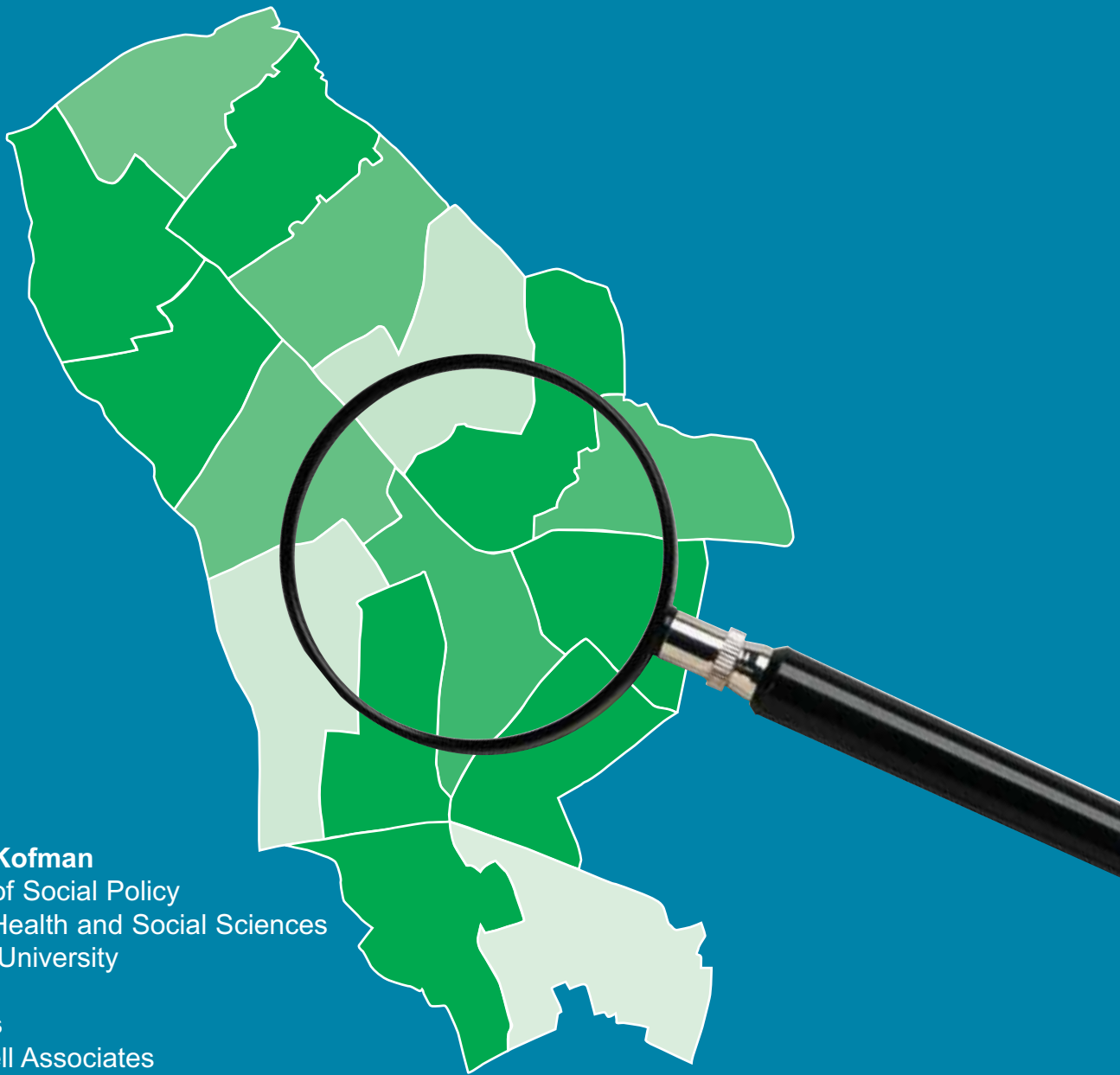


# Mapping Research on Refugees in the Borough of Islington



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**ISLINGTON**



## Translations and other formats

This document is the Mapping Research on Refugees in the Borough of Islington. This research seeks to provide an estimate of the numbers, needs and aspirations of refugees living in Islington. If you would like it in a different language or format please phone 020 7527 7140 or email [iris@islington.gov.uk](mailto:iris@islington.gov.uk)

## Traducciones y otros formatos

Este documento es el Análisis Espacial de la Población de Refugiados en el Distrito de Islington. La intención de esta investigación es ofrecer una aproximación de las cifras, las necesidades y las aspiraciones de los refugiados que viven en Islington. Si desea este documento en otro idioma o formato, puede llamar al 020 7527 7140 o enviar un correo electrónico a [iris@islington.gov.uk](mailto:iris@islington.gov.uk)

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## Executive Summary

### Background

This research project seeks to provide an estimate of the numbers and types of refugees living in Islington, reviewing the available information about demography and trends. In addition the research seeks to “examine refugee perceptions of their inclusion in society and the key factors that facilitate that process”. The purpose of the research is to facilitate more effective planning and delivery of services using a more concrete evidence base than has been hitherto available.

It was commissioned by the borough and uses an innovative methodology, taking the data available from the 2001 census on country of birth as a starting point. Maps of the presence in the borough of those from specific refugee communities were produced and used to identify specific areas where researchers knocked on doors, identified the numbers of refugees living there, asked filtering questions and found refugees willing to be interviewed. Unlike other surveys, this draws on the views and experiences of people who have little contact with other services and organisations, supplemented by interviews with people found through organisations, reviews of literature and other contacts. The interviews also provide information about family formation and demography that enables better analysis of the data available through the census and other sources.

Data on refugee presence previously available in the borough is mostly partial, often based on ethnic origin, language or nationality, but can point to the presence of significant groups. The survey of languages in Islington schools which draws on more complete information than most found that 21% of children were of refugee origin. This is supported by the finding that the population of refugee origin in Islington will continue to grow even with falling asylum numbers and dispersal out of London, but that this growth will occur through a mix of family reunion and children being born in the borough: the “second generation”.



### Refugee numbers

The team concluded that it was impossible to “count refugees” but that some working figures for the larger communities could be possible, based on the census data and modified by what was learned from other data, the street survey and the interviews. A formula for counting specific communities is offered, which depends on information being available on

- the percentage of refugees among people citing a particular country of birth
- an estimate for likely under-enumeration by the census
- an estimate of growth or decline of the population as a result of births or deaths
- an estimate for net in-migration since 2001, including family reunions.

The figures so derived should always be triangulated with other data available. Within Islington, the four largest communities are defined as Turkish speakers (including Kurds), Somalis, Maghrebis and Latin Americans. Islington is home to many communities, with no one “claiming” it as the main area of settlement.

**Turkish speakers** arrived initially from Cyprus, but increasingly from mainland Turkey in the 1960s and 70s, then a significant influx of Kurdish refugees in the 1980s. The borough is home to several community organisations. Using the above method, we arrive at a conservative estimate of a minimum of 3,500 -3,600 people.

**Somalis** constitute a rapidly growing community, and it is believed that their numbers were seriously underestimated in the census. Many Somali families are large, and a number have also increased through family reunions. They are also the fastest growing population in Islington schools. The presence of several associations in the borough reflects a pattern of significant historical, ethnic and other divisions in this community. We calculate a minimum of 1,600 Somalis in the borough, but the number may be significantly higher if there is any degree of underestimation in the census, and results from our street survey indicate this may be so.

**North Africans** are a disparate group consisting of Maghrebis (Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians) as well as much smaller numbers of Egyptians, Libyans and Sudanese. Algerians only started to request asylum in significant numbers from 1995. It is a heavily male population (70.5% in the 2001 census) and fairly well qualified, although many may arrive undocumented. They have a concentration in the Finsbury Park area around religious and commercial centres, and the census figure of 868 is likely to be a large underestimate because so many of this community are either undocumented or live in quite unstable situations, or, commonly, both.

**Latin Americans** now consist of numbers of people from Colombia and Ecuador (and to a lesser extent, Peru and Bolivia) who have sought asylum in the UK from the early 90s onwards, often supported by existing communities of migrant workers. They are scattered all over the borough, but the emergence of shops, restaurants and other businesses serving the communities along the Holloway Road and in Newington Green indicate the presence of a viable infra-community market locally. The census identifies 1678 people born in Latin America in the borough in 2001, but this is a figure difficult to correlate with others because some are not refugees, and the language survey in schools does not identify Latin Americans specifically.

While the methods described above help to produce estimates for some populations that are of considerable use in monitoring service delivery, especially in relation to languages, providing an estimate of Islington's refugee population as a whole is more difficult and there is very little data about some populations. There is also no commonly accepted definition of "refugee". However, such an estimate is a useful baseline against which those delivering services can see how they are doing in reaching refugee communities. We urge caution on this as well, since the work that follows, based on interviews with refugees in the borough, appears to indicate a greater level of need in many areas than among the population as a whole. A

service that merely attracts the presence of refugees in the same ratio as the general population may well be failing to reach out to those in most need. However with all these caveats, we would suggest that, for the purposes of measuring performance for service delivery, that the Borough can safely use a working figure of **5-10% of its population being of first generation refugee origin**. Obviously there are likely to be more of second generation as the school figures indicate.

### Other research findings

The fieldwork interviews with refugees found through the street survey and via contacts with organisations yielded detailed and interesting information about their use of services, attitudes to them and needs. Put together with the literature survey and other contacts and discussions, these generate findings relating to the main areas relevant to integration. Challenges for those working in these areas are also identified. What follows is a selection.

1. Citizenship is popular among Islington's refugees, most of whom took it up as soon as they were qualified to do so. However, the new citizenship regulations now in force would have prevented about a third of those interviewed from doing so since they now incorporate an English language test. Passing this would present particular difficulties for the significant numbers we found who were ill, disabled or looking after small children.
2. Few of those interviewed were in employment, and most that were depended on the community sector for satisfying work. A majority of those not in work were not looking because of illness, disability or caring responsibilities. When our interviewees did seek work, they were often disappointed. Levels of dissatisfaction with statutory resources were high and knowledge of other options and services low.
3. Getting Islington's refugees into appropriate employment is a complex set of challenges: the barriers identified: language, skill recognition and validation, community pressures, health, disability and caring responsibilities do not operate in isolation, but combine to create quite intractable problems. There is a need for statutory agencies to engage with partners who may be able to offer new approaches and insights to enable more refugee households to get into employment that does not devalue their skills or potential. This includes the refugee community sector which, itself, is a source of employment.
4. We found an almost universal hunger for ESOL that was not being met, and challenges presented by the need to devise flexible, portable learning packages that will enable students to take up where they left off, rejoin classes etc. when faced with other demands on their time and attention.

5. Some interviewees used “private” paid interpreters to secure access to services and many believed they did not have effective access to the services they needed because of the lack of interpreting for that.
6. Refugees found through the household survey and brokered interviews reported much greater housing needs than the general population and correspondingly greater dissatisfaction. Many have little idea of the options they may have, or of where they may go to find out about them. Given that many Islington residents face unacceptable levels of housing need and deprivation, the aim of work with refugees should be that they are no more disadvantaged than others who are equally poor, unemployed or ill, that they understand what determines the lack of decent affordable housing in the borough and that they develop a perception that they are able to access services on equal terms and are treated fairly. The key to solving refugees’ housing problems, however, may actually lie in the fields of employment, training, etc which would enable them to deal with their own housing needs.
7. The numbers of interviewees reporting use of hospitals (77% of households), long term illnesses, major health problems etc are very high in comparison to the general Islington population. Given this, the low level of contact with some services for disabled people and their carers is of concern. Devising appropriate outreach and communication methods for this group presents a real challenge. We found a high level of complex health and care needs that identified just how marginalised, vulnerable and dependent this community can be.
8. Interviewees have considerable social interaction with friends and family and many have helped relatives and friends. There is considerable use of places such as libraries and adult education institutes for ESOL. Parents were heavily involved with schools and appreciated the information given out and the presence of interpreters. Tenants associations, however, were seen as unwelcoming. It appears that participation in RCOs encourages them to believe that they can influence what happens locally, and enables them to understand “the system” better.
9. Most refugee contacts were with people from their own ethnic group or other migrants and refugees and few had sustained or close friendships with British people. Many do not work or work in community organisations where they meet their fellow nationals or ethnic groups and hence have little opportunity to make friends with British people. It is important to note, however, that people were generally positive about Islington as a place to live.
10. Refugees had mixed hopes on arrival and aspirations now. The report gives considerable detail on this, quoting directly from the interviews. Many express optimism, or aspirations that are not markedly different from other borough residents: “Just want to be happy, with health and a peaceful life and live like a normal human being, and for children to grow up in respectful society”.

**Finally the report makes five overarching recommendations, covering:**

- **Mapping and involving all Islington's communities:** the use of the baseline figure in measuring general performance, the incorporation of the four main communities into monitoring arrangements and the need to develop a dynamic process of review and engagement to ensure that emerging communities are included
- **Citizenship and ESOL:** the need to seek resources to promote and enable citizenship among those who may find it harder to attain because of difficulties in accessing and maintaining ESOL, and so reduce dependence.
- **Refugees with multiple and/or complex needs:** need a coordinated approach to identifying them and ensuring proper referrals between agencies and the use of models such as the expert patient programme and health advocacy across services
- **Interpreting, access, outreach and service use:** access arrangements should be reviewed and new arrangements, especially in relation to interpreting, may be needed in order to enable refugees to exercise effective choices and make good decisions.
- **Refugee organisations:** should be a focus of the current borough review of community funding in the borough. There is a need to provide stability and coherence and to enable them to reach out to more isolated refugees as well as to work with the statutory sector to deliver services equitably, appropriately and effectively to all.



## Introduction

Islington has long been a place where immigrants have come to live, many of whom were refugees. It was a central place, with the attractions of cheap housing, available offices and tolerance. Finsbury was, after all, the first constituency to elect a South Asian Member of Parliament, Dadabhai Naoroji, in 1892<sup>1</sup>. The Marx Memorial Library in Clerkenwell testifies to the presence of one of the world's most influential refugees (who was refused both citizenship and a post as a railway clerk). Many refugee organisations set up home here. The Defence and Aid Fund smuggled an estimated £100 million into South Africa for the legal costs of political activists for almost 40 years from its offices in the Essex Road. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, synagogues in Barnsbury, New North Road and Newington Green were set up by and welcomed those fleeing pogroms in eastern Europe, some of whom established businesses on Upper Street or workshops nearby. Campaigns for human rights and solidarity with Chile worked from Seven Sisters Road, Pentonville Road and Old Street<sup>2</sup>. The World University Service, from Islington offices, administered a huge government grants programme in the 1970s for refugees from Latin America and continues to support refugees worldwide as it has done for over 80 years<sup>3</sup>.

Islington is now home to 82,500 households, almost half of whom live in social rented housing, but 35.5% of whom are owner occupiers. The social divide is huge: the average gross annual earned income of Islington home owners is £49,254, of Islington council tenants £6,290. Islington has a higher than average proportion of both graduates (36% as compared with 25% nationally) and people with no qualifications at all (18% compared with 15%). The poorer residents are more likely to be in need: 12.2% of the population is on Income Support, compared with 7.6% across London, and 45.3% of Islington's unemployed have been out of work for more than six months, compared with 29.7% nationally. Almost 3,000 households needed new homes in 2003, and in that year it was calculated that the borough would need 1815 new affordable dwellings each year until 2008 to meet demand. The borough population is projected to grow by 35,000 by 2021, but this growth will be uneven: 50-59 year olds are predicted to increase by 30% to 2010, and 0 – 11 year olds to decrease<sup>4</sup>.

Recent refugees have settled in a borough that has become the home of migrants from Ireland, the European Union and the Commonwealth (Australasia, the Caribbean and South Asia). In the past 15 or so years new waves of refugees and migrants have further diversified London's population. Like other inner London boroughs, Islington's population, instead of declining, has grown largely as a result of immigration from 164,686 in 1991 to 175,797 in 2001 with a mid-year estimate of 179,900 in 2004. London is, for example home to three quarters of those who have arrived from Turkey, and between 1991 and 2001 who joined a significant Turkish-speaking group from Cyprus, many of whom had arrived as refugees from the

1 For more on some of these references, see [www.movinghere.org.uk](http://www.movinghere.org.uk)

2 Archived resource on Chile Committee for Justice, held by Sue Lukes

3 [www.education-action.org](http://www.education-action.org)

4 Figures presented to borough managers conference October 2005

divided island in the 1970s. Many of those from Turkey are ethnically Kurdish. The various conflicts in the former Yugoslavia brought Bosnians and Kosovars, though many of the latter have either been dispersed from the Borough or forced to return to their homeland. Other groups, such as the Somalis, North Africans and Congolese were so small at the beginning of the 1990s that they were not enumerated in the 1991 census. Their presence has added to substantial African nationalities such as Nigerians (the largest single African nationality in the borough), Kenyans and Zimbabweans. Whilst Islington may not be known for very high proportions of a particular nationality or ethnic minority, as is the case with many of its neighbours, it has developed a highly diversified profile. In 2001, 56.76% declared themselves to be White British, 5.72% White Irish and 12.87% White Other, reflecting Islington's large number of residents born in other EU countries. Significantly, Black Africans as an ethnic group (5.97%), had outstripped Afro-Caribbeans (4.86%) and there were also a number of groups from the Middle East and South America.

In terms of the population of refugee origin, the five largest groups based on the 2001 Census, and reflected in the languages currently spoken in schools, are:

- **Turkish (including Kurdish)** are present throughout the Borough but particularly towards the borders of Hackney and Haringey and in the south.. The Turkish-speaking population is estimated to be 80% of refugee origin with the Kurdish-speaking a 100% . Those born in Turkey have increased from 1700 in 1991 to 3123 or 1.78% of the total population in 2001. To this number we should add the increasing number of young people born in the UK. There were almost 1600 pupils who spoke Turkish as an additional language and 160 with Kurdish. However, since 2001 there has only been a slight increase of Turkish and Kurdish speakers in Islington schools from 1524 Turkish and 138 Kurdish in 2001 to 1588 and 153 respectively in 2004.
- **South Americans** of different nationalities and, amongst refugees, primarily Spanish speaking. 1678 inhabitants were born in a South American country and a population that is more dispersed within the borough than other major refugee groups. Refugees now largely come from Columbia, Ecuador and Peru. About 60% of Spanish speakers in schools are believed to be of refugee origin. It is one of the fastest growing additional languages in schools with an increase of 125 pupils in the period 2001-5.
- **Somalis** are concentrated on the edges of the Borough around Finsbury Park and on the borders of Camden. In 2001 there were 1226 inhabitants born in Somalia. This is a very rapidly growing population with sharp increases in the school population and of children born in this country. In 2001 there were 500 Somali speakers in Islington schools but this number has risen to over 800 by 2005.

- **North Africans/Maghrebis**(Arabic and French speaking) with small concentrations particularly in the north of the Borough with a well known one around Finsbury Park. It is a population which is primarily of refugee origin. Few Algerians have received positive decisions on their asylum applications and many of them are undocumented. It is also a particularly male-biased group (estimated at 70% men). There has been a noticeable increase in Arabic speakers in Islington schools.
- **Former Yugoslavs**, many of whom are Kosovars. In 2001 there were 569 inhabitants from the former Yugoslavia but no break down was given between the different nationalities. In schools, Albanian is a significant language (277 speakers) but with few speaking Serbo-Croat (23).

This research was commissioned by the Islington Refugee Integration Service (IRIS), which offers refugee advice, service co-ordination, establishment of baseline management information and support to the Refugee Forum (which brings together statutory, voluntary and community organisations with an interest in refugees in Islington). IRIS was set up after a Best Value Review of services to refugees and asylum seekers, after which the Audit Commission rated the action plan devised as giving excellent prospects for the future. It is accountable to the Refugee Strategic Partnership Board (RSPB), which includes senior officers from all sections of the local authority. The research forms part of an innovative work programme, including the development of a refugee strategy and action plan in collaboration with major statutory services, refugee-run organisations and others concerned with refugee issues in the borough.

This research looks at recent arrivals in Islington: the refugees who have come within the last 15 years and now seek to make it their home or their base for further moves. The number of asylum seekers receiving services from the Council has declined markedly from 2608 in 2000 to 230 in April 2005. Many of those previously supported have been successful in their claims and have settled in Islington. Knowledge of the communities, however, was patchy, and not enough was known to enable appropriate planning.

\*These figures are mainly from the census and CEA figures, which are explored in more detail below

## The Research Project

The project was commissioned by IRIS, in cooperation with others involved in the RSPB, including the local Primary Health Care Trust and representatives of the Refugee Forum, to contribute to the Islington Refugee Integration Strategy 2005-2008 which, whilst working within national objectives for refugee integration, seeks to develop local priorities with reference to the council's '**One Islington**' vision. The vision aims to make Islington a greener place where people of all backgrounds are able to realise their full potential in an environment made up of safe and empowered communities. The aim of the project was to develop the Borough's understanding of the extent of refugee communities, their location and numbers, the household types and their use of and demand for services. We were also keen to find out about the aspirations of the Borough's refugees, and their perceptions of how they "fit in" to Islington. All this information is to assist in enabling more effective planning and delivery of service as well as to provide a more concrete evidence base for measuring needs

The research was undertaken and report written by Sue Lukes, an associate with Michael Bell Associates, and Eleonore Kofman, Professor of Social Policy at Middlesex University, who are the authors of this report. Two research assistants (Alessio D'Angelo and Emma Jordan) from the University conducted most of the interviews with refugees. Alessio D'Angelo also prepared the maps of the borough.

### **Preparation for the project consisted of:**

- Reviewing available information already published on the presence of refugees in the Borough, including contacting agencies in the borough for any statistics etc they might hold
- Reviewing the relevant literature on refugee integration

### **The core elements in the work were:**

- the development of maps of the presence of significant refugee communities in the borough based on the data held by the borough planning department on country of birth as reported in the 2001 census
- the use of this data to determine small areas of the borough for fieldwork
- a street survey in the selected areas to identify refugee presence via filtering questions
- detailed qualitative interviews with refugees so identified (and others found through contacts with community groups) about their needs, experiences and views
- discussions and meetings with relevant individuals and agencies

### **The proposed report was to cover:**

- A review of available information about refugee numbers, demography and trends in the Borough
- Estimates of the numbers and types of refugees now living in Islington based on the above review plus the results of the fieldwork done in Islington streets and places

- How refugees view inclusion and integration in Islington
- What services are used and not used by Islington refugees and some indication as to why this is so

The methodology is thus innovative in that all known previous work undertaken with refugees has been based on interviews brokered by an agency such as a service provider, community organisation or faith community. Almost half of the refugees interviewed for this report were found through knocking on doors, and some had very little or no contact with these types of organisation. It is important to note that all elements in the methodology are linked. The street surveys enable us to comment on the data available, as to those who may have been missed by other surveys, including the census, or whose presence has not been recorded. The interviews build up a detailed qualitative picture of refugee experiences and lives in Islington, but also tell us about family formation and arrivals, which, in turn enable us to comment on the existing data on numbers etc.





## Methodology

The research design combined a strategy to estimate the numbers, composition and locations of refugee origin through quantitative methods as well as qualitative methods based on interviews with a sample of refugees from a wide range of nationalities. Basic small-area data from the 2001 census was used to map the location of groups and this was supplemented by quantitative data from key services, especially those derived from the comprehensive language census undertaken by CEA@ Islington which indicates changes in the languages spoken in Islington schools since 2001 and yields an idea of how particular groups might be expanding through the second generation.

The mapping of refugee presence was designed to serve two main purposes. The first was to ascertain the known presence of possible refugee populations in designated areas (which were identified using the Output Areas (OAs) on which the census is based), and then to devise the street survey to provide more quantitative data which might be of use to overcome under-estimation in the census, shifting populations and the difficulty of distinguishing asylum seekers and refugees from migrants from the same nationality. It was not possible, to a varying extent in the different OAs and for diverse reasons to fully identify everyone within the OAs (see below). The second objective was to draw upon residents identified in our OAs to provide the direct sample of interviewees unmediated by refugee organisations or service providers. Information provided by them, the other interviewees and the contacts made with refugee organisations and service providers was then used to comment upon the data hitherto available.

Much of the academic and policy research has raised issues of what and how we know about refugee experiences in general as well as about specific communities (see, for example, ICAR Navigation Guides). In particular many reports called for qualitative data which convey what it feels like to be marginalised (ICAR 2004). Researchers (Bloch 2004; Ager and Strang 2004b) have also highlighted the problems of a heavy reliance on Refugee Community Organisations and statutory agencies to access asylum seekers and refugees since this may limit the range of potential interviewees. The qualitative semi-structured interviews thus seek to address these issues (to understand the perspective of the interviewee): a purposive sample of refugees in Islington, found both through “knocking on doors” (unlike previous studies) and through local organisations, most of them refugee run (as other researchers have done). The street survey not only allowed us to look at the existing data on the presence of refugees in Islington but was also designed to reduce the degree of mediation by organisations and service providers and to encompass a wide range of refugee situations. These were supplemented by “venue” interviews (with people identified by organisations and taking place in their premises) which in fact demonstrate the significance of how we access refugees and find out about their use of services, community involvement and aspirations.



### Mapping of output areas

In addition to reviewing and collating existing data, we mapped the presence of specific communities in the borough as evidenced by the census information on country of birth. This was done on the basis of the “Output Areas” (OAs) which contain 2-300 people identified in the census and are the smallest unit for which census information is available. The Planning Department in the borough holds detailed census returns by OA, kept in tables, which we were able to use to map those born abroad from communities with significant numbers of refugees. We used Geographic Information Systems to produce maps identifying areas of significant settlement within the borough. We used this information to pick a sample of 11 Output Areas in different parts of the borough, with different mixes and characteristics of populations. All have a high proportion of their population identified as born outside the EU, but different levels of unemployment and types of housing tenure. Unemployment for Islington is 5-6%, but in our OAs it ranges from 4.6% to 13.9%. Some have over 80% housing rented from the local authority, others have high levels of housing association or RSL owned properties, but few have high levels of home ownership. We then undertook a detailed street survey in these small areas of Islington.



### Street survey

Within each chosen output area, researchers knocked on every door (see appendix) and asked a series of filtering questions aimed at identifying all refugees of interest for our interviews: any adults who have made an application for asylum since 1990, and their other adult family members (many women, for example, do not make their own application for asylum but apply to stay as dependents). 1990 was chosen as the initial date since this is nowadays accepted as the definition of new migrants (see Born Abroad) and the 1990s were the decade of substantially higher rates of asylum applications. Researchers also noted the household type and composition where possible.

The street survey has resulted in varying percentages of people answering doors by OA (see appendix): we started deploying researchers during the day, intending to follow up in the evenings where needed. Gaining access to estates, particularly some of the OAs in Bunhill, Mildmay, St. Peters and Tollington, proved difficult despite repeated attempts to acquire a key. However, the London bombings occurred during the street survey. Islington organisations and faith communities reported a climate of extreme suspicion and hostility between communities. Press coverage, especially after the second bombings, identified “asylum seekers” as somehow implicated. When they returned to the areas after a few days suspension of activities, our researchers encountered considerably more suspicion, with many people simply refusing to answer the door to anyone they did not know. This problem was multiplied when an innocent man, a migrant worker from Brazil, was shot by police on the London underground: many refugee communities spoke then of their fears that more such killings could occur. We decided to suspend the street survey definitively. This left some of the OAs with lower percentages of households identified than others, and may also have resulted in an under representation of people who would normally be out during the day, working or studying.

Most existing local studies have been based on focus groups and/or interviews where the individuals have been contacted via service providers or community organisations. The street survey is particularly useful for picking up groups who may not have been present in the 2001 census or who cannot be identified from the available data, even using the country of birth (such as those whose nationality is not separately identified like Ethiopians and Eritreans who are subsumed under the “Other South and Eastern Africans” who constituted 1.26% of Islington’s recorded population in 2001, although Eritreans and Ethiopians now form a significant refugee presence in Islington, as is demonstrated in our street survey). Furthermore we can identify ethnicity as well as nationality e.g. Turks who consider themselves Kurdish, whether they speak the language or not. As a study on children in Islington schools<sup>6</sup> shows, there are about 1 to 10 Kurdish to Turkish speakers but one to six in terms of ethnicity. The study also reports that Kurds are twice as geographically concentrated as the Turkish population. In addition there are also some Iraqi Kurds.

The survey also picks up the demographic expansion of a group since the 2001 census due to family reunification and the birth of children after arrival in the UK. The census does not include information on immigration status, only country of origin. Hence the survey is able to break down how the family was actually formed and grew in the UK over time. And unlike the country of birth statistics (see below), it includes both individuals born outside of the UK together those born in the UK i.e. the “second generation”.

Although it is not possible to estimate under-enumeration in the 2001 census in the borough with a small scale survey, it is possible to extrapolate from our knowledge of current family formation. For example in one street in one central OA, there were only 8 Somalis enumerated in 2001 but on the basis of only a third of households identified, we found three Somali families. It is possible that a full identification would have yielded 8-9 Somali households. Many Somali families have three to four children and may have brought in further members through family reunification. In the three OA interviews with Somali households, two had 6 members and one 7<sup>7</sup>. Even if only half of the total were of large households, this would still yield well over 8 Somalis. The other possibility is that more Somalis have been housed in this OA since 2001, however, the neighbouring OA already enumerated 22 Somalis in 2001.

Tables explaining the number of homes contacted, the percentages, and the times at which found are in appendix 2.

The street survey has also found individuals and households to be interviewed who do not have much contact with council services or voluntary and community organisations (see sections on Community Involvement and Neighbourhood and Social Contact). These are refugees whose experiences, hopes and lives have not, until now, been explored in research conducted in the UK.

<sup>6</sup> By CEA@Islington and looked at in some detail below

<sup>7</sup> The 5 venue interviews, on the other hand, encompassed households with fewer members.



### Interviews with refugees

Our aim was to create a purposive sample of interviewees which incorporated the main nationalities present according to the Census and which were also confirmed by other data collected by agencies. Some of them, such as Iraqis and North Africans (Algerians and Moroccans), were poorly represented in the interviews derived from the street survey and were supplemented by venue interviewees who were contacted with the assistance of refugee community organisations, other agencies and our local contacts.

The initial agreement was to find at least 30 interviewees from the household survey and supplement this with others found through venues, community events etc. We decided it was important to interview all available adults, because this would ensure that the experiences of women, adult children and other family members would be properly represented. We succeeded in interviewing 26 people identified from the street survey before suspending it and moved on to organise interviews through intermediary agencies, mainly refugee community groups. Here, however, we encountered difficulties because the delays caused by events in London in July had taken us into the summer holidays when many groups effectively suspend activities.

Interviews have been conducted with 44 households (23 venue and 21 derived from the street survey). In 5 street households we obtained information on both partners, resulting in interviews with 49 individuals. Some of the key issues (education, employment, health) were different for the partners whilst others were shared such as housing. Not all questions were answered by all interviewees, so there is some variation in the numbers for each section. Though the numbers represented by this qualitative study are relatively small in comparison with the overall refugee population in Islington, other large scale studies using postal questionnaires and on studies of specific nationalities such as the ICAR Navigation Guides and Somalis in Sheffield (Hamm nd), identify similar groups and characteristics to those generated by this project.

It is also important to note that few of the street identified households arrived after 2000 (the year in which the National Asylum Support Service was established to disperse new asylum applicants away from London and the south east). However 10 of the 23 venue interviewees had arrived in the UK after 2000. The street households were more likely to be family households (none were single person households) whilst the venue interviews included interviewees with more disparate household structures – seven single person households and 6 single parents out of 23.

Our study highlights the very real concern of some researchers in this field about the way in which we gain access to asylum seekers and refugees, which influences the sample we construct. The interviewees in venues, most of which were in community organisations, tended to span the whole spectrum from the most

destitute clients to workers or volunteers in these organisations who were heavily involved in many community activities. Those generated by the street surveys, and therefore unmediated by community contacts, were often not working, had been here longer and were far more isolated.

Thus the different sources of interviews are likely to have implications for the types of people we get:

- We have picked up few interviewees who are working and this may be because they would be more likely to be out during the day
- For the same reason, we have picked up a lot of interviewees with health and disability problems who are more likely to be in during the day
- We have found a number of people who are effectively isolated from many local resources including community and faith organisations as well as statutory services. This needs careful consideration: these are voices that have yet to be heard in almost any surveys or research exercises on refugees hitherto undertaken, since they generally rely on interviews brokered through service providers or community groups.
- We have interviewed women who often tend to be marginalised in other studies (except those specifically on women refugees). Women do, of course, only constitute about a quarter to a third of principal applicants for asylum, but may be underrepresented for other reasons as well.



### Contacts and discussions

Throughout the research process we maintained contact with a range of local organisations, agencies and community groups, and set up specific discussions with several. The Islington Refugee Integration Service offered help with some contacts and figures and set up a meeting with service users to discuss the initial findings from pilot interviews. These service users were obviously in fairly regular contact with statutory services (as well as community and faith groups), and were all people who had got indefinite leave to remain and were starting the process of settlement. Some had been offered temporary accommodation outside the borough, although most were keen to move back in. Some continue to use borough services such as schools.

We attended one meeting of the borough Refugee Forum (which brings together refugee organisations and those in the statutory and voluntary sector concerned with refugees) and had some discussions with Forum officers. We also met, interviewed and discussed issues with a range of refugee organisations based in the borough, and some that cover the borough, as well as local authority officers and others. Where issues arose during the research, we sought out organisations that might be able to offer further information generally or on specific points, not always with success. Some of these interviews (with community organisations) were conducted on the basis of a semi structured questionnaire to enable them to comment on the results of the research so far and the key issues identified. It is

important to note that these organisations by no means constitute a balanced group or representative sample: they were sought out specifically to inform us about aspects of refugee life in Islington about which they might have information, to enable us to judge the relevance or importance of the matters raised by interviewees. The information received through these contacts and meetings is included in each section. Informants are not identified, by agreement with them.





## Review of Literature

There is a growing body of literature on refugees in the UK, some of it reporting on formal research, some generated by policy makers (looking at “what works”), and some by refugees themselves, via their organisations, reporting on the experiences of their communities. We have included relevant findings in the subject sections below but here note the main work on mapping refugees and integration itself.



## Mapping refugees

The Information Centre About Asylum and Refugees in the UK has initiated a pilot project **Mapping the UK** which is intending to build up a picture of refugees in several locations in the UK – Sheffield, Leicester, Bicester, Southampton, Lambeth, Glasgow and Cardiff. The only London location currently being undertaken is Lambeth where there is as yet no available information on statistics or in-depth stories of refugee lives. Even for those locations which have been completed, such as Leicester, ICAR states that:

There are no statistics available on the exact numbers of asylum seekers and refugees in Leicester. Most surveys, including the census, do not collect information on immigration status, therefore disaggregating this population from the combined population is difficult. The only publicly available data on the asylum seeking population relates to those asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS).

In addition, these figures give no indication of the numbers who have been granted refugee status, Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR), Humanitarian Protection (HP), or Discretionary Leave (DL) residing in the city. Furthermore, these statistics certainly do not give any idea of the numbers of residents who arrived as part of the earlier twentieth century refugee flows to the city and who may have stayed on. Client data collected by agencies working with refugees and asylum seekers may provide useful statistical information on the demographics of the refugee and asylum seeking communities in Leicester. However, this data is not usually made publicly available



## Integration research

There is an increasing emphasis in this comparative literature on what migrants and refugees consider of greatest concern to them, their needs and aspirations and social interaction. On the part of government, focus is on indicators of integration (Ager and Strang 2004), good practices and concern with civic participation encompassing issues of effectiveness, the role of organisations delivering services and how this enhances belonging, as well as engaging people in active participation. There is also a substantial amount of recent literature on educational levels, skills and employment (see section on Employment), some of which has been undertaken with widespread national coverage rather than relying on small local studies.

One study, in Pollokshaw and Islington (Ager and Strang 2004a) compared the two areas. Its objectives were to identify local understandings of integration, the factors locally seen to support or disrupt it, and those that shape the development of policies. Preliminary social mapping assisted in the identification of samples for interviews. A focus group and individual interviews, with refugees and others living in Islington, identified through contact with statutory and community agencies, formed the core of the research, which was also used to refine and develop the work on indicators of integration that now informs strategies nationally and locally. The study developed important themes around participation, safety and access, along with the identification of health, housing, employment and education as core areas for tracking how integration is working. Interestingly, given the ways in which health appears as an issue in this research, Ager and Strang found that health was not noted with the same frequency as the other areas of concern.

**In the final report on the wider project to develop indicators of integration, integration is defined as:**

An individual or group is integrated within a society when they:

- achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health etc. which are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities;
- are socially connected with members of a (national, ethnic, cultural, religious or other) community with which they identify, with members of other communities and with relevant services and functions of the state; and
- have sufficient linguistic competence and cultural knowledge, and a sufficient sense of security and stability, to confidently engage in that society in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship.

These definitions are cited and to some extent developed in the refugee strategy produced by the Home Office in 2004: *Integration Matters*, which focuses particularly on facilitating integration through mainstreaming services for refugees. They also form the basis of the domains dealt with in the *LB Islington Refugee Integration Strategy 2005* which was under discussion as we were undertaking the research, and therefore informed the core of the questions asked of interviewees. It should be noted, however, that Ager and Strang's research has generated quite a sophisticated framework of indicators, identifying ten areas under four headings:

**Foundation:** rights and citizenship

**Facilitators:** language and cultural knowledge; safety and stability

**Social connections:** social bridges, bonds and links

**Means and markers:** employment, housing, education and health

Research on integration focuses not only on a description of the degree of integration among immigrant groups, but also on how integration processes develop over time, and on the factors that positively or negatively influence the various aspects of integration. Furthermore, research is concerned about the way the different elements of the integration process influence each other, and on why integration processes differ between groups (NIDI 2005).

## Review of Data

We contacted all the statutory agencies in the borough and many voluntary sector organisations as well, requesting information on the data they hold on refugee use of services. We also reviewed literature on this area, very little of which was directly about Islington. Essentially, the data sought was:

- from the 2001 census: information on countries of birth of those then living in Islington
- information about the use of interpreting services provided by health and local authority services in the borough
- information collected by schools about the children attending
- information collected by other key services in the area about those using them
- the detailed data held on asylum seekers accommodated by the borough and the National Asylum Support Service and those registered as staying in the borough on “subsistence only” (i.e. presumably staying with friends or relations)

Each of these sources only provides a very partial picture. The census is now four years old, and also only tells us about the country of origin: while most people born in some countries may be refugees, from other parts only a small percentage may be. Children born in refugee families in the UK are not so identified. Service use may tell us more about community knowledge than actual need or numbers because people will only use the services they know about, and services may only be provided for communities that are known. Language services again identify particular linguistic groups without reference to whether they are refugees or not. Other services tend to collect information about use on very broad ethnic monitoring categories that are useless for finding out more about refugees.

There is a further problem in actually defining refugees. A variety of definitions are in use, and each has their difficulties.

- A **legal** definition (those granted refugee status plus those offered humanitarian protection, discretionary or exceptional leave) is precise, but excludes asylum seekers, some family members and other de facto refugees. It is also usually construed to exclude those who acquire citizenship, or even settled status or whose status has changed for other reasons (such as becoming EU nationals).
- Asking refugees to **self-define** avoids this problem, but numbers may then change as a result of other pressures, from the media for example, that may lead individuals to prefer to define themselves as refugees or not.
- Defining refugees as members of a household where someone has made an asylum **application or arrived on a refugee programme** is reasonably precise and includes family members, and even those who have subsequently acquired
- All of these definitions, however, can apply equally to a refugee who arrived in 1956 or in 2005. Although it is true that long term refugees may continue to have specific needs (especially as they age, when new needs may become apparent), for the purpose of research it is advisable to have a **cut off point** that is the

same for all (unlike e.g. acquiring citizenship which may exclude “better integrated” refugees in greater numbers).

- Again, for research purposes, it is often more helpful to be precise about specific refugee **communities** and also to work on the basis that one is looking at communities of **refugee origin** rather than simply refugees. This has the added advantage of including the second generation: the children born in the UK.

Even the data about asylum seekers supported by the National Asylum Support Service (NASS: the national agency of the Home Office that offers support and accommodation to those seeking asylum until a decision is reached on their case) and the borough tells us only about asylum seekers and so we cannot find out much about established refugee communities from that (although the numbers supported on subsistence only are a good proxy indicator of an established community in the area). There is also concern among some refugee service organisations that there are “hidden” refugees, particularly asylum seekers who may have refused or lost asylum support or become destitute at the end of the process, who may fear to use services and whose presence is difficult to measure. We explore and explain the data provided below, and this is followed by a detailed discussion of the census data available and the ways in which it can be used to identify areas of refugee settlement in Islington.

### Data provided

It is important to note that some agencies have not provided data at all. This may be because, as is the case with the DWP (Jobcentre Plus), the data they collect is not likely to be of use to us (we were told that country of birth information is collected “patchily” and service users have recently been asked if they want to identify themselves as refugees, but that very few have). Others, such as **City and Islington College**, have provided data on refugees ( a total of 1856 refugee students, of whom 1138 are registered at the Lifelong Learning Centre at Finsbury Park, which offers basic skills and ESOL courses), but do not identify specific communities or where they may be situated in the borough. This is unfortunate, because data on adult students could complement that held on children in schools and give some insight into the numbers of childfree refugees.

Some data is partial and so likely to be skewed. **Interpreting services**, for example, tend to keep information on the languages supplied, and so exclude those who did not get an interpreter (because they did not know one could be had, because the service provider failed to book one or because the service does not provide interpreting in that language). One service providing interpreting for Islington surgeries recorded most requests for Somali, Albanian, Arabic and Kurdish in the five months to April 2005. The absence of Turkish, one of the major languages spoken in the borough, is striking, but may be because Turkish speakers use different interpreting services. The inclusion of Albanian as second is also notable but it is important to note that this second highest rating is actually achieved by 32 bookings, generated by three surgeries and two local projects, and so may

represent simply the interpreting needs of a small number of people with lots of health problems.

The Borough commissioned a mapping exercise on **black and minority ethnic users of housing services** in 2003. This collated data from the census, a tenants survey conducted in 2003 and some schools information from 2001, using broad ethnic monitoring categories (such as “black African”). They also conducted discussions with several black and minority ethnic organisations in the borough. Unfortunately, none of this provides us with much information about refugees, since only one of the categories identified is likely to be mainly refugees: the Kurdish respondents (for whom the largest number answering the tenants survey in any area office was 11).

The **official figures held on asylum seekers** provide some quite specific information as to the presence of refugees in the borough. These asylum seekers consist of three groups: those supported by the borough (some of whom may be housed outside it), those housed by the National Asylum Support Service(NASS) in the borough and those provided with subsistence only support by NASS and staying in the community in Islington. In April 2000 there were 2,608 asylum seekers supported by LB Islington which had fallen to 1,673 in 2002 and was down to 230 in April 2005. In May 2005, NASS supported the following main national groups receiving subsistence only support (staying with friends or family) within Islington:

Turkey	104
Somalia	32
Angola and Congo	24
Eritrea/Ethiopia	19
Iran	16
China	16
Col/Ecuador/Peru	13
Algeria	12
All others have less than 10.	
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>

These would all be people who applied for asylum after 2000, when the service was set up, or went on to appeal against a refusal after then. The numbers of subsistence only cases in the borough is falling, from 820 in 2003 to 317 now, presumably because they have had their asylum applications resolved and fewer new applicants are coming to stay with friends or family in the borough. NASS was also supporting 180 people with accommodation within Islington last year, 55 of whom were from Turkey. No other national group had a significant presence.

A much more detailed set of data is compiled by CEA@Islington (who run Islington schools) on **language as first language of Islington school students**. This very detailed set of statistics, based on school records in March 2004, avoids many of

the pitfalls of the census and is based specifically on languages used and educated guesses about the relationship between language use and refugee status. On the basis of these studies, the main non-white UK ethnic and national groups are Black Africans (11.5%), Black Caribbeans (8.0%), Bangladeshis (6.7%), Turkish (6.3%) and Somalis (3.4%). Mixed make up 10.3% of pupils.

It highlights the very high percentage of children of refugee origin – 21% - in Islington schools. However this is in keeping with the distinctive ethnic demography of the younger population. In the 2001 census, 18.96% of the population of Islington (175,813 in total) were in the 0-15 age group. Amongst the Black African and Bangladeshi populations this rose to 34.67% and 38.87% respectively. On the other hand, amongst the White British and White Other, which would include Eastern Europeans, this percentage was 16.14% and 12.5% respectively.

The numbers and therefore the percentage of refugee pupils will however underestimate or leave out altogether those refugee children whose English is good who may not identify their first language as any other than English. Those from Anglophone African countries such as Kenya, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Zimbabwe (with the number of the last increasing considerably recently) are likely to give English as their first language. It also does not distinguish between languages which straddle different countries e.g. Albanian (both Albania and Kosovo), Farsi (Iran and Afghanistan), Lingala (both Congos and Angola), Tigrinya (Eritrea and Ethiopia), Arabic (includes the north African/Maghrebi countries and Iraq). Pupils from one country may also speak a range of languages (e.g. Turkish and Kurdish from Turkey; French, Lingala and others from Congo; Portuguese, Lingala and others from Angola).

**CEA Survey of Languages 2004**

Language	No. refugees	Based on estimated % of refugees in linguistic group
Turkish	1268	80
Somali	874	100
Arabic	427	80
French	332	90
Spanish	330	60
Albanian	277	100
Lingala	189	100
Tigrinya	158	100
Kurdish	152	100
Portuguese	117	45
Vietnamese	92	100
Farsi	88	100
Amharic	71	100
Tigre	56	100
Swahili	41	80

Language	No. refugees	Based on estimated % of refugees in linguistic group
Other	339	
<b>Total Refugees</b>	<b>4811</b>	
<b>Total number in Schools</b>	<b>22615</b>	
<b>Total Refugee %</b>		<b>21%</b>

Averages of estimated refugee student presence in an Islington schools range enormously from a low level of 5-10%, often in church schools, to 13 schools with 30% or over, peaking at 42% in Newington Green and 52% in Pooles Park<sup>8</sup>. In most of these schools, the two largest groups were Turkish and Somali speakers with Arabic often third. Some schools had a distinctive profile with an over representation of a single group e.g. Albanian in Copenhagen, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Montem, Newington Pooles Park and Vittoria; Spanish in Mount Carmel, Arabic as well as Farsi very strong in Elizabeth Garret Anderson, French in Montem, Lingala in Mt Carmel, New North and St Aloysius, Tigrinya in Sacred Heart and St Aloysius. Thus the schools with both high percentages of refugee pupils and unusual mixes were Elizabeth Garret Anderson, Pooles Park and St Aloysius.

However what cannot be known from this data is whether these children live in Islington. We did contact schools to comment on these figures, and, in particular, on whether they represented any significant numbers of children from out of the borough, but have had no response. In the absence of further investigation, we can offer a few comments on the high number of probable refugee children in Islington schools in relation to the numbers of refugees in the borough. The material gained from our interviews does indicate that some refugee families have several children, and the children born after arrival in the UK would not appear in the census country of birth information but would form part of groups identified by first language. The flight from Islington schools into other boroughs and the private sector is a phenomenon commented on elsewhere and may offer a further element in considering an explanation. What is clear is that the presence of refugees in Islington schools is no indicator of any decline in standards: those with higher numbers of refugee children generally do not perform poorly<sup>9</sup>. It would also have been helpful to know what percentage of children of parents of refugee origin had been born in the UK and would thus be contributing to the expansion of a second generation.

Others such as **City and Islington College** have provided data on refugees (a total of 1856 refugee students of whom 1138 are registered at the Lifelong Learning Centre at Finsbury Park, which offers basic skills and ESOL courses) but do not identify specific communities or where they may be situated in the borough. Their data on students in general highlight the strong presence of non-British White and Black or Black British African and in terms of a single nationality, Turkish.

<sup>8</sup> An overall average of these percentages would be misleading because of different school sizes

<sup>9</sup> The experience of Sighthill in Glasgow, on the contrary, has been reported as being that the arrival of refugee children dispersed to the area raised educational standards in local schools.

### Top ten ethnic origin categories

Ethnic Origin	Total	%
White – other	4516	22.27
White – British	4072	20.08
Black or Black British African	3009	14.94
Other	2042	10.07
Black/ Black British Caribbean	1406	6.92
Not known	972	4.79
Turkish	885	4.36
Asian/Asian British-Bangladeshi	609	3.0
Asian/Asian British Indian	409	2.01
White-Irish	384	1.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>18304</b>	

The data on first language provided by City and Islington College reveals rapid changes in the student population as well as confirming the significance of the major groups indicated in the Census and other sources. Large numbers of young Eastern Europeans, especially Polish, have come as students and workers since the accession countries entered the European Union in May 2004.

### Top ten first languages used by City and Islington students

First Language	Total	%
English	9813	48.39
Spanish	1325	6.53
Polish	1140	5.62
Turkish	1060	5.23
French/Creole	794	3.91
Somali	771	3.80
Italian	607	2.99
Bengali	479	2.36
Arabic	429	2.12
Portuguese	381	1.88
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,278</b>	

Source: City and Islington College 2004-5

### Census Information

The recently published *Beyond Black and White* (IPPR 2005) confirms the increasing diversity of the non-British born population in the period between 1991 and 2001. It uses place of birth statistics by groups of wards or tracts that are the equivalent half of a Parliamentary Constituency (four in Islington) to capture geographical changes between the census dates. A question on ethnic minorities based on a number of broad categories was introduced for the first time in the 1991 census and modified in the 2001 census with the inclusion of a series of mixed and white categories e.g. Irish. The higher levels of immigration and its greater diversification in the 1990s, especially in London has led to attention being paid to

place of birth statistics which enable one to monitor more closely changes in the migrant and refugee populations, to understand differences in economic and social well-being and provide more targeted and accessible services. The ethnic categories are too broad to be able to pick up key differences in families, educational levels, employment, income levels etc. There are enormous differences in the Black African category between the Nigerians and Zimbabweans, many of whom have a high educational level, who have good English and are in employment compared to the Somalis who often have large families, low levels of employment and educational attainment. In addition (see mapping of census) Somalis display specific geographic concentrations in the Borough relevant for planning services.

As a whole, 24.81% of London's population was born abroad in 2001, an increase of 6.35% over the previous census. In Islington 29.73% had been born abroad. A number of the groups which contributed to this increasingly varied landscape are primarily of refugee origin such as the Somalis, Congolese, former Yugoslavs, Iraqis and Iranians, or have received a substantial refugee inflow such as the Turkish, and amongst them especially Kurds. Some of these groups are well represented in Islington and its neighbouring boroughs and form solid communities across this part of London. For example, St Pancras, an adjoining tract in Camden, had (in 2001) the seventh largest Somali population (724) and one of the largest Congolese populations (137), whilst Tollington in Islington had the 10th largest Turkish population (1043) in the country which represented almost doubling of this particular group from 540 in 1991.

However given the developments of the past few years, such as continuing conflict feeding refugee flows, such as Afghans, Iraqis and Zimbabweans, the dispersal programme and ever more restrictive asylum and immigration legislation, the picture since the 2001 census has also evolved. Furthermore, country of birth is unable to capture ethnic distinctions within a national group or the cross-national character of others such as Kurds who in Islington are primarily from Turkey but also come from Iraq, Iran and Syria. Hence it is necessary to complement the country of birth data with other data such as school data on language and ethnic belonging (see CEA above) as well as in-depth surveys such as this Islington study. Furthermore these sources also may include the second generation born in the UK unlike the country of birth data.

The major groups with substantial refugee populations identified at the time of the 2001 census were:

Country or Region of Birth	No.	% of population
Turkey	3123	1.78
South America <sup>10</sup>	1678	0.95
Somalia	1226	0.70
North Africa	868	0.49
Former Yugoslavia	569	0.32
Iran	408	0.23
Zimbabwe	289	0.16
DR Congo	240	0.14
Iraq	220	0.13
Afghanistan	82	0.05
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>175.797</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The nationalities listed above are not exhaustive, since no figures have been provided for a number of African nationalities, such as Angolans, Eritreans and Ethiopians, all of which include large numbers of refugees.

Comparing the two (Census and CEA), and bearing in mind they do not refer to the same populations, the three major nationalities and languages are roughly the same: Turkey (Turkish, Kurdish); Somali, North African/Maghrebi especially Algerian. The NASS data, though a snapshot in time, also confirms the continuing significance of the major nationalities listed above except for the former Yugoslavians, and indicates current trends of inflows.

There is evidence that some of the groups strongly present in the 2001 census are likely to have declined in number since then: for example those from the former Yugoslavia which included Kosovars. The Humanitarian Evacuation Programme set up to deal with the crisis there enabled many to come to the UK on a temporary basis, mostly dispersed to the north of England, but also gave limited leave for up to two years to any Kosovars in the UK. That has now ended, and many have now returned to their homeland. Although some unaccompanied minors continue to arrive from Kosovo and Albania and make asylum applications, the numbers have declined sharply: in 2000, they represented 63% of the 1055 coming from Europe, in 2004 they represented 18% of a much smaller projected total of 340, possibly discouraged by an active programme of removals and deportations both before and after they have turned 18. Community organisations told us that they believe that there are still significant numbers of Kosovars and Albanians, including young people in London, but that they are extremely difficult to contact or engage because they fear such removals. However we did contact several Kosovars who had Indefinite Leave to Remain through ESOL classes.

<sup>10</sup> This encompasses all South American countries. Those producing refugees in recent years are Colombia, Ecuador and Peru.



## Research Results

Faced with the need to steer a course through this range of data on refugees, we have chosen to summarise what can be found out about the numbers and location of refugees in the borough using our research and fieldwork to comment on the information available before but never collected in one place or looked at specifically in relation to refugees in the borough.

Mapping the census provides a useful guide to where refugee communities are focused within the borough. The street survey enables us to look at potential undercounting in the census and also comment on the extent to which the presence of refugee children in Islington's schools reflects the presence of communities in the borough. We have then used the information gained through the interviews undertaken to comment on family formation and arrivals. Finally we summarise what can then be said about the more significant communities in Islington.

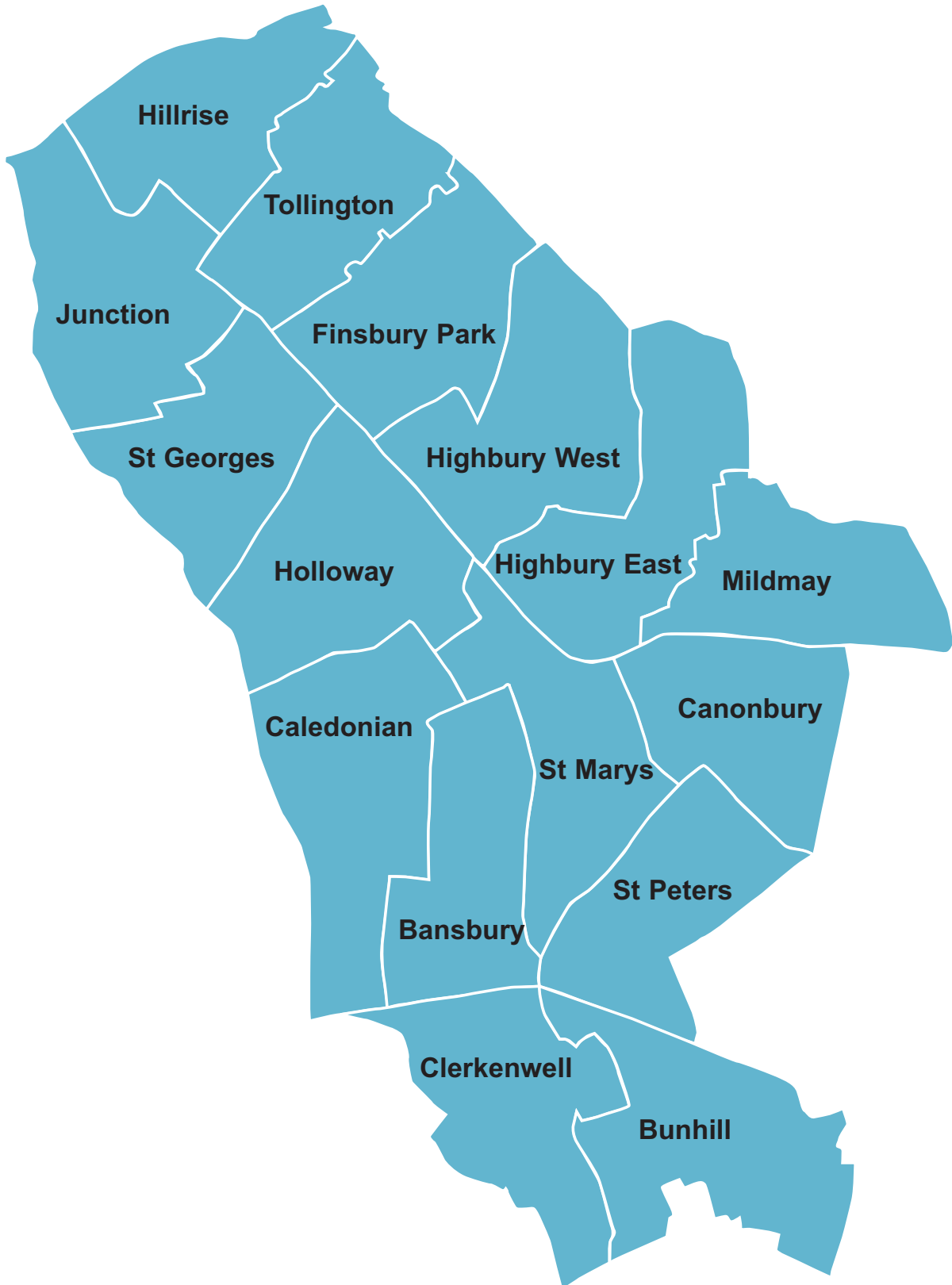


## Mapping the Census

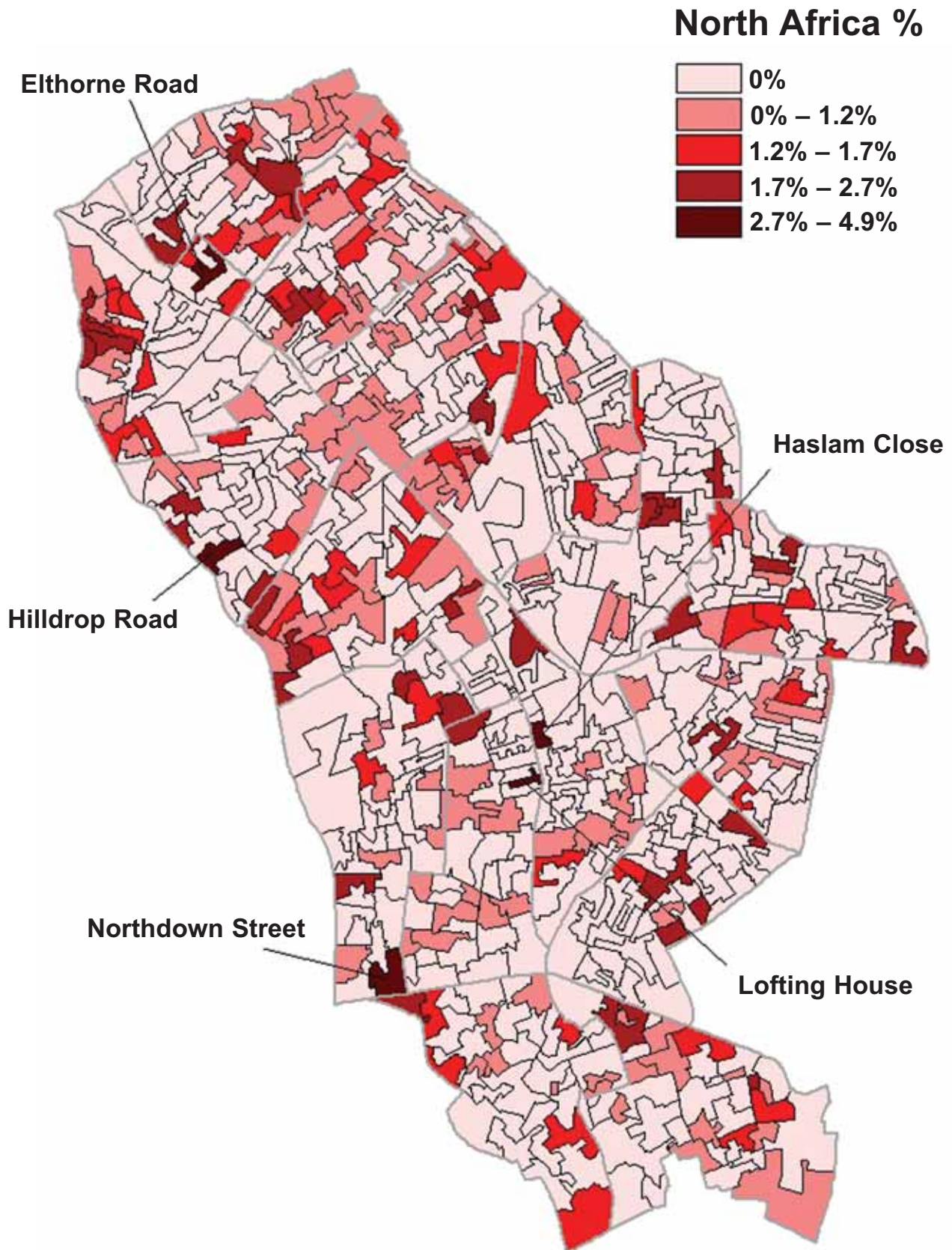
The **maps of the key groups** in Islington (reproduced below) give a more detailed picture by Output Areas (200-300 persons). This enables us to obtain a much finer grained understanding of the presence of migrant and refugee populations in the Borough than that provided by the Beyond Black and White Report; and they indicate the uneven geographical distribution of the principal groups by country of birth in the Borough. Those from Turkey are particularly concentrated in Hillrise and Tollington wards in the North, Highbury and Mildmay in the Centre and Bunhill in the South. Somalis are concentrated around Finsbury Park and Caledonia wards and Iranians in Junction ward in the north. Other groups such as South Americans are more diffused throughout the Borough.

The maps we have made of the key groups in Islington are represented below. It should be noted that the shading for each map is relative to the size or presence of that group: it thus takes, for example, considerably more Somalis to "achieve" the darkest shade in an area than Chinese. The aim is to pinpoint the areas of settlement of the major communities. The names attached to them are those given to the output areas by the OPCS. The percentages are of the total numbers in each output area. The output area and ward boundaries were obtained from the Planning Department of the Council, who have been extremely helpful. The data used to produce the maps is derived from the 2001 Census country of birth statistics (ONS) by output areas.

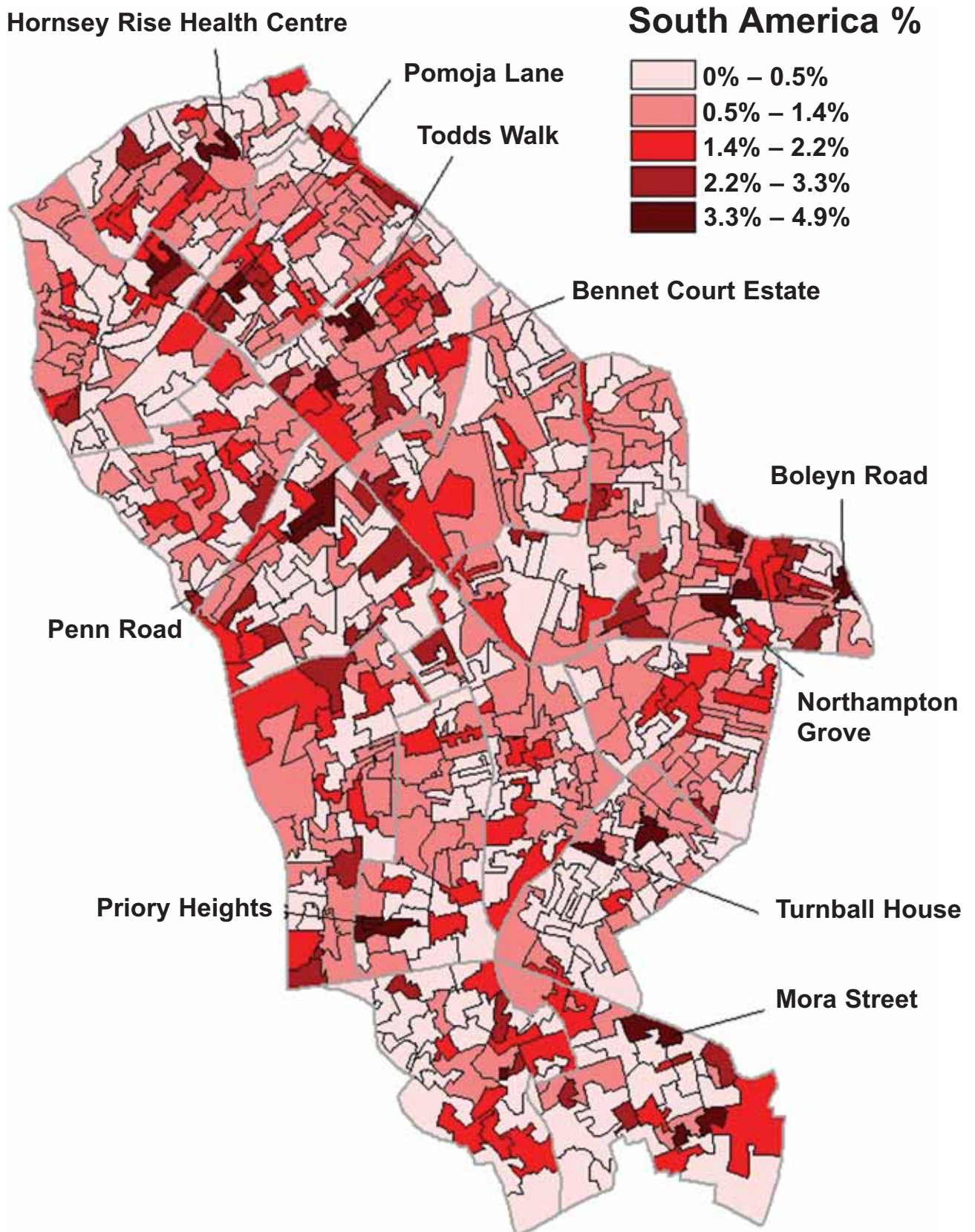
 **Areas**



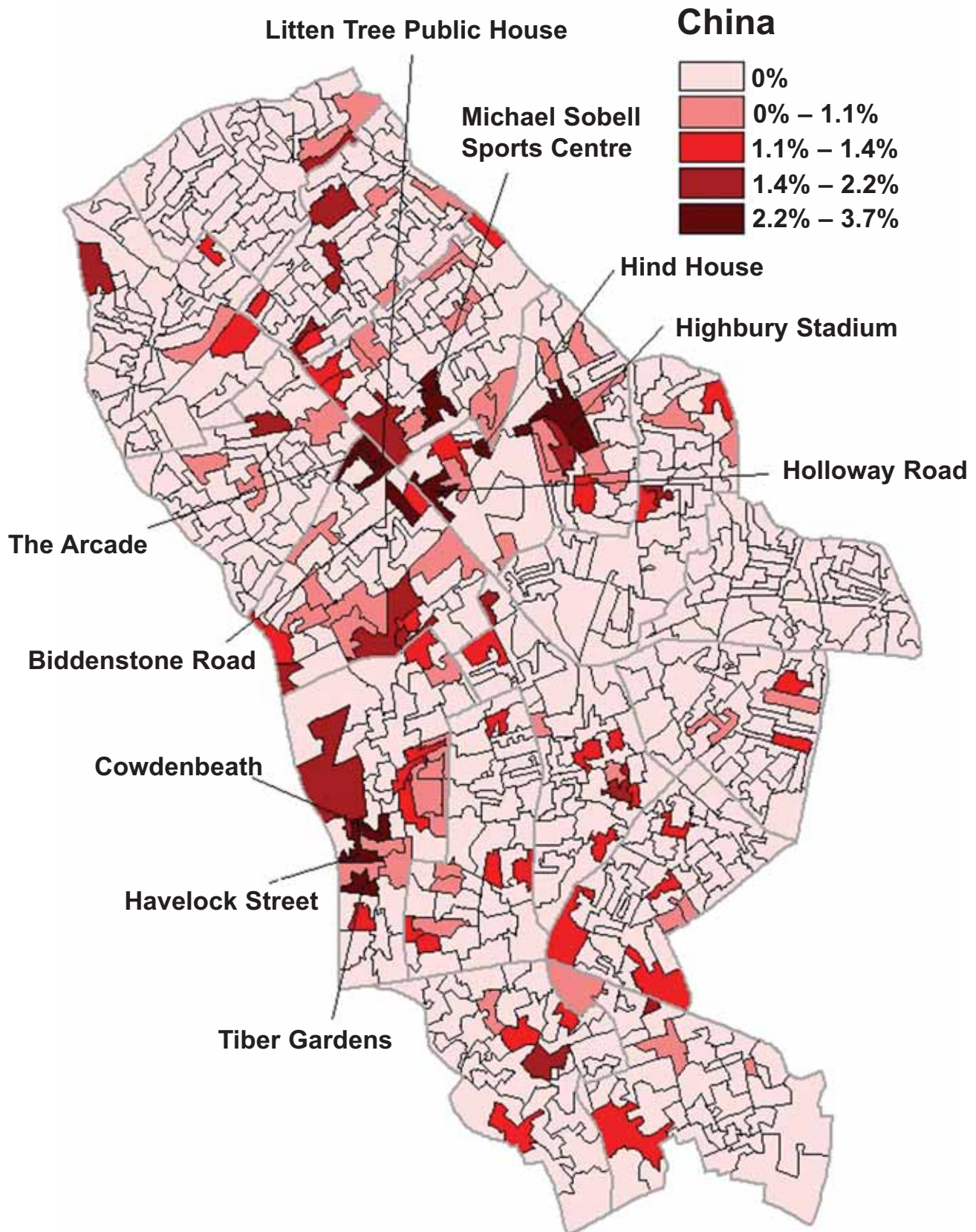
# North African Population in Islington



# South American Population in Islington

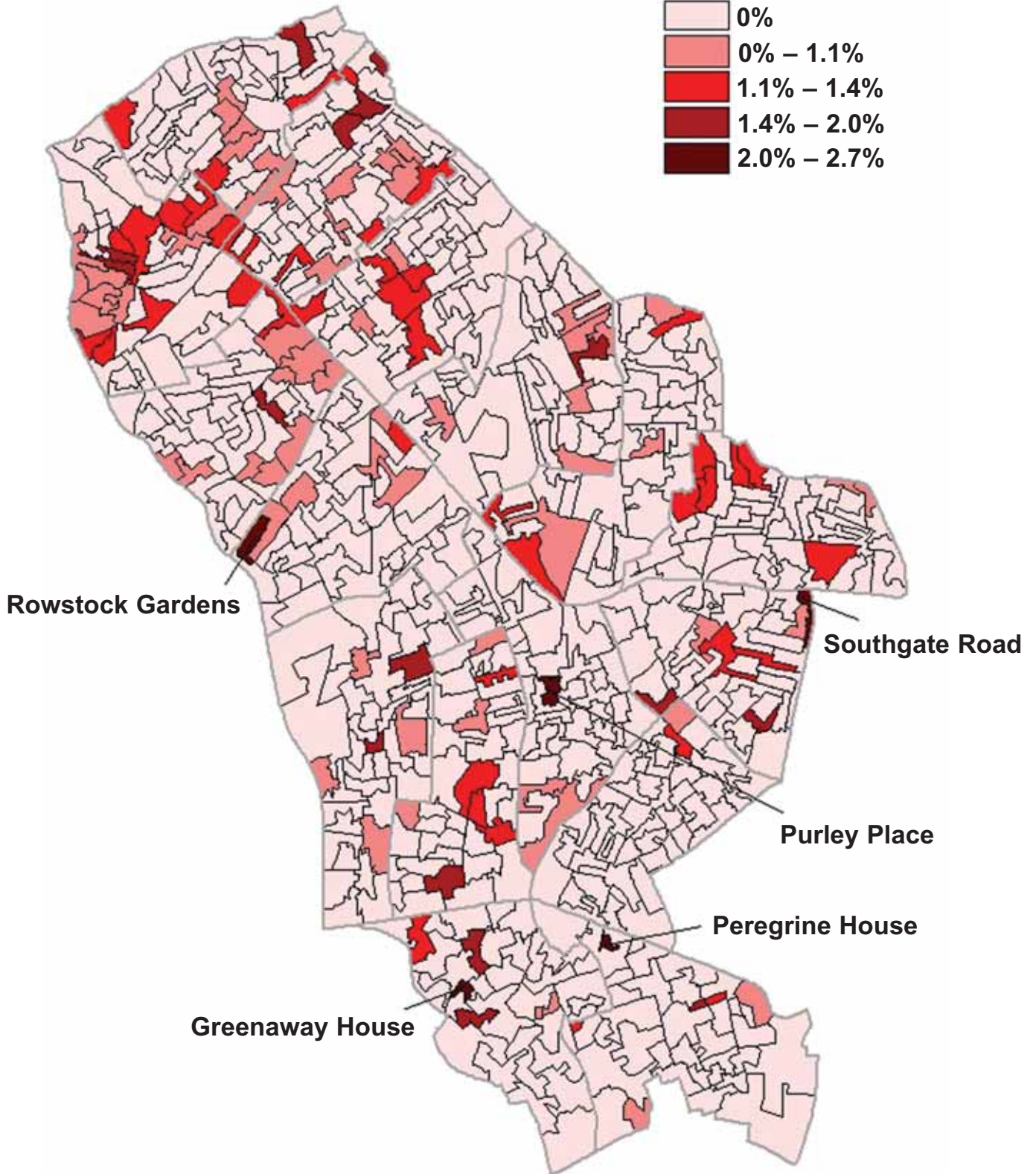
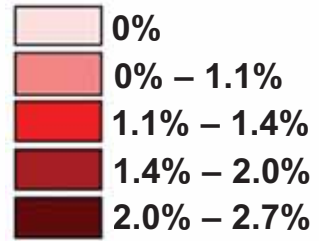


# Chinese Population in Islington

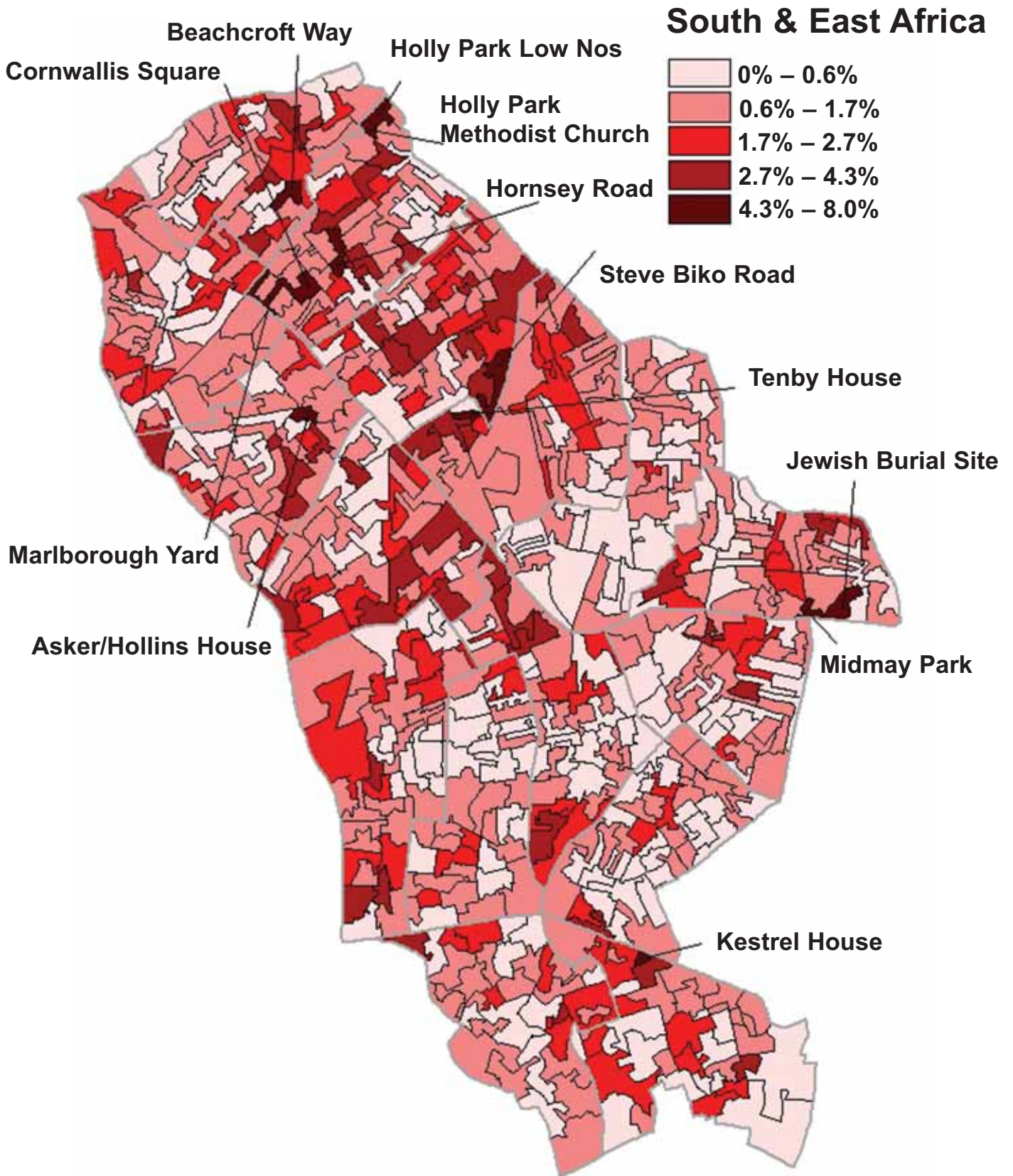


# Iranian Population in Islington

## Iran

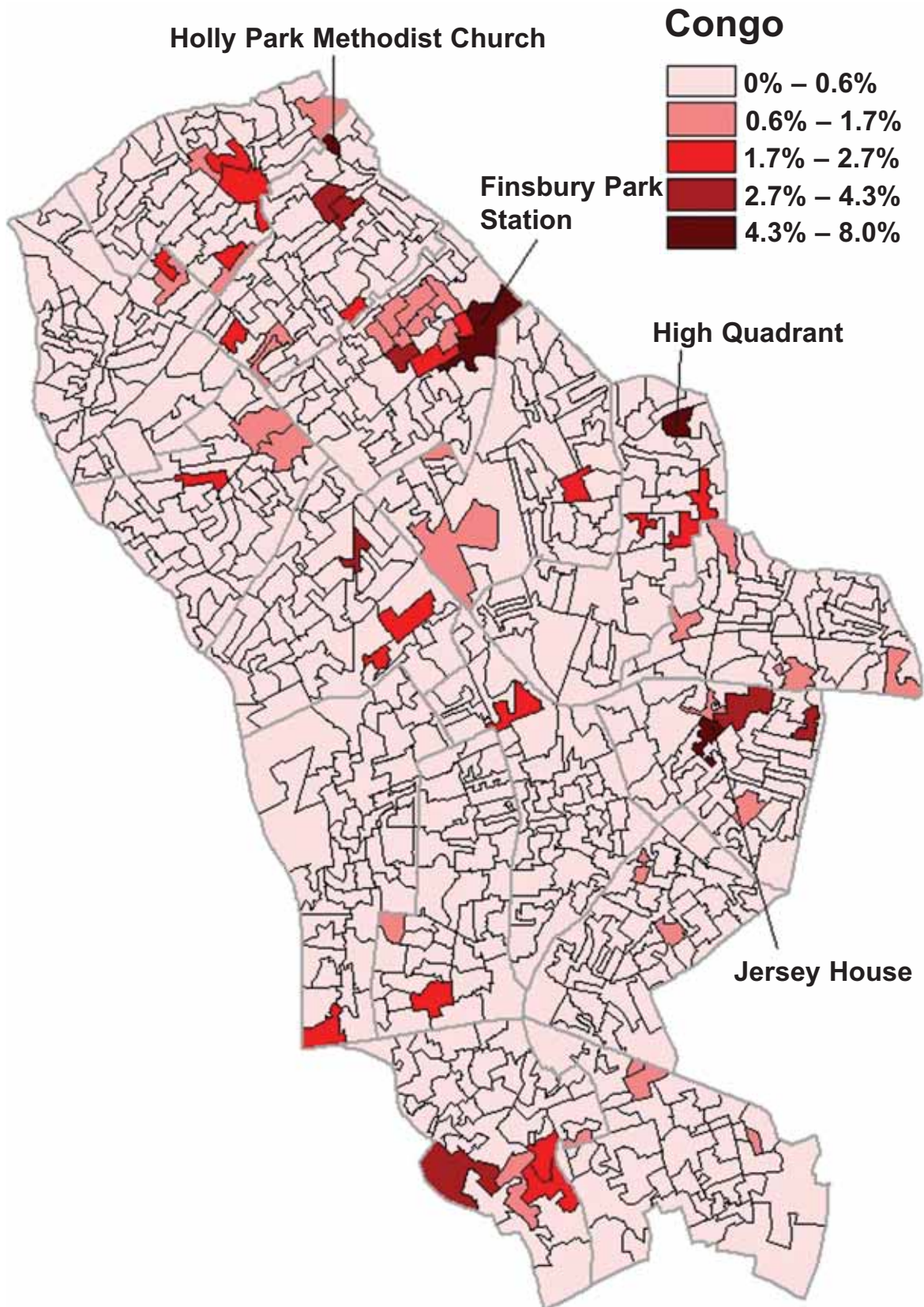


# South & East African Population in Islington

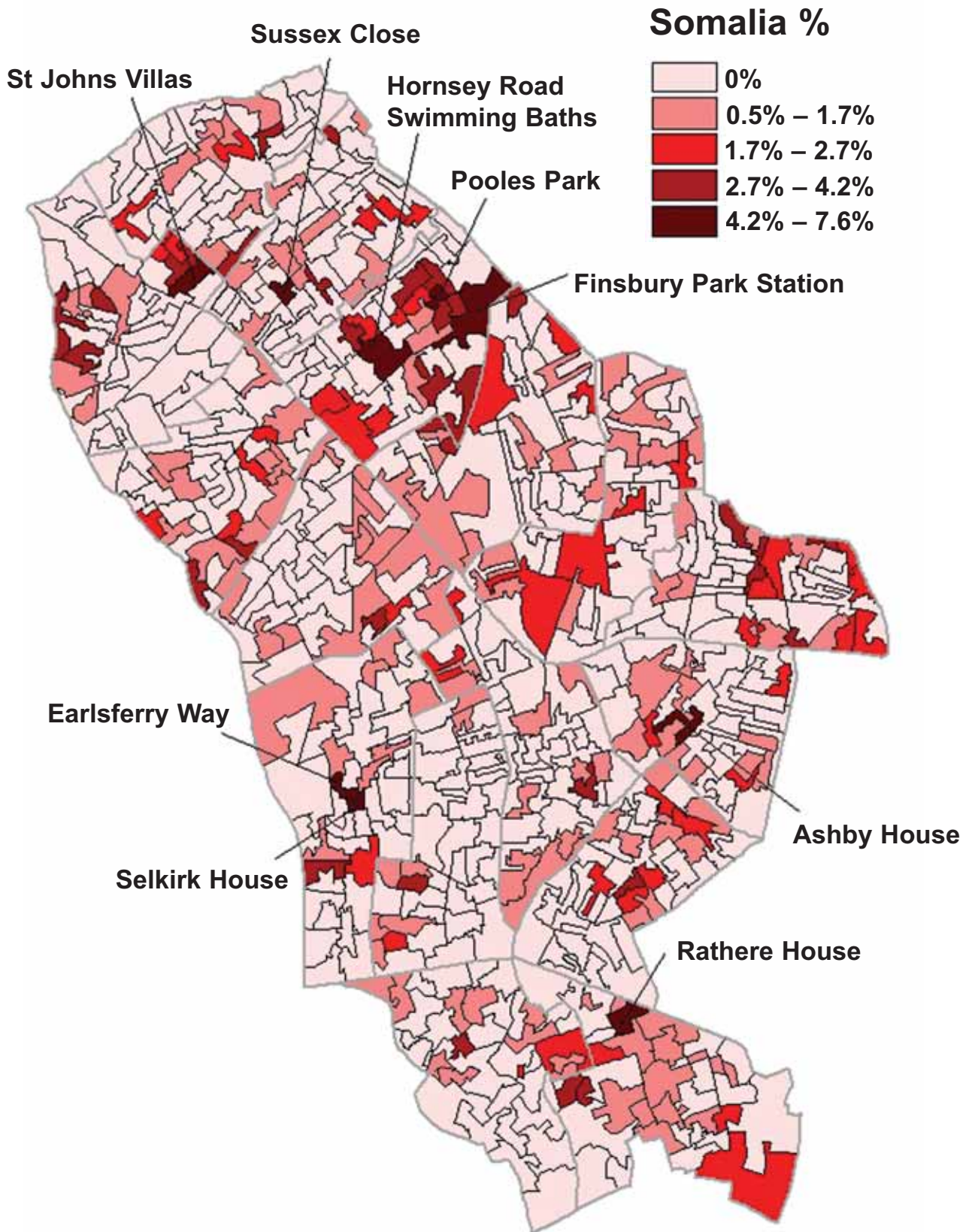


\* South and East Africans, except Kenya, Somalia, South Africa and Zimbabwe

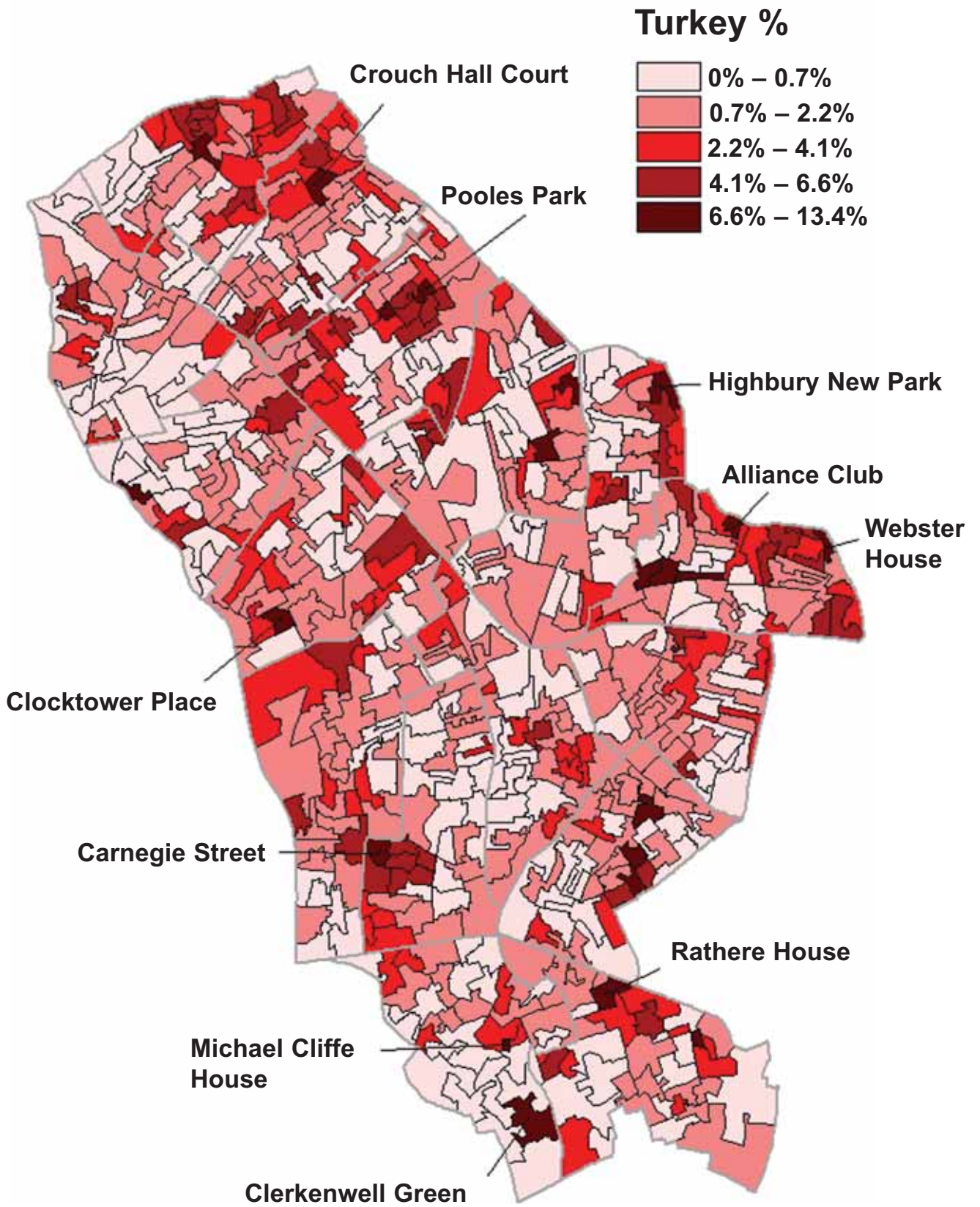
# Congolese Population in Islington



# Somali Population in Islington



# Turkish Population in Islington





**Street Survey**

Overall we knocked on 1263 doors and received responses from 394 with 57 from refugee households, that is 14.4%. There were major access problems in four of the OAs. In six of the OAs nearly all doors were knocked on, 264 doors identified, yielding 37 households with refugee households, that is 14%. This percentage will not be replicated throughout the borough since OAs with high percentages of non-EU nationalities were selected.

Nationality	No.
British/English	222
Turkish/Kurdish <sup>11</sup>	37
Irish	18
Somali	13
Caribbean	10
Eritrean/Ethiopian	9
EU	18
Cyprus	7
Bangladeshi	5
Former Yugoslav	5
Vietnamese	4
South American <sup>12</sup>	6
Congolese	3
Kurdish (ethnicity)	4
Ghana	3
Nigeria	3
North Africa	3
Chinese	3
Indian	4
Phillipine	3
Poland	3
Other nationalities	1 or 2 per nationality
<b>Total</b>	<b>394</b>

Thus the nationalities identified correspond to those who were listed in the country of birth statistics for the 2001 census and confirms the significance of Turkish/Kurdish and Somalis as well as indicating some of the groups which were subsumed under broader categories such as the Ethiopians and Eritreans.

Total Refugee-producing nationalities: 64 or 27.7% refugee households.

Thus the nationalities identified correspond to those who were listed in the country of birth statistics for the 2001 census and confirms the significance of Turkish/Kurdish and Somalis as well as indicating some of the groups which were subsumed under broader categories such as the Ethiopians and Eritreans.

<sup>11</sup> If we follow CEA@Islington estimates, this group would produce about 80% refugees.

<sup>12</sup> All from refugee producing nationalities

## Family Composition and Formation

In the 2001 census, Islington had a very high proportion of single households (44%), 26.5% married and cohabiting and 12.9% lone parents. Little research is available on refugee family reunion, although Refugee Action, in 2003, found a third of women waiting for asylum decisions had left children behind and would hope to bring them when they could. The rules on family reunion were changed on 30th August 2005, and now allow those granted Humanitarian Protection to apply for family reunion as well. This could double (or more) the numbers of those eligible.

The mid-year estimated population by the ONS for Islington in 2004 was 179,900 so the population is continuing to grow by over a 1000 per year. It is not clear how much of this is reckoned to be due to migration and how much through natural increase.

Amongst asylum seekers (waiting for a decision on their status) in Islington, the number of single people has been decreasing from 33.2% in 2002 to 18% at the end of June 2005. Amongst this group there were 183 children in 88 families or just over 2 children per family (London Asylum Seekers Consortium).

## Points from the Interviews

The sample of interviewees came from 44 households who had arrived from 1990 to 2004. There were five asylum seekers waiting for or appealing a decision.

- 5 (56.8%) households comprised couples with or without children, twelve single parents (11 female) (27.3%) and seven single person (15.9%) households.
- A high proportion of households (21) in our sample have had children since arriving. This means that almost 48% of households have grown as a result of additional children. Such expansion has implications for housing and education in future years.
- Family reunification (FR) has occurred in 8 households, with 7 involving a partner and 1 with children entering subsequently. Two of the households are Somalis, a group for which reunification is common (also confirmed by Home Office Control of Immigration Statistics). In schools the number of Somalis is increasing with higher levels amongst young children. Somali is the fastest growing language amongst pupils for the period 2001-5. The others have come from Colombia, Congo, Ethiopia, Kosovo, Turkey and Zimbabwe (one household each with FR).

## Other Views or Comments

Somali organisations identify family reunion as a significant area they deal with, as well as the attendant problems of health, overcrowding etc. Although they were aware of concerns about Somalis who had been granted refugee status in other European countries arriving in the UK, they did not believe that this was happening to any extent in Islington, considering it to be concentrated in areas outside London, such as Leicester, Birmingham and Bristol (which has generated some interesting case law on housing these arrivals).

**Findings: Analysis of Family Composition and School Populations**

The population of refugee-origin will continue to grow through demographic expansion even with falling asylum numbers. This will happen through a mix of family reunion and “natural increase” as families have children in the UK. The numbers of “second generation” children of refugees born in the borough will also increase.

We found few single person households through the street survey possibly because the areas chosen for interviews may contain more family type accommodation. More single people were found in the organisation based interviews.



## Refugee Numbers?

It will be obvious from the above that we believe that it is impossible to count “refugees”, but that some working figures may be possible for some larger communities, based on the census data, modified by what we have learned from the work done by CEA, the information gained through the street survey and the knowledge acquired through the interviews. This is almost impossible for the smaller communities because the low numbers make it impossible to draw inferences from the data available.

In effect to “count” a specific refugee community, we need

- The census figures on country of birth (and for some communities this may not be available)
- A percentage to apply to this figure to get the likely number of refugees among that community: these have been worked out by CEA for some communities but
  - They relate to language groups not country of birth
  - It is possible that more refugee families have school age children in the UK, for various reasons, such as because they do not have to pass a means test for family reunions, or the age at which people become refugees.
- Some useful estimate of the likely percentage undercounted by the census: but in some communities the under-enumeration is likely to be so high as to make estimates impossible here
- Some useful estimate of the population growth or decline since 2001 caused by births and deaths: the information we have gained on family formation is useful for this. Interestingly, none of our interviewees reported a death since 2001, which probably reflects the fact that the vast majority of applicants for asylum are under the age of 50.
- A useful estimate for likely in-migration into the borough since 2001, including family reunions, people coming to stay with friends or relatives and new asylum applicants staying in the borough. New people moving into the borough otherwise are likely to be insignificant in number because the new local connection rules plus the effective unavailability of housing for any but the richest new arrivals in the area are likely to exclude refugees who cannot rely on family or community support. From this should be deducted the figures for out-migration.

As explained above, the percentages, multipliers and figures applied will be different for each community.

To express this as a formula: where N is the total number of people born in that country recorded in the 2001 census:

Total current refugee population in Islington = (N) x (undercounting percentage) x (CEA percentage) x (births minus deaths multiplier) + (total in-migrations).

However, given that some of these multipliers and figures are based on guesses, they should always be triangulated with other data available, such as schools admissions, etc.

Looking at all the information available as detailed above, we would define the largest groups of refugee origin in the Borough as Turkish speakers (including Kurds), Somalis, Maghrebis and Latin Americans.

**Turkish speakers:** Cypriots, including a few Turkish Cypriots settled in Camden and Islington in the 1950s but in the 1960s and 1970s started to move northwards. They provided support for the immigration from the Turkish mainland, largely male in the late 1960s and early 1970s, many of them working in the textile industries. More women and children began to arrive from the late 1970s, IMECE, a Turkish-speaking Women's Group, was established in 1982 and has become one of the best organised and successful RCOs in the borough. From the late 1980s Kurdish refugees led to the expansion of the number of refugees from the Turkish mainland. It is estimated (CEA@Islington 2004) that about one seventh of the Turkish population is an ethnic Kurd and that they are twice as geographically concentrated as the Turkish population in general.

In the census, 3123 people were recorded as having Turkey as their country of origin. We have no evidence of significant undercounting (although children born in the UK to Turkish families would not have appeared as Turkish born), and CEA estimate that 80% of Turkish speakers are refugees. However, this figure both includes Turkish Cypriots and excludes Kurdish speakers, which makes it almost impossible to apply this multiplier to the community.

Among the families we interviewed (eight families and 33 people) we found only one who clearly was born after the census and another who might have been (a child aged four). Extrapolating that figure would give us a possible total of 95 children born in the borough since the census but we have no data on deaths. We also know, however, that there has been an increase of about 80 Turkish and Kurdish speakers over 2001-5 in schools: these children were largely born before the census, but represent some evidence of a birth rate in this community.

To this we should add those supported by NASS. 104 people from Turkey out of the 329 currently supported on subsistence only in the borough represents 31.6%. Assuming that the percentages in previous years were roughly similar the numbers for 2002 and 2003 (when total numbers were higher, but already declining) would have totalled 491. To these we should add those accommodated by NASS in the borough who currently total 55, and so we can assume a total of 200 at least over the last four years (while some may have been supported for longer than a year, asylum seeker totals globally were also considerably higher in some of these years). It is likely that those whose asylum applications were accepted would have stayed, and others may have stayed on some other basis, but refusal rates for Turkish applications are currently very high (260 refused out of 295 decisions in the first quarter of 2005). We have no data on the rate of family reunions among households from Turkey, nor on out-migrations, although we believe the latter are small in number. Taking all the above into account, we are able to produce a conservative estimate that the Turkish community in the borough numbers a minimum of 3,500-3600.

**Somalis:** until recently they have been typified as an 'invisible community' (Harris 2004). They have grown rapidly and diffused northwards and to surrounding boroughs in the 1990s from their initial concentration in Tower Hamlets<sup>13</sup>. It is thought that their numbers were seriously under-estimated in the 2001 census, partly because it did not take into account Somali children born in the UK. Since 2001 there has been a steady increase in the number of Somali pupils in Islington schools from about 500 in 2001 to over 800 in 2005 (CEA). Many Somali families are large and a number have brought in members through family reunification. Rates of employment are by far the lowest for new migrants amongst all the nationalities in the 2001 census and second lowest among settled migrants. There are several Somali associations covering welfare issues in the borough, a pattern repeated elsewhere and reflecting significant historical, ethnic and other divisions in this community.

The census counted 1226 born in Somalia living in Islington in 2001. To this we can add a possible 225 supported by NASS within the borough between 2001 – 4. Applying the multipliers gained from our sample of eight identified in interviews, we could assume a further 150 added to the community by births and family reunifications since 2001. We have no information on out-migration and deaths. The increase in the school population of Somali ethnic groups, of which a small minority are Arabic speakers, is estimated at 340. This gives us a minimum figure of 1600 in the borough, but this might be significantly higher if there is any degree of underestimation in the 2001 census. The information from the street survey indicates that this may be the case.

**North Africans:** a disparate group consisting of Maghrebis (Algerians, Moroccans and Tunisians) as well as much smaller numbers of Egyptians, Libyans and Sudanese. Algerians only started to request asylum in significant numbers from 1995. It is a heavily male population (70.5% in the 2001 census) and fairly well qualified, although many may arrive undocumented. (Collyer 2004). They have formed two concentrations in North London, one of which is around the Finsbury Park mosque and Blackstock Road where the Arab Advice Bureau, formerly the Algerian Refugee Council, is located, along with many Maghrebi-run businesses. It is likely that the 868 identified in the census represent a large underestimate, because so many of this community are either undocumented or live in quite unstable situations, or, commonly, both.

**Latin Americans:** the Chileans who arrived as refugees in the 1970s and 80s had a notable impact on public perceptions of refugees, and received support from many organisations, some based in Islington. The small numbers remaining now have a third generation born in the borough, but they mix with the large numbers of people from Colombia and Ecuador (and to a lesser extent, Peru and Bolivia) who have sought asylum in the UK from the early 90s onwards, often supported by

<sup>13</sup> Somalis have been settled in port and docklands areas of the UK like Tower Hamlets, Cardiff and Liverpool for over 150 years, arriving as sailors. After an initial group of refugees from the Siad Barre regime arrived in the UK in the early 80s, large numbers were forced into exile by the war from the mid-eighties onwards.

existing communities of migrant workers. They are scattered all over the borough, but the emergence of shops, restaurants and other businesses serving the communities along the Holloway Road and in Newington Green indicate the presence of a viable infra-community market locally. While some may not have arrived as refugees, evidence from community organisations is that significant numbers have applied for asylum. Two of the “oldest” refugee run organisations in the UK, CARILA and Chile Democratico, had premises in the borough, but the latter has now moved and changed its name<sup>14</sup>. Although the census identifies 1678 people in the borough born in South America, it is impossible to use the CEA multiplier on this figure, because the school data relates to language. There is some Spanish settlement in the borough, and some Latin Americans have other first languages (Portuguese, and, to a lesser extent, Amerindian languages). Our street survey identified six Latin Americans in the areas concerned, five of whom were from Colombia and Ecuador, three of whom were interviewed.

**Former Yugoslavs:** throughout the 1990s as the nation-state disintegrated, an increasing number of former Yugoslavs applied for asylum or were brought in under two major humanitarian programmes. For the first, from Bosnia, in November 1993, the Government agreed to allow 1000 men who had been detained in camps and their families i.e. 4000 in all to come to the UK. A further 500 were offered temporary asylum in 1995. Reception centres were set up in various parts of the country to disperse the population from London. The vast majority of asylum applications (around 14,000) were made independently, some of them joining relatives. The second programme was the Kosovan humanitarian evacuation programme following violent events in 1999. By the time the war had ended, 4346 refugees had arrived in the UK and were placed in regional clusters. However, by July 2000, 55% of the evacuees had returned. As with the Bosnians, the majority arrived independently. Thus the former Yugoslav population in the UK increased dramatically from 13,846 in 1991 to 47,410 in 2001. In London, the most significant concentrations are in the west, Golders Green, Highgate and Tottenham. In Islington, 569 persons born in the former Yugoslavia were enumerated in the 2001 census. It is not possible to break this figure down into the constituent groups, such as Serbs, Croatians, Bosnians and Kosovars. There are, in addition, some refugees from Albania itself, who swell the numbers, for example, of those needing Albanian interpreting services. Ascertaining numbers may also be made more difficult because of fear of being forced to return.

### ➤ Sizing the Whole Population?

While the methods described above help to produce estimates for some populations that are of considerable use in monitoring service delivery, especially in relation to languages, providing an estimate of Islington’s refugee population as a whole is more difficult, for of the reasons already explained.

For some populations, in addition, there is very little data available whether through the census or other sources. The Vietnamese are an example of this.

384 people in Islington identified their ethnic origin (not their country of birth or

nationality) as Vietnamese in the census in a section that allowed those identified as “other” to specify further. The data from this part of the census is not much use for any detailed analysis because many ethnicities are simply unidentified, remaining in wider categories (only 287 Somalis identified themselves as such, for example). It serves, however, as an indicator that this community, which arrived in the 1970s and 80s, still has a presence in the borough.

As explained above, there is also no commonly accepted definition of the term refugee, whether described by reference to legal status, method of arrival, or the respondent’s own definition. Refugees themselves, and those trying to define them, may also determine that the definition ceases to apply once they are fully settled and/or have acquired citizenship.

So, given all these difficulties, why bother to try to size the refugee population in Islington? The short answer is that such an estimate is a useful baseline against which those delivering services can see how they are doing in reaching refugee communities. We urge caution on this as well, since the work that follows, based on interviews with refugees in the borough, appears to indicate a greater level of need in many areas than among the population as a whole. A service that merely attracts the presence of refugees in the same ratio as the general population may well be failing to reach out to those in most need.

However with all these caveats, we would suggest that, for the purposes of measuring performance for service delivery, that the Borough can safely use a working figure of **5-10% of its population being of first generation refugee origin**. Obviously there are likely to be more of second generation as the CEA@Islington figures indicate.



## Fieldwork Results

What now follows is the result of the fieldwork based on the street survey, interviews with asylum seekers and refugees in the street survey and venues as well as interviews and contacts with refugee community organisations (identified through the Refugee Forum, CEA@ Islington and our own databases) and other organisations working with refugees in the borough. For each area of interest (corresponding to some of the domains identified as those central to integration) a summary of information from other literature and research is followed by the points raised in interviews with refugees and then the points arising from other interviews and contacts, including that with the IRIS user group. Findings summarise the main items of concern or interest in each area as derived from all the above. A final section at the end brings together broad conclusions and recommendations across all domains.

## Citizenship

### Literature and Other Research

Home Office (2005) figures on grants of citizenship show that a high proportion of those from Africa and the Middle East apply for citizenship at an early stage after they are eligible. In general 60% of migrants apply for citizenship once they are eligible after 5 years legal residence. New legislation will make it much more difficult for many prospective applicants, especially from some of the major nationalities resident in Islington to be granted citizenship due to lack of linguistic competence and the problems of accessing ESOL classes. New citizenship tests will come into operation on 1 November 2005:

“every person who applies for naturalisation as a British citizen on or after that date and is not exempt by reason of age or disability will need to present a certificate showing that they have passed the life in the UK test or that they have attended an English language course which incorporates approved teaching materials on citizenship in the United Kingdom” (from ministerial statement July 2005)”

The required level of English is ESOL level 3, and the alternative “life in the UK” test requires a similar level of English: the ability to follow straightforward spoken explanations and a conversation on a familiar topic. The cost of applications for the test (£40) may also prevent some from applying.

Citizenship is identified by many commentators and decision-makers as a foundation for integration, and has also figured prominently in debates on community cohesion as a core area, essential to build a “sense of belonging” (see, for example, an interview with Ted Cante, Guardian 21st September 2005). The Islington Refugee Strategy identifies “(5) *The proportion of refugees taking up citizenship once they are qualified to do so*” as one of several higher level indicators of refugee integration in the borough.

### Points from the Interviews

- Of the 44 households, 21 had taken out British citizenship. Eighteen had indefinite or exceptional leave to remain, three were waiting for a decision and two were appealing. Three, of whom two had indefinite or exceptional leave to remain, were hesitant or didn't know about taking out citizenship. Eleven of the households had entered in 2000 and after; one of these had taken out British citizenship.
- Of the 44 households, 21 had taken out British citizenship, 6 had applied, and 8 would like to. Five households were waiting to have their status determined or were appealing, Three were hesitant or didn't know about taking out citizenship.
- The most common reasons given were travel, the fact they had made it their home and their kids were born here, to benefit from improved rights and get better jobs. An Iraqi stated that his home country was linked with terrorism and

he had great difficulty getting a job with that passport. Two said they could then vote and believed in democracy, and one Somali that their country had no government now.

- The majority who had applied said it was straightforward but several had used family members (children, sister-in-law) to fill out the forms. Three of the 21 had had considerable problems, one with neighbours refusing to confirm they had known them for 5 years and one had taken legal proceedings to sort out their application. For one it had taken 11 years to obtain.
- Several of those who have acquired British Citizenship would find it difficult to obtain it under the new regulations due to their command of English (see language issues). Some households had difficulties attending ESOL classes due to caring responsibilities for disabled partners or young children or had health problems themselves.
- We asked interviewees to tell us about whether they needed interpreters in different situations, since those that needed interpreters for ordinary situations would be likely to be unable to attain ESOL level 3.
  - Of the 23 venue interviews, 7 needed interpreters for ordinary situations and 5 for complicated situations, 1 came from a country where English is the common language and 8 were able to conduct the interviews in English
  - Of the 21 OA interviews (which would be categorised as complicated), 7 would need help in ordinary situations, 6 would require interpreters in complicated situations, 8 can manage without interpreters in their everyday lives whilst 3 can speak, read and write English fluently. All this group had been resident for at least 5 years in the UK.

### Other Views or Comments

The IRIS users' forum commented extensively on citizenship and their reasons for applying.

- Citizenship makes sense and will give some protection
- It might hopefully improve academic and educational options
- Levels of English are difficult and the interview can be even more difficult on the phone
- It is expensive to apply for citizenship especially for those not working and would be helpful to have assistance with fees

### Findings: Citizenship

#### New findings

Citizenship has clearly been popular among Islington's refugees to date, for a mix of practical and other reasons. If the proportion of refugees taking up citizenship is used as an indicator of integration, our research shows that they do so to a very great extent and soon after they are qualified to do so. Islington's refugees generally want to become citizens as soon as possible.

#### Challenges

However the new citizenship regulations now in force would have prevented at least those who say they rely on interpreters for everyday situations or those who have

not yet acquired ESOL level 3 from acquiring citizenship: about a third of those we interviewed. Given the relationship expressed by interviewees (see below) between ill health, disability and their difficulties in accessing or maintaining ESOL courses, it is likely that those who are already dealing with these or other difficult problems may find themselves further disadvantaged and isolated (the provisions to exempt those with disabilities from the test are quite tightly drawn). Women may also find it more difficult. The cost of taking the test and the waiting lists for classes may be further disincentives.





## Employment

### Literature and Other Research

A range of studies on refugees highlight their high unemployment rates, difficulty in getting jobs and employment in jobs that do not use their experience or qualifications. Bloch (2002) surveyed 400 people nationally whilst Michael Bell Associates (2004) covered 271 refugees and focused on four sectors- engineering, hospitality, health and air support services – in London. Bloch found a very low employment rate of 29% compared to 60% for the BME population in her locations. In a study of Newham (Bloch 2000), 46% were unemployed compared to 12.3% of the general population of working age.

Others have examined the mismatch between job seekers and the London labour market (Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion 2002) or focused on specific groups such as women refugees from professional backgrounds (Dumper 2002). A recent study has examined the extent to which volunteering may provide a route into employment (Working Lives Institute/RAGU 2005). The DWP (2003) has noted that 29% of refugees were involved in voluntary work with a much higher proportion of skilled and professional refugees taking part. Whilst volunteering can be seen as facilitating entry into the labour force (Working Lives Institute/RAGU 2005) and a means of integration and greater contact with the wider society (DWP 2003), it may only provide a restricted range of employment.

A large-scale national study of principal applicants (1981 postal questionnaires analysed) who had received positive decisions in the winter of 2002/3 (Kirk 2004) found that there were enormous variations in the three largest groups in terms of educational level, previous occupation, including non economically active, and knowledge of English and literacy in their own primary language. For some nationalities, such as Somalis, gender differences were significant. 55% of Somali women had no education and 25% less than 6 years compared to 24% and 21% respectively for Somali men. Zimbabweans, on the other hand, were highly educated (both men and women). Similar gender differences applied to economic status whereby only 4% of Somali women had been employed, 3% self-employed, 9% student and 81% economically inactive. Somali men too had low levels of employment (16%), 38% self employed, 12% students and 28% inactive. Iraqi women and men had higher levels of employment whilst Zimbabwean women and men had low levels of economic inactivity in their home countries.

A local study of Somalis (Hamm) in Sheffield (covering 249 respondents) also found that length of stay had not helped their chances of being in employment and that the main problems identified were cultural and racial barriers, language, and childcare. Amongst Somali women, 40% were lone parents, a third of whom had four or more children under 16 years, whilst almost a third were caring for children, the sick or the elderly.

The conclusion of the skills audit (Kirk 2004) is that:

“advisors in JobCentre Plus and in voluntary organisations need to respond to a very wide range of needs in terms of practical advice and guidance for refugee job-seekers and language skills – both first language and English-exhibited by respondents should be taken into account when planning employment or learning programmes in areas where it is known that there are growing numbers of unemployed refugees” (p.23)

Beyond Black and White (IPPR 2005) shows that among new migrants (economic migrants and refugees) only 12.7% of Somalis were employed compared to over 30% amongst Iranians, Iraqis and Turks but 73% of Zimbabweans. Amongst settled migrants Somalis continue to have a low level of employment – 38.% compared to 48% of Turks, 77.7% of Iraqis and 81.1% of Zimbabweans.

So whilst many national and European studies (Netherlands Ministry of Justice 2004) target sectoral groups such as skilled refugees or mothers with children, we need to take into account the national differences of refugees as well. In addition, there are large numbers whose access to employment depends not only on reducing the level of discrimination, inaccessible language provision, lack of understanding of their qualifications and skills, poor service delivery by agencies but also on the provision of care facilities for children, the elderly and the incapacitated (see results of our sample).

Some research is critical of the role of job centres which are the main source of likely vacancies in the area but which are limited in their location (Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion 2002). The City Fringe Partnership Report (Economic and Social Inclusion 2002) notes that there are large numbers in Inner London who are looking for work in elementary occupations, sales and customer services, personal services and plant and machine operating jobs requiring few or no qualifications but that the growth areas of employment in Inner London are those requiring more qualifications from clerical and administrative jobs upwards. More significantly, many of the less skilled jobs require personal skills and some linguistic competence which rules out many newly arrived refugees.

In contrast to the emphasis on minority ethnic businesses, there has been little policy attention given to refugee entrepreneurship (Lyon et al., 2005) but refugee and new arrivals do not yet have co-ethnic support in some communities. There is, however, experience of running businesses in their home country which they can transfer to another sector in the UK e.g. Iranians opening up pizza shops. Some of the key problems refugees confront in setting up businesses are access to financial resources, lack of information, knowledge of marketing strategies, English language and difficult relationships with mainstream organisations. Though constrained by lack of childcare, and therefore unable to take jobs in the formal economy, some women had managed to use social networks such as school friendships to sell clothes they had sewn. Refugee businesses may contribute to the regeneration of

areas, especially since they often cannot afford high street sites, and may also be used as effective community centres e.g. call centres.

Islington Refugee Integration Strategy aims to increase both employment and retention opportunities for refugees through:

- Identifying the main barriers that prevent refugees from accessing employment
- Developing a framework for refugees to improve their skills and use existing qualifications to access employment

### Points from the Interviews

- The 49 individuals for whom we had knowledge about work and/or study can be divided into the following categories:
  - Those who were not working and not looking for work (14)
  - Those who as asylum seekers were not allowed to work (3 people stated this in interviews: two other asylum seekers did not and may have arrived before the current bar on working came into effect)
  - Those who were not working and were incapacitated (10)
  - Those who were not working but were looking for work (7: two of whom had health problems that restricted the work they could do)
  - Those who were working but not at level commensurate with their qualifications or experience (5)
  - Those who were working at roughly the appropriate level whether in skilled or less skilled paid jobs (3)
  - Working in voluntary capacity (1)
  - Those who were studying including improving English(6)
- In the sample a number of respondents did not work due to health problems (physical and mental) whilst two were caring for husbands with such problems. One of them had a medical condition which prevented him and his wife from working. Many of those not looking for work (women) had young children though some said they would like to work once they could.
- As noted above, the fact that interviewees from the output areas were mostly contacted during the day may mean that we were more likely to find people who were not working or unable to work. Of the 21 households thus found, 14 (a third) were claiming Income Support, and so presumably not currently seeking work. Three were claiming jobseekers allowance, and so seeking work. Five were claiming disability or incapacity benefits (these categories, of course, may overlap with those on income support or working). Among the 23 contacted via community groups or agencies, however the proportions on Income Support are also high: 12 (almost half). None, however, were claiming jobseekers allowance.
- Almost all of those who had jobs were doing low-skilled work – restaurant, professional ironing, cleaning and warehouse operator. Another had been employed as a taxi driver but was currently incapacitated.

- The only ones who were satisfied with employment were those working in community advice and advocacy centres full-time (3) or combining this with study (1). For the volunteers this could give them valuable experience: one was hoping to become a lawyer (and studying for it), another was heavily involved and was completing a management course and university studies which might enable them to get work in this sector. He commented that getting funding in this sector was getting more difficult. Three were paid workers but had started as volunteers.
- The other satisfied person had started up a successful restaurant but had persevered through immense difficulties due to legal status and had to accumulate capital through friends, family and her own hard work
- Another two women would like to set up their own businesses but either do not know how to go about it or are experiencing difficulties in securing finance or undertaking any commercial activities in rented housing
- Six were studying (one of them combining it with part-time work in a community advocacy and advice centre) whilst three of these were improving their English.
- Our interviewees were generally critical of Job Centres, saying that they merely got them to fill in forms and “say they would call back but never did”. One mother said that the Job Centre had told her to get a job despite having two children. Another commented that what had helped at the Job Centre was the presence of a Turkish speaker. But most others were critical, some preferring commercial agencies. Several complained they always saw someone different at the Job Centre, and that:  
“they never called back... made you fill in forms and that’s it...I can’t believe there is no work for me”. The woman had several qualifications and spoke good English.
- Job centres were also found to be unhelpful in providing information on how to start up businesses, as one informant who wanted to set up a beauty salon, commented.
- Several commented on the national and racial discrimination they experienced. One said “when you are Black and Muslim, they think you are a terrorist”. Another said that when they saw his passport (Iraqi), that was the end.
- As one respondent, who wanted to work in construction with machinery, stated:  
“In Turkey it is experience which counts, in the UK qualifications”.
- Whilst several interviewees (3) stated that their English might be a problem in getting the work that they wanted, two of those who spoke fluent English and had higher level qualifications could not get work. Several others were not looking for working whilst studying English.



### Other Views or Comments

The user group had had problems getting into employment too:

- They would like vocational training as well as ESOL
- language was the main issue for some
- experience was often required
- childcare was an especial problem that made it difficult for single parents to start training or work

Community organisations were also very concerned about employment. They spoke of popular local initiatives: training for the driving test which had been funded by a local bus company, a project at the Whittington Hospital which has attracted several nurses, utilising people with the skills and experience as teachers in supplementary schools and as school support workers. Another organisation felt that the way in which its community members (Maghrebis) were largely stuck in low paid catering jobs reflected the way in which their organisations were also not getting funding. It was essentially because these were the jobs available. Others spoke of pressures on community members to get into paid employment to be able to send money home, and that could also lead to underemployment or a failure to requalify.

Entrepreneurship was also of interest. Muslims face particular problems raising finance, but the Muslim Welfare House has a business adviser who has helped with many successful start ups. Others, however, had little idea of where to find support. Although many Somali enterprises have been set up in the borough (telephone centres, internet cafes, £1 shops and restaurants), the view expressed was that they often collapsed quickly. This was because they lacked basic information: how to do petty cash, cash flow forecasts, customer relations, this last especially:

“it is difficult, they do not target people outside the community so the places fill up with Somalis sitting around and talking loudly so discourage other users.”

In Maghrebi communities the key problem was identified as being essentially of finance. “Some wealthy people bring money with them and set up coffee shops, where the rest of us work”.

One area with potential is the existence of community interest free saving circles, often set up and run by women. These are popular in the Somali community (Lyon et al. 2005).

Islington can draw on considerable resources in relation to refugee employment: it is home to several nationally respected agencies working in this field, such as the Refugee Employment and Training Advice Service at Education Action international (formerly WUS) and the Refugee Advice and Guidance Unit at London Metropolitan University and local agencies such as Tracks to Employment, the Islington African Project and the Muslim Welfare House have developed some innovative and well regarded services.



## Findings: Employment

### New findings

Of the refugees we interviewed, few were actually in employment, and the percentages in work are similar to much of what is known about refugees and employment nationally, even though Islington is an area of relatively low unemployment.

Of those that were in employment, most depended on the community and voluntary sector for satisfying employment. The community sector, however, is a sub-sector of the “ethnic economy” and, while it may present refugees with a ladder out of unemployment, they may also find themselves “locked into” it, in the way that other migrants do in the “ethnic economy.”

For those seeking to provide work, the experiences of the Islington entrepreneurs and would be entrepreneurs is fairly typical of the experiences faced by many refugees as evidenced in other studies: setting up requires a great deal of hard work, and assistance is usually provided by friends and families rather than formal agencies.

Of those that were not in work, a majority were not looking for work, mostly because of illness or caring responsibilities. Two of the key issues for those looking are the lack of English preventing a number of them from finding work and the gap between ability and work. Even traditional areas of less skilled work such as construction may require adequate knowledge of English and some qualifications. The issue is not, generally, that refugees lack the skills for the local labour market, but that the skills they have do not match the jobs they are in, or that their skills are not evidenced by qualifications that would get them into employment.

When our interviewees did seek work, they were often disappointed. Levels of dissatisfaction with statutory resources were high, and knowledge of other options and services low.

### Challenges

Getting Islington’s refugees into appropriate employment is a complex set of tasks. The barriers identified here: language, skill recognition and validation, community pressures, health, disability and caring responsibilities do not operate in isolation, but combine to create quite intractable problems. They cannot be dealt with separately, either: an attempt, for example, to get those affected by ill-health into work, must be “joined-up” with more appropriate English language provision as well as requalification processes that are accessible to the disabled or those looking after family members.

Given the dissatisfaction with statutory agencies that was widely expressed, and the lack of knowledge of the options available, it is clear that a major challenge is to get useful and appropriate information to people who may be able to use it. Statutory agencies may find it most helpful to engage with organisations that may be able to

offer new approaches and insights to enable more refugee households to get into employment that does not devalue their skills or potential.

The role of the refugee community sector in this is not just as a provider of information but also a source of employment and advancement for some refugees. However, if work in some community organisations is not to become the voluntary sector equivalent of a shift in a kebab shop, attention needs to be paid to the routes in and out, the links to other forms of employment and the ways in which more such organisations can achieve some stability to enable them to offer proper staff and volunteer development and support.



## Education and Training

### Literature and Other Research

Most of the research material on this relates also to employment and has been covered above. Access to ESOL has been fairly consistently found to be a problem across London and in other parts of the UK where demand is high. The London Skills Survey in 2001 found 34% of Londoners wanting to continue with some learning. A study for the LDA found 14% of refugees had left school before 15, a much lower percentage than in our interviewees (28%), who compare more with the London average for people who have left school with no qualifications: 24%. Over half the LDA sample had degrees, which compares with the 13% in our interviewees. Within the London population as a whole, 31% have a first degree.

The LBI Refugee Strategy considered the ability of refugees to demonstrate English fluency within two years of achieving refugee status as a high level indicator of integration. It identifies a priority action for employment as to “Develop a framework for refugees to improve skills and use existing qualifications to access employment”. A strategic aim is to “enable refugees to realise their full potential in education at all stages of their integration”, supported by priority actions to

- “Develop improved knowledge base of refugee needs and promote good practice
- Improve educational outcomes for members of refugee communities within the context of integrated provision”

### Points from Interviews

Numbers vary since not everyone gave an answer to every question in the interview.

- Although nine (out of 47 people) people had only attended primary school, and two had no education at all, six had completed university (one in the UK), twelve had completed A levels or equivalent, and 20 had been at school until 18. One had left school aged twelve to take over the family shoe repair business.
- Only five had gained any academic qualifications inside the UK. Eight others had gained vocational qualifications in the UK or undertaken other training and three had started degrees in the UK
- 45 wanted more training, with most saying they wanted more English language learning. Some wanted to update or requalify in their professions in the UK (four), learn new marketable skills (fifteen) including setting up in business (three). One proposed to start a third degree because he had found that his non-UK qualification was no use, and he had encountered discrimination in private sector employment: he now hopes to enter social work. Or simply “training to do anything except cleaning”, or “I simply like to learn”. One said training would have to wait until he had settled down and earned some money.
- Problems in accessing or continuing training include
  - Time: childcare, existing work, running her own business all get in the way
  - Health of the interviewee or a family member
  - Expense and lack of available finance

- Need for a better level of English to access or complete the training wanted: “I’m doing hairdressing courses.....level 2. I’d like to do level 3 but that’s very difficult because you need very good English”.
- Embarrassment and knowledge of the risks involved
- Awareness that people with qualifications also find the job market difficult
- Lack of knowledge about what is available or possible
- Belief that the training needed may not be available
- Age: one interviewee at 84 years old did not answer any questions about education
- Even when training, it is difficult to concentrate with a head full of worries about the future (from an asylum seeker waiting for an appeal decision)
- The quality of teaching on offer: “I’m afraid to ask questions because they look at me reproachfully” (from an ex-teacher)
- “I would like to retrain as a nurse...but I am afraid it will be hard for me in this country, maybe my daughter will” (from a woman who had been a maths teacher for ten years but believed she would never be able to teach in the UK because of her English)
- But some found no problems: “I applied in the summer and I should start in October”; “no problem: I’m doing English training and it is very good”.
- What do refugees believe is needed?
  - Information and advice that is easily accessible
  - More flexible and part time schemes that can cope with the demands of home life etc
  - More ESOL provision
  - Several hope that once the children are older or health improves they will train or study
  - Finance for refugees who wish to study, and do not face a “level playing field” because they already have children to support, may need to work etc.
- Seven said they speak read and write English fluently (one had taught English before fleeing and one had gained two university degrees studying in English), but 14 had not enough English to manage ordinary situations. Others reported difficulties in the areas of reading, writing, listening, understanding and speaking, with many variations between these.
- 39 had attended ESOL courses, but only seven reported reaching a recognised level or qualification, six of them level 3 or above (that now required for citizenship). Eleven were still doing ESOL classes.
- 42 wanted more ESOL training. Independence was one reason cited: the children growing up, to look after her own health, to deal with her own problems. Employment, because English is seen as the key to gaining employment or improving prospects, also figured highly. It was also important to be able to help children with their homework and protect them.
- Some had no problems finding ESOL (“grammar is the most difficult and important thing, but when you can manage it, the rest is simple”) but those that did cited
  - the problem of class timetables not allowing people with children or other responsibilities to study

- ESOL timetables not suitable for those working
- The difficulties of finding and signing on for classes: “it was difficult to find the ESOL classes I’m doing now: all the schools are always full and the waiting lists are very long”
- The level or standard of ESOL on offer: “I’ve done 6 months of English training for refugees but it was very basic: the ABC and little more. It wasn’t very helpful”.
- Waiting lists
- Health problems (their own and others in the family)
- Twenty-seven interviewees needed interpreters to access services (some just for more complex medical or legal interactions), but fourteen of them used family members. Some of these are children: one interviewee said it was difficult to take her son out of school when she needed translation, another that children had translated council letters for her but the housing benefit had then stopped, another that some places now bar under 16s from interpreting but since they provide no alternative this causes problems.
- Three used friends to interpret on occasions
- One worked as an interpreter.
- Interpreters had been provided by solicitors, hospitals, community groups and GPs but only three reported using them for council services: “I have never seen a council interpreter although I understand there are some” said one. Another said: “I tried to use interpreters from the council but the service is not efficient: it is hard to book an interpreter and takes a lot of time so I just keep on getting help from my sister in law”. Another was told by the council tax offices to get her own interpreter to deal with the problem. She uses her husband. The DWP was also cited as not providing interpreting as needed: one interviewee had filled in her own disability benefit forms, been refused benefits, appeals and gone to court to win her rights to benefits: “and we got an interpreter there”. Generally the health based interpreting services used were satisfactory (with one exception) when available. One said “I get a free interpreter when I need legal assistance but I couldn’t get one from my GP, because they said my English was good enough, but that was good because I had to improve my language and now it is much better”
- One household said they could not get interpreters for services and so used community groups (they were interviewed via a community group). Some used a mixture of interpreting services offered by local service providers and community groups.
- Two interviewees reported using “private” interpreters, whom presumably they pay. One had paid for interpreters provided by a community association.
- One said: “I usually deal with these things by myself but it is very difficult”
- Interviewees spoke a great variety of languages, with a majority speaking at least two. Languages spoken: Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin) “various Congolese languages,” English, Farsi, French, Italian, Korean, Kurdish, Lingala, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tigrinya and Turkish, “five vernacular languages of Zimbabwe”.



### Other Views or Comments

The IRIS user group identified “Language is the main issue. If you work in the community all there is is kebabs and coffee shops. Turkish people work 14 hours a day.”

This is reflected by the importance given to ESOL by several community organisations, some of whom run training or English language classes. We were told about ESOL classes at Muslim Welfare House for women to level 2, with times tailored to needs. They also offer certificates like childminding, school assistant and employment advice. The Asylum Seeker Centre at St Mary Magdalene offers ESOL to level 3 but find most of their users are from out of the borough, although they hope to advertise and encourage more local take up. The service also faces a current funding problem. A Somali group had run classes but found their premises too small. They continue to look for options to offer ESOL as they believe that people prefer learning within the community, especially women. They would like to offer tailored courses and know the needs and barriers to be overcome (such as the need for Somali childcare to support women in training). Refugee Housing Association have also identified the need to offer ESOL to people who cannot get to classes easily and have just started a volunteer-run Home ESOL project in London.

Community groups were concerned that failed asylum seekers are expected to pay for most courses and this constitutes a barrier for many. Although some ESOL providers are prepared to take them on to courses without payment, this is not funded in the same way as other ESOL provision and asylum seekers may not be aware of what is available.

Some communities told us that a culture of paying for interpreters found through community contacts because people cannot wait may be developing. Two cases cited by an independent adviser (both in neighbouring boroughs) illustrate this: one a disabled man paying an average of £20 a week to interpreters to get the social services he needs, the other of a 12 year old (payment made to his father) employed for a housing interview. This mirrors the use of “private interpreters” noted by our interviewees.



### Findings: Education and Training

#### New findings

The interviewees generally present a different picture of refugee communities in terms of educational attainment from some previous surveys for reasons explored in the methodology: 23%, for example, had either not attended school at all or only reached primary level.

The almost universal hunger for ESOL, and the failure of many who have been on English courses to get qualifications or to complete courses is quite striking and can be read as a real desire to communicate, participate and be involved.

The use of “private” interpreters has not been explored or even mentioned in other research. The lack of access to timely appropriate interpreting services clearly presents the possibility of the creation of a market for such services, and, given the low income levels, service users cannot pay the price demanded by qualified, quality controlled interpreters and will find what they can. The dangers of this are obvious.

### **Resources**

Refugee run organisations are interested in facilitating access to training and ESOL, or offering it themselves. They often understand the difficulties faced by trainees and may have solutions for them, but state clearly that their precarious and under-funded existence undermines their ability to offer appropriate routes out of dependence and poverty for their users.

Refugees themselves represent a significant untapped resource in the borough: the underemployed people we interviewed spoke over 20 languages. Almost none had given up on the idea of studying, retraining, getting into work or business.

### **Challenges**

The need and desire for further training and ESOL is striking but so are the significant barriers to access to such training for many, and simply providing more classes without other ways of tackling the access problems will leave the most disadvantaged out. Although most interviewees had attended ESOL, very few (six out of 47) had attained a level that enabled independence (or, nowadays, citizenship). While some had faced extraneous problems that prevented further study, the major challenge is in meeting the need for some form of flexible, “portable” learning that will enable students to take up where they left off, rejoin classes etc.

The numbers and statements about interpreting services are also striking and present an urgent challenge because they mean that some refugees, especially the most vulnerable, need more or different resources to be used to ensure that they have effective access to the services they need in Islington.



## Housing

### Literature and Other Research

The mapping exercise carried out by Islington's housing service in 2003 concluded that : "There seemed to be a consensus amongst most of the interviewees that it was difficult to find out about council services. Some were saying that it was easy finding out about council services but it was harder to understand how to access these services. The main reason suggested for this was the language barrier although there was some suggestion that the council was partly to blame." This mapping included more settled black and minority ethnic communities, many of whom have no problems communicating in English, but the assumption that the council is "not to blame" if people from some communities cannot access services because of institutional barriers is interesting, especially in the light of the problems with interpreting services highlighted above.

The mapping identified Somalis as a significant hidden community and incorporated some of their experiences (especially of overcrowding). It failed to identify Maghrebi (north African) communities at all. This was also true of the Islington Housing Needs Survey conducted in 2002. The Housing Needs Survey (HNS) also aggregated figures to white/Asian/Black/other for most comparisons which makes it impossible to identify refugee communities or their needs. The HNS found that ownership was not a realistic option for most people in need of affordable housing in Islington, and that "The need for additional affordable housing represents over 100% of the estimated newbuild in the Borough (estimated to be 542 units per annum)." In other words, many people were likely to remain in housing need in the borough because of a shortage of available housing across all sectors and especially in the affordable rented sectors.

"The 2002 London Household Survey shows that 36% of social tenants have some intention of moving in the next five years. Among this group, 60% expect to move within the same district; 13% to another London district; and 14% to move out of London. The remaining 13% don't know."<sup>16</sup> About half of those likely to move were going to do so for accommodation related reasons. A more detailed look at reasons for mobility<sup>17</sup> identifies "positive" and "negative" movers. Generally "negative movers" are "more likely to be lone-parent, slightly older, economically inactive, disabled or in long-term illness". 60% of the social tenants wanted to move because they were worried about crime levels.

Choice is one of the key areas in the development of housing policy nationally. In line with this, Islington has introduced "choice-based lettings" for those seeking to transfer from their existing council accommodation. This is a system that allows tenants to see lists of available properties each week and "bid" for any they want, using points awarded them on the basis of their housing needs. The lists are available at council offices and on the internet, and bidding takes place by telephone or on the net.

<sup>16</sup> Cited in Dataspring Sector Study 39 November 2004

<sup>17</sup> Mobility Aspirations among London Households Cho and Whitehead 2004

Refugee housing is moving up the policy agenda. A conference on 20th September launched a guide to housing and support services for refugees published by the Chartered Institute of Housing with the support of the Housing Corporation, the Home Office and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Criticism of local authorities and registered social landlords for failing to include refugees in their strategic planning or monitoring of service provision echo similar comments made by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and hact after an 18 month project centring on a refugee housing network bringing the main actors together to consider how to ensure that housing becomes the “key to the door of integration”.<sup>18</sup>

Islington is producing a refugee integration strategy and recognises the importance of housing within it. A strategic priority is identified as to “enable refugees to have relevant advice and assistance in accessing and retaining appropriate accommodation” and it is supported by priority actions to

- Identify and address the housing needs of refugees
- Train front line statutory and community organisation staff to deliver appropriate and accurate housing advice to refugees

and by proposals to include “The reported satisfaction of refugees with their housing compared with the general population” as an indicator of the success of the strategy. It is important to note, however, that the council is now only directly responsible for advice, strategy and homelessness in the borough: housing management is run by an arms length management organisation. Asylum seekers, of course, are also largely the responsibility of central government, and some aspects of housing support are the responsibility of social services via Supporting People.

### Points from Interviews

The numbers of people answering these questions varied, and so not all totals are consistent. The output areas chosen for the street survey may account for the higher numbers of social housing tenants.

- 24 households were in council tenancies (one in temporary accommodation), two in housing association properties, eight with private landlords, two staying with relatives (both in council homes), one in a council-run reception centre, one in a NASS arranged centre, one in a private lease managed by housing association, one in private rented accommodation as temporary accommodation and one staying with a friend temporarily (for a few days). While the proportion in council-owned housing is high, this may not be significant given the numbers interviewed and the circumstances.
- 19 had obtained their homes through the waiting list, 12 had been through or were still in temporary accommodation, six had applied as homeless (one had given up), 3 found housing from commercial agencies, one transfer, one via an association scheme. One had met a landlord from her community
- They had been in this home for periods ranging from a few weeks to 14 years,

<sup>18</sup> See [www.hact.org.uk](http://www.hact.org.uk)

averaging 5 years, with four households (out of 40 answering) there for more than 10 years, 14 for five or more.

- Problems reported with current housing included
  - Nine households with major concerns about security and safety in the area, reporting harassment, open drug-dealing, noise and threats
  - seven who had to move soon and wanted permanent homes (one household was on their fourth home in nine months and were now a long way from children's schools and nurseries): "The place is not bad, it is just not a proper house". "We cannot keep on changing house every year". "I'm very nervous because I don't know what is going to happen". "the council puts you in one place, then moves you to another place, and to another again....and you don't know what to do"
  - six who reported disrepair including damp and inadequate insulation, two described quite graphically: one family of two adults and four children sleeping on one room throughout the winter, another with a kitchen flooded and unusable for 20 days, no hot water for December and January (when a baby was born). One had mice.
  - Six whose homes were too small for them, including one family of an elderly lady, couple and four children in a two bedroomed flat, and another couple plus four children and one more on the way in a two bedroomed flat. One said her flat was too big (three bedrooms for a mother, daughter aged 16 and a son aged 2)
- 19 interviewees had sought help with resolving these problems, and most were not satisfied with the service offered (although two said they were very satisfied). Twelve had asked the council for help, but reported problems ranging from simple inaction ("local people say they have been trying to get something done for 20 years and still no result", said one, "They are very laid back" said another, about not responding to letters: she was about to contact a solicitor), through explanations of why solutions are not possible (housing of the type they need unavailable) to experiences of no access to effective advice or help: "housing people refuse to understand him and tell him to come back with someone who speaks English". "We would like to find somebody in the council who really listens and wants to help".
- Two had got help from a community group to go on to a transfer list and were satisfied. Another was being helped by a community group to make a homeless application. one had consulted a solicitor "but I don't think there is much we can do".
- Twenty-five of 41 households wanted to move within the next five years, mainly for the reasons indicated above: security, stability, safety, a decent or a larger home, although one said "I wouldn't like a house: it looks strange to me. At home everybody lives in flats". Some people in private rented wanted less expensive accommodation. Two wanted homes that would meet the needs of disabled people in their families. Most wanted to stay in Islington although some would move if it would improve their chances of getting the home they needed.
- Some were enthusiastic about their homes and the borough: "transport here is

fantastic, people who live here are very friendly, I am used to the area and the markets and shops are very convenient". One has been offered a move but chosen to stay where they were. One wanted to buy the flat she was in. one homeless man wanted to stay in the borough "because it is a nice and safe area".

- Interviewees had few ideas as to how they could improve their housing. Five hoped to earn enough to move on or buy, but one was eloquent about the difficulties in raising finance, saving and negotiating the systems. One hoped to buy but did not yet know what type of house or where. Four hoped that they would get something through the council schemes, but one had found the bidding system impenetrable. One had organised with other tenants on repairs but this had still not achieved results. Two said "I don't know what to do". One said: "I guess when I improve my English and get a job I'll be able to rent a house but life is now and I don't know how to cope with it.
- Few had ideas about where they could go for help: eight said they would go to the council offices, three named voluntary sector sources of advice and advocacy, two were going to contact a solicitor. One recommended the council's repair line. One had contacted the council's housing advice centre but did not recommend it after a long wait for an absent adviser.

### Other Views or Comments

IRIS service users identified permanency as their main priority: moves had disrupted every aspect of their lives, especially children's schooling and well-being: "I cannot change my life until I get out of temporary accommodation" as one said. They were, however, a group that had been treated in a specific way because they had been housed as a result of the grant of indefinite leave to remain to asylum seekers with children stuck in the backlog of cases, and, in many cases, had moved into private sector tenancies on potentially insecure contracts.

Community organisations had dealt with many housing problems. Within the north African communities, community groups estimate 45% are in council housing but 20% are in temporary accommodation, mostly private sector leases and 35% are staying with friends or relatives. Many of these latter are people faced with dispersal by the National Asylum Support Service, and they include significant numbers of families. Of those in permanent accommodation, the problems reported are of overcrowding and poor facilities or disrepair. There is also a lack of advice resources: no organisations currently receive funding to provide specific housing advice, advocacy or information for this group.

The Somali community groups told us of problems with overcrowding, sometimes caused by family reunion, but also by placement of families in homes that were always too small for them. Community associations cannot help with bidding at the frequencies needed to have any effective access to the choice based transfers system. At the other end of the scale, there is particular concern for single Somali women, whose vulnerability may not be recognised by local authorities when they become homeless (unless it is as a result of domestic violence), but who face

insuperable barriers to obtaining their own accommodation and may be in particularly unsafe situations when they cannot. Disrepair also causes problems for many Somali tenants. Language barriers deny them access to services, so urgent works may be delayed by as much as two weeks as interpreting is arranged. Similar language problems contribute to problems with benefits, where many Somali tenants find themselves with arrears caused when they were in temporary accommodation, or repaying “overpayments” made to landlords. One Somali community association now has an arrangement with a local advice centre who do a fortnightly outreach session for housing and benefits problems at their centre. Unfortunately the 6 appointments on offer are usually booked up within days.

Somalis face few routes out of their housing problems. Many know little about their options or rights and cannot, in any case, access them. Few will earn enough to consider buying even on low cost schemes, and when they do they face the further problem that many cannot use regular mortgages and need access to Islamic finance to do so, which even Somalis with UK degrees and well paid jobs find difficult because they are scarce (only two high street banks offer them) and demand a high deposit (sometimes 30%)<sup>19</sup>.

Advocacy providers told us of their belief that different council departments (social services, homeless services and housing management, for example) can be at loggerheads and that this can cause problems for their clients. They were also concerned that some vulnerable housing applicants (to various providers) had been treated in an insensitive or inappropriate way, causing them distress, or not had emergency needs dealt with in time. “To get them to change their mind you have to threaten legal action: they won’t budge otherwise” they said. And when they do they may still act inappropriately: an example cited was of one single woman now in a three bed temporary home where she cannot use the upper floors because of her disability.

Service users (including some of the IRIS user group) who need transfers told us that have nowhere to turn if they cannot use the internet or speak English and so cannot operate the bidding system: solicitors, Shelter and law centres will not usually take on these cases and they will be told to contact community groups, who generally cannot deal with them either.

Interpreting services in the borough are inadequate and inappropriate according to several informants. There is provision, it appears, for those making new applications: IRIS provides interpreters for direct service users and we were told they were also available via the homeless persons unit. However, people with emergency repairs have to wait a week or two to book a visit because the interpreting takes that long, and as noted above, those wanting transfers find it difficult or impossible to communicate their needs. Even those in touch with council services had problems negotiating the repairs and transfer systems. “We can phone, but only for the basic stuff; they ask us questions and we cannot respond”.

<sup>19</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4725459.stm> July 2005

One agency still had refugees on their caseload for whom they were still sorting out benefit problems from when ITNET ran housing benefit in Islington, paying back “overpayments” they may not owe from years ago. This, we were told, illustrated a more general problem of no effective access to services because people do not know what services should be offered in the first place and so have no expectation or sense of entitlement, or have no idea of who to contact, or have no access to material in their own languages on rents or other major concerns.



### Findings: Housing

#### New findings

Refugees found through the household survey and brokered interviews reported much greater housing needs than the general population and correspondingly greater dissatisfaction. The 61% wanting to move compares particularly badly with the 51% of Londoners fairly satisfied with their current home or the 36% of social tenants wanting to move. The reasons why refugees want to move were not explored in detail, and many may related to the insecurity of temporary or private sector housing. However, only two respondents said they were very satisfied with the help offered by their landlord in response to problems identified, so disrepair and other management problems also contribute to the desire to move.

Faced with such a high level of housing need, refugees have few ideas as to what to do about it. In some ways, this is not surprising, because the wider picture is that Islington residents generally face a crisis in the provision of affordable housing that no current provision will solve. Refugees however, are not even necessarily aware of that, because they face initial barriers to access and to information to support rational decision making. Many have little idea of the options they may have, or of where they may go to find out about them. This may account for the fact that almost none gave us positive reasons for moving, i.e. some form of aspiration in relation to housing. One aspect of this is that the bidding system introduced for transfers may have left some refugees, especially the more vulnerable, with fewer choices than before. Refugees also have little access to advice and advocacy in relation to housing: community organisations have not developed proactive work in this area, and are not well informed about it, there appears to be little use of the council housing aid service and no interviewees mentioned Shelter as an advice option, although it does run outreach sessions in Turkish on the borough fringe.

We could not draw any definite conclusions as to the relative presence of refugees in social housing compared with other Islington populations, because, as noted above, the output areas chosen to find interviewees were mostly areas with relatively high proportions of social housing. The greater presence of refugees in these areas, however, is not surprising, given the needs we found they had: low incomes, difficult employment prospects, poor health and high levels of disability. All of these make it difficult for refugees to make their own way in the housing market and so they are more likely to be reliant for longer on social housing providers.

### Challenges

If the refugee dissatisfaction with housing in Islington is to be addressed, clear information and available advice are the key. It is an unavoidable fact that a significant part of Islington's population will continue to face unacceptable levels of housing need and deprivation in the short to medium term. The aim of work with refugees should be that they are no more disadvantaged than others who are equally poor, unemployed or ill, that they understand what determines the lack of decent affordable housing in the borough and that they develop a perception that they are able to access services on equal terms and are treated fairly.

Housing problems are impossible to separate from other areas of people's lives, and the solutions to them may often lie in other areas as well. In the cases of those interviewed, the main linkages are with

- the high rate of disability and long term limiting illnesses among those interviewed, which reduces the choices people have in many areas of life;
- the need for more English language provision that would enable people to understand, participate and become active in determining the direction of their own lives, including making the right housing choices
- the need for adequate and appropriate interpreting and translation services
- the need for action on employment, which would allow refugees to see their way to buying a home or to get access to key worker schemes

In order to ensure that Islington's refugees get appropriate housing advice and information, it is vital to ensure that the relevant statutory services are properly informed, trained and supported. Central to delivering a service that engages with refugees' lives as they are lived in the borough is the need not only to build effective links with community organisations but also with others who may provide services to refugees such as employment, health and language teaching.

## Health and Social Services

### Literature and Other Research

According to the 2001 census, 18% of population of Islington live with long term limiting illnesses and 11% (the highest in London) report their health as “not good”. Research on refugee health has generally shown that refugees have a poorer standard of health than the rest of the population:

“From a health perspective, concern has been expressed that this population, who have been exposed to high levels of war and privation, and ongoing adversities during migration and settlement, will have high levels of health needs. Mobility and language barriers might make accessing health services difficult” (cited in Aldous et al)

Research on disabled people in refugee communities published in 2002 by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that

“Unmet personal care needs, unsuitable housing and a lack of aids and equipment were common among the 38 disabled refugees and asylum seekers interviewed. Other themes were: a lack of knowledge about their entitlements or how to get a community care assessment, communication difficulties and extreme isolation.”

The move towards a patient led NHS includes a programme “better information, better choices, better health” includes work “designed to improve how information reaches people and its usefulness, so they can make better choices and better manage their own health.” It is recognised that credible understandable information is crucial to this, and that interpreting and translated materials have an important role to play. Primary Care Trusts are expected to ensure that advice and information, especially about healthier lifestyles, reach all in their districts, but especially the populations most at risk or harder to engage.

The Islington draft refugee strategy covers health and social care: a strategic aim to “ensure the life chances of refugees are enhanced through the delivery of culturally sensitive health and social care provision” supported by priority actions to

- “Identify and breakdown barriers of access to health services through improving understanding of the workings of the health service for the refugee community
- Through a consultation process, identify means of enabling voluntary sector and faith groups to provide health advice and support to refugees”

### Points from Interviews

- All except one of those interviewed were registered with a GP (one had been told he was not entitled because of his status and one was only temporarily registered) and 34 had used hospital services for a family member in the last year.

- Levels of satisfaction with health services were high: 25 were satisfied or very satisfied, and five were very dissatisfied. One “had the best GP in the world”. “The GP is very near and he’s very kind with me because he knows I’m ill”. “All people in the health services are very friendly”. Several complained about waiting times for GP appointments, hospital services and A&E.
- Some, however, believed that their GPs had no time for them, did not check problems properly, or had failed to treat problems adequately. “Every time I have an appointment she doesn’t remember my name and I have to explain from the beginning”. “Doctors don’t explain, or maybe they don’t understand (what is wrong)”. “The GP doesn’t really listen to me and doesn’t suggest any treatment”.
- Asked to identify what the problems had been with GPs, some said that interpreters were not always used when needed, and were sometimes reported as no use at all. One interviewee told us that such an episode had resulted in a burn being treated wrongly and a subsequent infection and scar. “They give us a leaflet asking what languages we speak and then tell us it must be booked in advance anyway”. Some believed that failures to treat had resulted in continuing problems: one said they had become permanently disabled after being given painkillers instead of other medication, and had then tried to initiate legal proceedings but found it too difficult. Another interviewee believed that s/he had been inappropriately treated for a heart problem and now suffered very poor health and was taking legal advice. One wanted to change GPs but was worried about “bad and wrong information” following them. One recently arrived single man was very satisfied because “the good thing is that when I need an appointment, the GP books an interpreter for me: very efficient”. Another said the GP used phone interpreting services for his appointment.
- 28 out of 44 interviewees were registered with a dentist. There were complaints about the costs and the difficulties in finding a good dentist. No Chinese interviewees were registered with a dentist.
- 18 had had an eye test in the last year. Three had not needed one, but others did not respond to a question about this.
- Only six people were getting other health care or advice: from a diabetes clinic, from a gym (prescription for exercise from GP), from the Department of Health, from a private Turkish speaking doctor for which he had to pay “because the GP was not available,” from “very expensive” Chinese doctors in Chinatown, or from a community organisation.
- Five people got lifestyle advice and 21 did not: others were unsure what advice they might have got. “My doctor advised me to smoke 5 or 6 a day, well maybe he was telling me to cut down to that but maybe it is good for you. You have to be your own doctor. He never told me to quit”. Another had attended seminars about smoking. Two people got advice from health visitor or baby clinic, and one from the mental health services supporting her husband. One had advice from a nurse about weight, but one had no help from the GP on request. One got her health and lifestyle advice from the TV, another from her son. Generally people preferred to get such advice from the GP or health visitor.
- Health problems faced so far included diabetes, arthritis, asthma, blood pressure (I was very ill back home but I’m getting good treatments here and I’m improving

a lot”), heart problems, deafness, gallstones, osteoporosis, “blocked vein in brain”; stomach problems, sleep apnoea, depression, cataracts (needing spectacles for which he could not pay), disabilities and problems resulting from an attack in Islington, back problems, an unspecified problem for which a child would need an operation but about which the mother was scared, a kidney removed, psychiatric problems in treatment.

- Health was related to diet, stress and other factors, but interviewees hoped to control and stabilise illnesses and conditions. Information about available resources, diet etc would help.
- Seventeen used sports and leisure facilities and 16 did not. Several used them specifically for their children. They had faced few problems in accessing them, other than time, knowledge of facilities and the cost. One does physical exercises and meditation as part of spiritual observance. One found gyms etc “unnatural”: a separation of the physical and mental, and preferred to exercise naturally by working. One takes long walks with his children. One does not like doing sport. One family did not feel confident enough to use these services, although they had been in the UK since 1997. One believed that skin problems had been caused by dirty water in the swimming pool.
- Seven interviewees had contact with social services, one in the past. One, a very elderly lady of 84 living alone, said she would welcome such contact but had not had it. Three were very satisfied with the service and three very dissatisfied. One described it as a depressing experience that had made her angry. Another believed “They don’t care about us and don’t do anything to help”: the family had faced problems in accessing interpreting for services. Another said she found services unprofessional (she had been told she could get no money or benefits help from social services but offered £10 from the social worker’s own pocket). Another was told to contact her MP as the social worker could not challenge the council. One child had been looked after by the local authority while the mother was in hospital but there had been no subsequent contact. One talked of good communication and regular meetings but had not found out about the service when she needed it.

### Other Views or Comments

Community organisations were vocal in their concerns about primary care. Some interviewees reported good experiences with some GPs. GPs have access to free interpreters but our interviewees and community groups consulted believe that some do not use them, seeing it as a waste of time. Community groups are concerned that they are approached to have medicine labels translated and ask about side effects, and that if diagnosis and treatment are offered with no communication between doctor and patient this can lead to terrible mistakes. Some people working in community groups reported difficult experiences with GPs: “when we have a problem they don’t look at us they just write a prescription, for paracetamol or antibiotics: we call it refugee medicine”.

Interestingly, the concerns expressed by community groups give much more prominence to mental health problems, describing depression and anxiety as

endemic in some communities, with trauma and loss as underlying factors, but also believing that some people with complex and severe mental health problems do not seek or use help because of the stigma attached. Four refugee community organisations are funded to provide counselling in Islington and the borough is also the home of several national organisations developing work in the field of mental health and refugees.

Substance abuse (qat among Somalis, and a range of addictions among Maghrebis) and infectious illnesses (the lack of health checks for new arrivals risking the spread of conditions like TB) were the other two areas of concern named by community organisations. The interviewees, however, told us more about long term, often disabling, and chronic conditions such as diabetes and asthma, although they also told us about depression and psychiatric problems in their households.

In community organisations there appears to be low awareness of options and rights from social services, especially in relation to community care and support for carers. This is exacerbated by the fact that many refugees come from areas where social services do not exist and so need careful and appropriate explanations of what is involved. There is a perception that social services do not engage with or consult refugees or their communities. Particular concern was expressed about elders, who often have specific care needs which are not being met. They refuse to go into care homes and facilities because they would be isolated there, but cannot get home care services because they live in poor quality, overcrowded and insecure accommodation. Advocacy organisations told us that getting a community care assessment is extremely difficult and agencies often have to threaten legal action just to get one.



### Findings: Health and Social Services

#### New findings

The numbers of interviewees reporting use of hospitals (77% of households), long term illnesses, major health problems etc are very high in comparison to the general Islington population. Some of this may be due to the sampling (people at home during the daytime are more likely to be those who are ill or disabled). Some of the high hospital usage may be due to a preference for using hospitals for primary care, but this is also an indicator of some degree of failure by GP services to engender confidence in patients.

Our interviews give little indication of the prevalence of mental health problems in the relevant communities, nor were they likely to. The incidence of physical health problems (often accompanied by some degree of distress or depression), however, is notable.

#### Challenges

Given the numbers of people with complex and limiting problems, the low level of contact with some services for disabled people and their carers is of concern. It

would seem to be related to the problems getting adequate interpreting or delays or difficulties in getting community care assessments, and consequent access to appropriate care. There appears to be a relatively low level of contact with services for the disabled, those “needing care and attention” and their carers and this is a challenge given the high levels of need and isolation found here. The challenge is even greater when the incidence of mental health problems is also taken into account. Devising appropriate outreach and communication methods for this group presents a real challenge.

PCTs are now expected to ensure that all those in the locality have access to lifestyle and healthcare advice, and it appears that many refugees do not have any such access, although many of those interviewed would clearly benefit from it. Again, appropriate outreach and communication are needed to begin the process of determining how such advice may best be delivered.





## Community Involvement

### Literature and Other Research

Civic orientation and inclusion is also seen as an important aspect of integration in many studies (Attwood et al. 2003; EC 2004, Netherlands Ministry of Justice 2004). With the expansion in the number of refugees, attention has turned to the role of refugee community organisations (RCOs) and how well equipped and effective they are in supporting the needs of different groups of refugees (Zetter et al. 2004). They found in a study of RCOs in London, North West and the West Midlands that the sector was internally differentiated and “marked by structural instability, with a solid core of established organisations and surrounded by a periphery of semi-secure and insecure organisations and high turnover of organisations. They also found that funding was a fundamental organisational issue and that most had difficulties in providing matched funding with the exception of the refugee women’s organisations in London which had substantial funding. Most organisations were only able to provide advice on asylum claims and services and signposting to the statutory authority, while only a minority offered specialist services. Zetter and Pearl (2000) have argued that RCOs do not have the resources to be able to contribute to the longer term integration of refugees; all they can do is to fill the gap and meet essential needs rather than being actively engaged in the development of individual and community resources. Zetter et al. (2004) use the term resources to encompass a number of aspects including the material and symbolic rewards derived from participation in networks involving RCOs and the skills and capacities of particular groups, including their degree of internal coherence. Access to these resources determined their capacity to develop effective community organisations, and their willingness or not to be part of formal agency structures.

It is within this context that we should consider the role of RCOs in supporting refugees and facilitating their community involvement. We have therefore distinguished in this section between those refugees found through the street survey and those found via refugee and other organisations.

One of the main questions looked at in a recent report on community cohesion in Islington was about the ability to influence the Council. Few people among their respondents felt strongly able to influence Council decisions. Almost two thirds did not feel particularly able to influence decisions with 37% endorsing not at all strongly as a response to this question.

The LBI Refugee Integration Strategy seeks to:

- identify the capacity building of refugee community organisations, and work in partnership to ensure that RCOs are enabled to participate fully in council decision making processes, and in delivery of services
- identify the potential contribution of refugees in terms of skills and expertise, and the positive influences on the wider social sphere

### Points from Interviews

Interviews through refugee and other organisations  
In the past month, of all households (23)

- All had visited friends or family
- Eight had used local parks
- Eight had used the Library
- Ten had visited a religious place
- Nine had helped a relative or friend
- Only one had visited a tenants association
- Only two had gone to the PTA (but this group has few children of school age)
- Seven had gone to community organisations
- Seven had gone to a local community centre
- Eight had done unpaid voluntary (two with the elderly), and one would like to, and one was teaching their language to English people.
- One had used a gym/sporting facility
- Six had attended adult education centres

### Interviews through Street Survey

In the past month, of 21 households:

- All had visited friends
- Eleven had been involved in schools
- Eleven had been to religious places
- None had contact with tenants organisations
- Ten had used the Library
- Seven had used Adult Education
- Six had used gym or sports facilities
- Three had gone to community organisations
- Three did unpaid voluntary work and one would like to help but does not know how

In relation to the ability to influence the Council,

- Ten said they couldn't influence the Council
- Twelve said they didn't know if they could or not
- Four that they could and have done so with their neighbours or others but not on their own, and for one this depended on the issue
- Three mentioned language as stopping them altogether trying to influence or contest decisions or only being able to do so with the help of neighbours
- One couldn't get involved because of ill health
- Four said they could influence the Council and did not state that it had to be in conjunction with others but all were from the organisation interviews
- Five had influenced decisions, three of these were from the organisation interviews.
- One said that they didn't want to



### Other Views or Comments

Our contacts and discussions with a number of RCOs in the borough revealed a range of capacities to tap funding. Some had a solid organisation and paid workers; others were finding it difficult to obtain funding. In some cases the fragmentation and competition between RCOs serving the same nationality led to a thin spread of resources. Many refugees do not use RCOs and may be completely unaware of the existence of them in their locality

Participants in the IRIS user forum led active social lives both in their own ethnic or religious community (Alevite and Catholic) and with other migrants. They were involved in school activities with one being active in the parents association and others going to parents evening, and friends made via children's schools had provided references for citizenship. They didn't go to tenants associations even when they were locally active because they don't understand meetings and no interpreters are available. They "say hello" to English people but not more than that. Two of the attendees were members of the library. Few had experience of racism (unlike that experienced by one in Glasgow) and no one visited the countryside despite some of them originating from rural areas



### Findings: Community Involvement

#### New findings

There is a great deal of social interaction with friends and family among all our interviewees and many have helped relatives and friends.

There is considerable use of places such as libraries and adult education institutes for ESOL. Parents were heavily involved with schools and appreciated the information given out and the presence of interpreters. Tenants associations, however, were seen as unwelcoming.

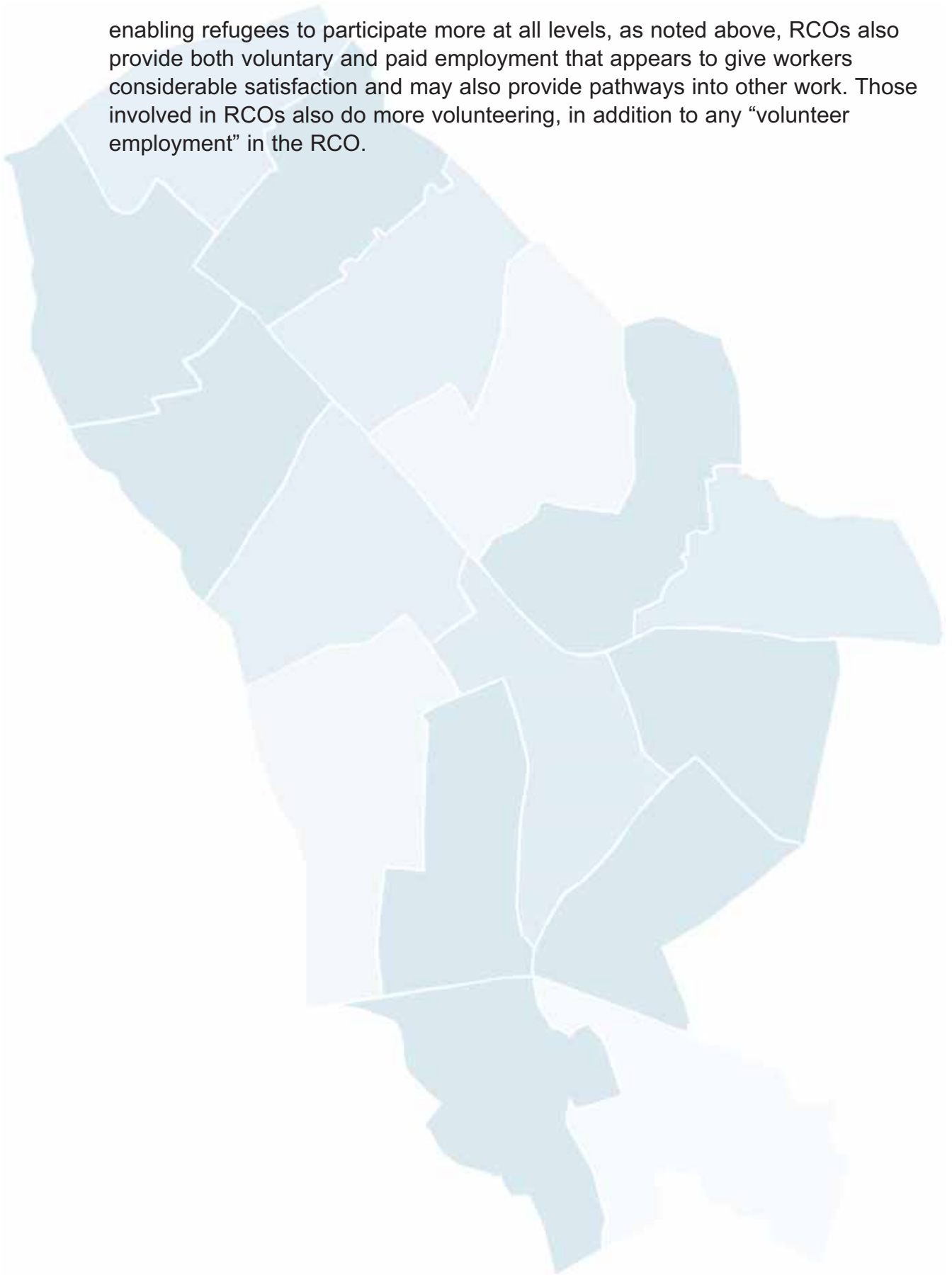
Involvement in RCOs gave more people a belief that they could have some influence on the Council. But overall only ten interviewees (about a fifth) said they could not influence council decisions (compared with over a third of those asked in a different survey from a panel drawn from all borough residents). In other words, although all refugees appear to have more positive views about local policymaking, among those interviewed, it appears that participation in RCOs encourages them to believe that they can influence what happens locally, and enables them to understand "the system" better.

Voluntary work was done much more by people already involved in organisations. This contrasts quite strongly with those found through the street survey and indicates that those who already work as volunteers, or are actively employed, often do additional voluntary work as well.

#### Challenges

It is within this context that we should consider the role and potential of RCOs in supporting refugees and facilitating their community involvement. As well as

enabling refugees to participate more at all levels, as noted above, RCOs also provide both voluntary and paid employment that appears to give workers considerable satisfaction and may also provide pathways into other work. Those involved in RCOs also do more volunteering, in addition to any “volunteer employment” in the RCO.



## Neighbourhood and Social Contact

### Literature and Other Research

There is a considerable body of research on people's views of neighbourhood and neighbours, and more is underway looking at the specific experiences of migrants. The extensive body of work on community cohesion emphasises the importance of "parallel lives" in undermining such cohesion. LB Islington commissioned a survey from BMG to look at community cohesion in the borough in 2005. The survey was conducted over the telephone with members of the Islington Residents' Panel, and included the views of 283 people. Most questions focused on the obvious core areas involving cohesion, which found significant differences in attitude by gender and age group. In general in terms of community cohesion, respondents felt local people got on well together regardless of differences of age, type of accommodation, ethnic background, sexuality and disability. However people over 55 years old were less likely to understand the needs of people from a different ethnic background and those who lived in different types of housing. More than half of the sample viewed the introduction of migrants (defined, oddly, by the survey organisation as "asylum seekers") as positive, particularly in relation to employment, whilst a quarter viewed it as negative, primarily for its impact on housing and health services.

- Two thirds of the sample felt they were unable to influence local decisions
- The sample on average believed the borough to be reasonably welcoming to migrants
- 17% had their home broken into in the last year and 7% had witnessed such a break in
- 27% had been the victims of verbal abuse in a public place and 11% had witnessed it
- 6% had been physically attacked in a public place
- 53% had reported all the crimes they had experienced or witnessed, and 28% had reported none.
- 81% do not do unpaid voluntary work, and of those that do such work, 47% do less than 2 hours per week

The other aspect of life in the borough looked at in the interviews was how safe people felt. In the British Crime Survey for 2001/2<sup>21</sup> 13% of respondents said they felt very unsafe walking alone in their area after dark, and 19% a bit unsafe. In response to the same question, the London Household Survey reported 6% of respondents feeling unsafe walking in the neighbourhood in the day and 30% at night.

### Points from the Interviews

Our research asked about the extent to which refugees had social contact and interacted with British people.

- Very few had British friends as opposed to knowing some British people.
- Their close relationships (visiting, advice, help) tended to be with co-ethnics/nationals, and for some, faith groups. Few people specifically mentioned having friends on the basis of shared faith though two had met British through a faith community.
- Some comments:
  - Voluntary advice worker/student:  
“Doesn’t have relationships with people in neighbourhood. Doesn’t feel she is Muslim so doesn’t have relationships with faith community. Knows British people with whom she shares interests and ideas but for quality time prefers from her own community or other Mediterranean whose lifestyle is the same and easier to be oneself.”
  - One young person noted:  
“Local people get on irrespective of ethnic background. The majority are the minority and ethnic communities have built a different society.”
- However one respondent (fluent in English) had made a considerable effort to get to know his neighbours, saying:  
“In the beginning neighbours were a bit suspicious , because you’re an African refugee etc. so I started to knock on their doors and say “hello, I’m your new neighbour, why don’t you come over to my place for a cup of tea...Now I’ve some good friends from the neighbourhood: African, English...from every background.”
- Weak links with a work place had implications for friendships with British people. As one person, who had made friends with those in the ESOL class and other nationalities, commented:  
“It’s hard to know British people if you don’t work”
- Responses to questions about whether local people got on well irrespective of their ethnic background and whether Islington in general was welcoming to new people generally elicited positive answers. Several said they neither agreed nor disagreed. Some said they spoke personally but could not comment how others felt. Two specifically mentioned the Council as being helpful.
- Two of the three Chinese felt they were discriminated against.
- When asked what would help them to get more involved in the local community, respondents gave a variety of responses:
  - Four would need more time (three from the organisation interviews)
  - Eight felt language to be a barrier
  - Two valued Sure Start
  - One had problems with accommodation
  - One needed to get a job first
  - One that they did not have the time

- One needed child care
- One wanted friends to go with
- One wanted more information
- One wanted a more stable situation
- One wanted paid outings

### Community Safety

The BMG Report asked respondents about crime in the area. Almost a third claimed to be the victim of a crime in the past year and fifth to have had their home burgled. Around a third claimed to have been the victim of verbal abuse but physical assaults due to ‘skin colour, ethnic origin, religion or sexuality’ proved less common. Amongst our sample, however, such assaults were much more common.

Amongst our interviewees, many had witnessed incidents or had experienced aggression. A common comment was that the police had done very little.

- Only one person felt unsafe during the day but 20 felt that it was unsafe at night and generally that they did not go out alone at this time.
- Four had been burgled or had something like a purse stolen and two had witnessed it
- Three had a car stolen and two had witnessed it
- Six had been physically assaulted and one so badly that they were now disabled and unable to work and two had seen it or had a friend who had been assaulted. Another person reported her son had been attacked at school and taken to hospital for treatment. The same person cited muggings of elderly people and boys fighting with guns, but had not reported it to police “because it was too dangerous. Commented that police were unhelpful, especially because of one’s imperfect English.”
- Five had been insulted in the street or a public place, some of these insults were by other minority ethnic groups. “It could be difficult for a person to respond because their English was not good enough”.

### Other Views or Comments

Those working in community centres said they heard lots of stories about people being victims of attacks and insults, and some had faced it themselves. The position of refugee run organisations within the wider voluntary and community sector often reflected the lack of contact that refugees had with neighbours and others: they also felt isolated and sometimes marginalised.

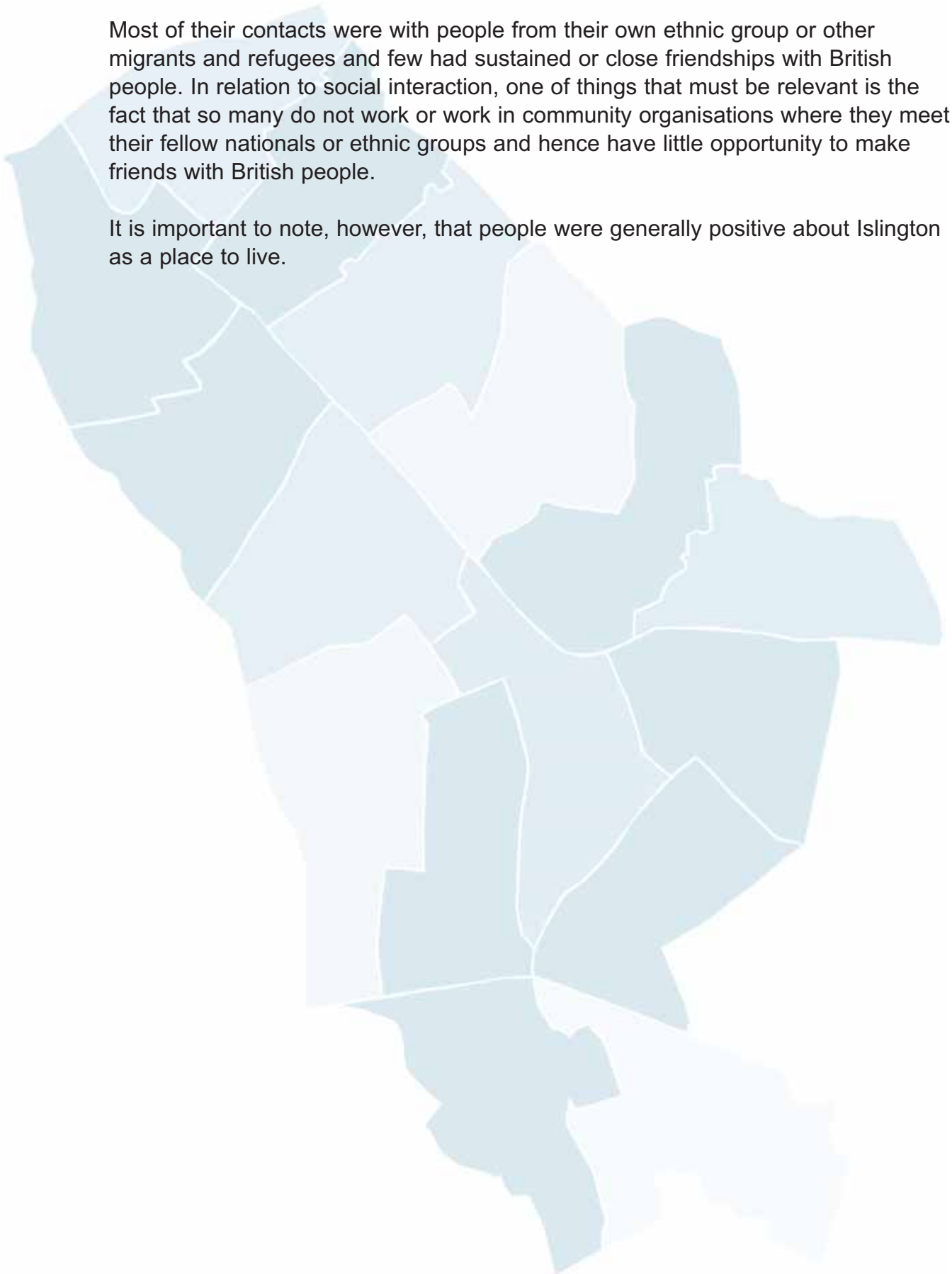
### Findings: Neighbourhood and Social Contact

#### New findings

Unsurprisingly a much higher proportion than in the BMG study had been insulted or physically attacked, often because of their ethnicity or race. Imperfect command of the language can be a problem in being taken seriously by police and has an effect on whether they continue to report incidents.

Most of their contacts were with people from their own ethnic group or other migrants and refugees and few had sustained or close friendships with British people. In relation to social interaction, one of things that must be relevant is the fact that so many do not work or work in community organisations where they meet their fellow nationals or ethnic groups and hence have little opportunity to make friends with British people.

It is important to note, however, that people were generally positive about Islington as a place to live.



## Aspirations

Refugees were asked to identify their hopes and fears on arrival and now, and the factors that would help or hinder them in achieving their aspirations. We believe that it is important here to report the voices of those who gave their time and thought to the interviews we conducted, and so have chosen largely to simply quote them. We asked interviewees about their general hopes and fears, about what they had hoped on arrival in the UK, what they saw as barriers to achieving their aspirations and what had helped or might help.

### Hopes and Problems

Restaurant owner – has had a chance to rebuild life without psychological damage but it has been an effort due to lack of money and status

Algerian – had been in prison and is now safe but has serious health problems which preoccupy him

Moroccan – “I expected as a woman to get more rights and freedom and chances to get higher education, to feel more useful to myself and society.... Refugees should be helped more, but above all they should help their families more too. I mean, my husband got refugee status (I didn't) and he received more help than me and my daughter' (She has indefinite leave to remain).

Iraqi single male- biggest problem in achieving aspirations is racial discrimination. They should stop portraying asylum seekers negatively as criminals. Should have equal rights.

Somali single man: I came here to fulfil my aspirations: a good education, a good job...and I think I've done well, I'm happy with what I've achieved so far.

Somali family: I wanted a good education but I haven't achieved it so far because of my health but I'm happy about my children who are doing well.

The most common issues raised were being safe here and the well-being of children. What they would like would be better English language teaching, accommodation, a good job or simply to start work and to improve health.

### Hopes on Arrival

#### No idea:

Did not know what to expect

I had no idea, just questions, and wanted to find out

When I arrived everything looked strange and different, I thought “I'll never be able to travel by tube or bus” but now its fine: I like life here

I don't know...I just hoped life would have been better here and it is. Life is very good here and I'm happy to be here

**Safety:**

Peace and safety in the community

Chance to stay alive, to survive

Not sure of chances, a lack of direction but to be safe from the police and the state

I just wanted to flee the war,...I was looking for a safe place

**Normality/peace:**

I hoped for a comfortable life and a peaceful one.

Live a normal life

I was very sick and depressed; now I feel in far better spirit. All I wished for was living in peace, in harmony with neighbours, having a decent house.

I wanted to live a better life, in a place where I could practise (my religion): I knew London was more "liberal" than (my home country) and I'm very happy I can distribute leaflets without any problem here

There was war in my country and I was just looking for a peaceful place and I found it here

I looked for a place to live in peace and I also hoped to study and get a good job, but my health made this much more difficult and I got demoralised. But now I'm a bit more confident about the future.

Rights and freedom

**Better chances:**

Chances for education

Chance to rebuild life

To become British

Chances for the children

To be able to work in UK

Improvements in health

My expectations were good, and I have been accepted by the government and have indefinite leave to remain so I am happy and have everything I need, everything is fine

I don't know: I just wanted to work, but now I don't know what will happen and I'm not very confident about my future

I came here because I wanted a good job and earn a lot of money....now I think I could stay here many years for the good of my children, other times I wish I could go back....

I thought it would be easy to set myself up, get the children over here and get back to normal. I was surprised that it has been so difficult.

I thought about my son and hoped he could get a good education

I just wanted a better life for my children; that's all a father should think about, the best for his children.

**Problems in Achieving Aspirations****Racism:**

I thought getting a good job was quite easy if you had the skills but it isn't true. A lot of people are racist here, especially employers. A girl from the jobcentre told me

that if they employ me employers should get insurance against terrorist bombing and that's why they don't want me. And once I started a new job and the employer called all the others in and said "look everybody, this is our new worker, he is a refugee, a refugee understand?" why did he have to do that? Everyone looked strangely at me

Being labelled: you're black, you're Muslim, you're refugee; being blamed for things like 9/11 and so on. It is much more difficult to achieve what you want, find the job that you want; but sometimes it is also hard to say something bad happens to you and you think this is because I'm stereotyped and maybe it just happened and you are stereotyping yourself and your own condition

**Difference:**

Doors are always closed here. In Ethiopia we leave them open

The weather was difficult at first but now I prefer winter to summer

When you come here very young you have this mental image of the west from the Hollywood movies, beautiful buildings, nice people etc. it was a shock for me when I realised that the reality was much different; it took a year to understand it and understand how things work here

Not being UK born is a limitation...some communities have stronger links with the UK and are more of a priority, others...are less "important". But it is not something against me or us, it is just how the system works.

**Lack of help/resources:**

The families of refugees should be helped more

We had no money, I had to borrow money for our wedding, we didn't even have a tape recorder to play music on, then our son arrived, it has been a hard struggle but it is fine now

Accommodation

Accommodation, the lack of space, no way of controlling other factors as I could at home

**Personal problems:**

Health problems

Children getting involved with the wrong people or "going off the rails"

My health problems: I don't think I can blame anything or anybody in this country like the council, the people etc.

I've got problems with my house, health problems, but at the end of the day I'm happy here

**Immigration problems:**

Temporary leave and problems with leave

Sometimes I think I've done the wrong thing. After four years I haven't got refugee status, no job, no home and I don't know what will happen to me. I always hear the news about deportations and I'm so scared. If I go back now ...they could kill you and your family. If I could go back....I would, because life here is a nightmare: it's not like war but it's something very subtle, something you cannot escape.

I'm only worried about the asylum application; wouldn't know what to do if I don't get the status. I'm afraid that they might put me in prison again. This is the only thing that I am worried about. As for the rest, life is easy here.

**Language and understanding:**

In the beginning it was very hard here, it takes time to understand how things work, but I'm improving

In the beginning I was a bit confused, didn't know the language, the system etc. but now its much better and I'm improving and I'm confident I'll continue to improve

Trying to understand how the system works in the UK

Language is the most difficult thing here: that's why I'm dedicating myself to study English; if I can deal with it all the rest will be fine.

**What will help you achieve in the future?**

**Language and understanding:**

Language

Language is the main problem: it makes everything else more difficult. If I knew English the rest would be easy

**Solving immigration problems:**

Sort out leave to remain

British passport

I'm just waiting for the British passport, after that everything will be fine

**Self help:**

I don't wait for others, I get on with it

Have lived in different rules and conditions in my own country. Here it is much clearer. If you ask for help or information then it is given so just being in UK has made difference to my achievement, being free

My hopes that my children will be socially useful and minded to be so

Housing/money/work:

Financial security: "getting off benefits with all that paperwork and stress...would like to get rich but health comes first. Humans are rich in health but always want other things"

Work

A decent home

**Wider social changes:**

A better social environment, better relationships between different communities

The news should stop telling all those bad lies about refugees and asylum seekers, "we are criminals", "we don't want to work" and so on. We should have equal rights and be allowed to work according to our skills and aspirations so we could integrate and help this society. Some refugees become criminals because they cannot find a job and nobody helps them"

Healthy and safe environment

(Worried about Islamophobia especially after the London bombings)...but I think things are going a bit better now.

**Optimism:**

Just want to be happy, with health and a peaceful life and live like a normal human being, and for children to grow up in respectful society

I want to be given an opportunity to participate in things, to do things in terms of my career and business, to be given a break and to be able to develop as a person, and then to integrate.

Life is OK here

I see things are improving in my life and I'm optimistic

I feel at home here now and I don't see any real problem: it's a safe country

I don't know.... I don't know about the future...maybe I'll be dead tomorrow! All I know is today and today is good for me.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

Islington is home to a very diverse refugee population, which is likely to grow. This growth, however, will probably be due more to the birth of new children and the arrival of family members or friends of those already settled in the borough than to significant numbers of new arrivals moving into the borough independently. This diversity creates particular challenges for local service providers, especially in the statutory sector. It demands a sophisticated understanding of the many communities and people described as “refugees” and a fine grained approach to both monitoring and delivery.

The borough is not home to the largest population of any single significant ethnic or national group, but has several who are present in enough numbers to be considered in any planning or consultation exercises. The four largest groups identified by the census country of birth information also feature in the information collected about languages in schools, and “map” quite differently in the borough. Two groups, Turks/Kurds and Latin Americans, are spread across the borough much more evenly and also represent communities with a mix of refugees and some other migrants. Somalis, on the other hand, are the fastest growing community, more concentrated in the north and south west of the borough (next to Camden where there is a major concentration) and almost entirely comprising refugees. North Africans/Maghrebis focus on Finsbury Park, and have scattered groups elsewhere in the borough. Within this overall growth, some refugee communities in Islington may decline over the next few years, and it is possible this process has started among the Albanian/Kosovar community, for example. This emphasises the need to continue collecting and considering quite detailed and useful monitoring data gained from sources like those used in this report to enable borough planning to deal with real needs and decision makers to engage with communities as they change.

In many respects, Islington’s refugees have remarkably similar aspirations to those held by most Islington people: to be settled, to be safe, to see their children grow up safely, to get work commensurate with their skills. They are not, however, starting from the same place. In order to access services, deal with their children’s needs, get employment or training they need to be able to speak English and it is clear that many, even those who have been here for many years, have not been able to learn the language. Almost all those who have difficulties managing in English would welcome more opportunities to learn, but many face quite complex difficulties in accessing or maintaining studies. It is clear that these cannot be overcome by a single agency: thought must be given to developing partnerships between those with whom even this more isolated group have contact (schools and health services, for example), the community organisations who may offer expert knowledge, the training providers (principally City and Islington College) and the integration service. Without urgent attention to the problem of ESOL, many of Islington’s refugees will stay isolated, unable to manage their health care, unemployable and not even able to become citizens.

Those who form part of refugee community organisations, even if they are just using their services, tend to know about more services, use them more effectively and believe more in their capacity to influence local decision-making (even more so than the average Islington resident). Those who do not, while they may have a rich network of friends or family members from within their own communities, tend to lead quite isolated and often difficult lives. We cannot comment on the relationship of cause and effect here between the very high levels of health problems and disability reported by those refugees we found through the street survey and their relative isolation.

The core areas identified by the refugee strategy and the priority actions proposed would go a considerable way to removing some of the barriers identified by refugees themselves. We have therefore chosen not to produce a long list of recommendations, but to highlight a few options to promote effective integration that involve work across several of the identified domains and relate specifically to the issues identified in the findings.



### **Mapping and Involving all Islington's Communities**

The arrival and presence of refugee communities in the borough presents a challenge to local services to collect and use the data they require to ensure that services reach those in need. The four communities identified as most numerous within the borough's refugee populations (Turkish/Kurdish, Latin American, Somali and Maghrebi/North African) should be incorporated in all types of monitoring undertaken by all borough services. These groups also cover many major languages spoken by a range of refugee groups. Services offered at borough, neighbourhood or ward levels should take particular note of the presence of significant numbers of certain communities in their patch, and establish performance measurements for engagement with them, as users and as decision-makers. Via the Local Strategic Partnership, other statutory and voluntary service providers should be encouraged to do the same. The work of CEA in not only identifying but also engaging some of these communities, and in putting the knowledge and experience so gained to use in raising achievement in schools is a model that other services could follow.

It should be emphasised that this is not a simple question of adding a few new categories to existing monitoring, but a need to develop a dynamic process of review and engagement to ensure that as new communities emerge they are included. Some of the smaller communities, especially those newly arrived from particularly traumatic situations, may have particularly high levels of need, and smaller communities face additional barriers to access generally because they may not have organisations capable of advocating or mediating for them, or even trained interpreters available in relevant languages.

The baseline figure of 5 – 10% of Islington's population is available for use in measuring the performance of services across the board in attracting service users from Islington's refugees.



### Citizenship and ESOL

The borough should welcome the positive desire of so many refugees to become citizens and note that this bodes very well for community interaction. City and Islington College offers a well-regarded ESOL curriculum to many residents. However, the new regulations will lead to considerable numbers becoming further excluded unless action is taken to enable them to learn English to the required levels. Funding should be sought to build a borough-wide partnership to promote and enable citizenship among those who may find it harder to attain because of their current difficulties in accessing and maintaining ESOL. The partnership should include RCOs as well as IRIS, City and Islington College and other service providers who may be able to help with access to the more isolated refugees or imaginative ways to secure their continued learning. The fact that an investment now in enabling refugees to reduce significantly their dependence on interpreters and other intermediaries will lead to considerable future savings could form a part of such funding.



### Refugees with Multiple and/or Complex Needs

Refugees with disabilities and long term limiting illnesses are more likely to be isolated, will need more services, may find coordination and access difficult and may suffer multiple layers of exclusion and deprivation. The lack of contact with and knowledge of appropriate services is of concern given the levels of need identified among this group. They also require a coordinated approach to their needs that also enables them to take control of their health and care needs as much as possible. This should form the basis of discussion among the main agencies and organisations with an interest: social care and health services, refugee organisations (especially those with specialisms in disabilities or care needs) and interpreting or other agencies enabling access. Options to be discussed should include

- A coordinated approach to identifying refugees with multiple needs and ensuring that contact with any one agency enables referrals and contact to be made with others offering care, treatment, support, etc
- The involvement of refugees in any expert patient programmes to date, the potential for their future involvement, and for the development of a model based on these for an “expert refugee patient programme” that would also help them meet and develop support networks with other refugees as well as understand and manage their health and related needs, develop an knowledge of how services, referrals and other provisions “fit together”, understand differences between UK health care models and others, learn about entitlements to health care in relation to immigration status and build necessary vocabulary.
- The options for developing the health advocacy model across social care, bringing together the roles of interpreters and care/case managers and/or enabling the provision of dedicated interpreters to individuals or families, working across all services (a “patient/user centred” service), and enabling refugees to make appointments, deal with emergencies etc
- The ways in which the PCT can meet its targets for the delivery of healthcare

and lifestyle advice to this “difficult to reach” group in particular, and to refugees in general, and the role that other agencies can play in helping them achieve this



### **Interpreting, Access, Outreach and Service Use**

The updating of monitoring of service use and access to include the main refugee communities is likely to provide further evidence of poor uptake and satisfaction levels with some services. As choice becomes more significant in service delivery across the board, the risk that some refugees become a choice free underclass is increased. The borough and other providers also have statutory responsibilities to provide or enable the provision of some services (such as housing advice) and to ensure that access to services is effective and non-discriminatory. Each service of importance to refugees should review current access arrangements in this light.

We understand that a review of interpreting services is currently underway and believe that our findings indicate both significant under-use of the services available and some dissatisfaction with them in terms of access, knowledge of their availability, and user perception of their quality. They remain, however, a key resource. Public services should consider the possibility of setting aside regular, frequent and publicised blocks of interpreter time to enable users to enquire about options and to have effective choices. These could be used, for example, to book repairs, bid for vacancies or explore low cost home ownership options in housing, or to find out about employment advice available in the borough.

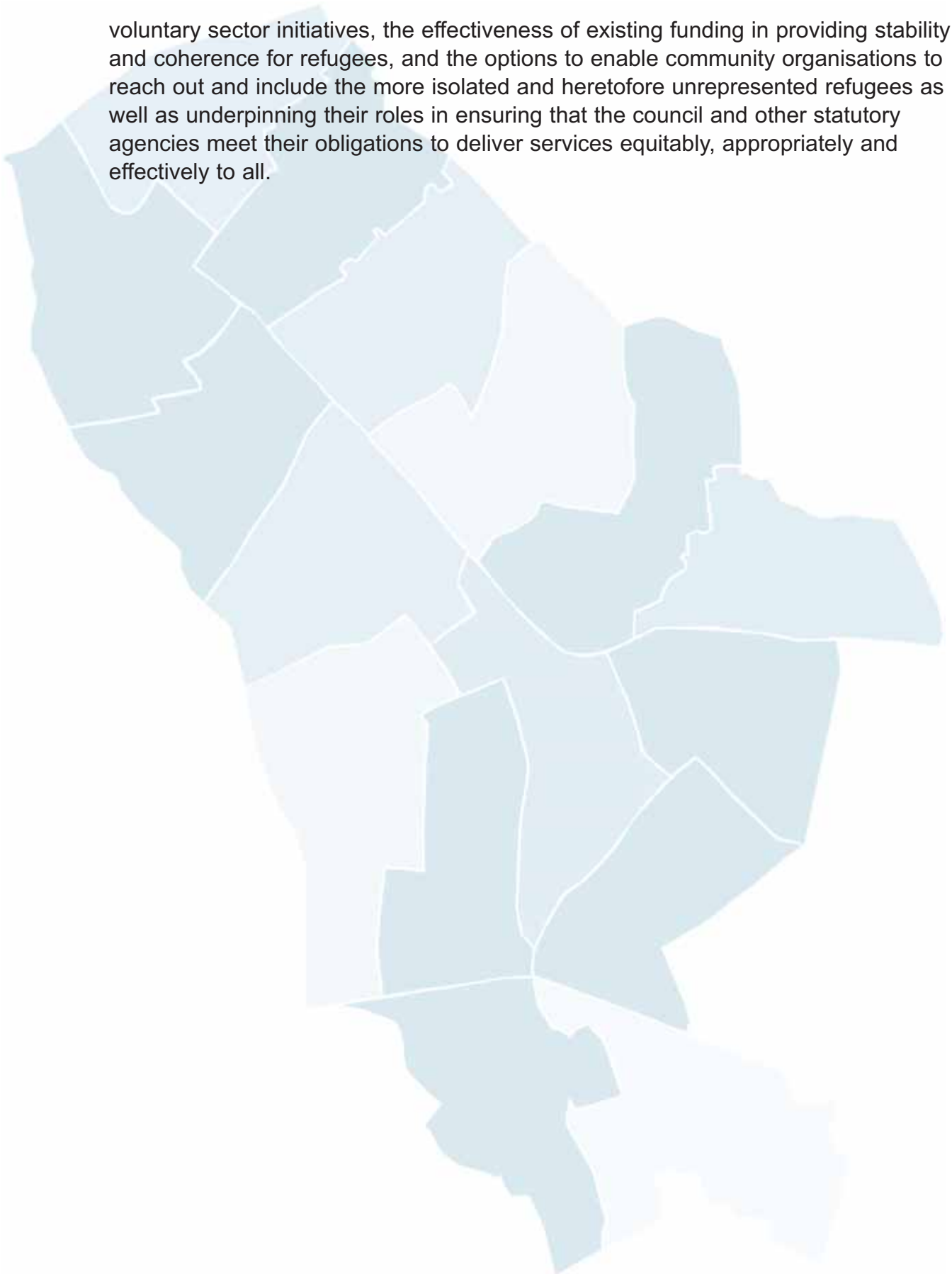
All public services should also review statistics on their use annually in the light of refugee needs and usage, preferably in partnership with refugee organisations, with a view to experimenting with alternative arrangements to improve take up where that is indicated as necessary. One option already in place in some cases is the development of surgeries based within refugee organisations. Another is an energetic programme of outreach developed with those involved in the refugee forum and incorporating the publication of information about key issues in relevant languages and formats. The development of a basic “Welcome to Islington” pack similar to that now in use in Tower Hamlets should also be considered, integrating existing literature and reviewing its usefulness to all new migrants into the borough.



### **Refugee Organisations**

It is difficult to disentangle the relatively low participation in and knowledge of refugee organisations in the borough from the chronic under-funding, instability and consequent relative lack of impact of those organisations. They do, however, represent a key resource in the borough, along with the Refugee Forum. The knowledge and experience they can offer is invaluable, and they should be included as valued partners in decision-making and consultation. However, this cannot happen if they are not adequately funded and supported. We understand that there is a review of borough funding of community organisations due to take place soon, and would recommend that it examines the inclusion of refugee organisations in

voluntary sector initiatives, the effectiveness of existing funding in providing stability and coherence for refugees, and the options to enable community organisations to reach out and include the more isolated and heretofore unrepresented refugees as well as underpinning their roles in ensuring that the council and other statutory agencies meet their obligations to deliver services equitably, appropriately and effectively to all.





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- Migrant Organisations Development Agency
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- PRAXIS
- Refugee Housing Association
- Refugee Therapy Centre
- Shelter
- Graham Smith, CEA
- Somali Speakers Association
- Somali Welfare Centre
- Kate Tansley, Age Concern Islington
- Kassa Tsegaye, LBI

# Appendix 1

## Table of Interviewees

### KEY

<b>M</b>	Male	<b>UND</b>	Unemployed and disabled or long term sick
<b>F</b>	Female	<b>PT</b>	Part time
<b>BC</b>	British citizen	<b>FT</b>	Full time
<b>ILR</b>	Indefinite leave to Remain	<b>E</b>	Employed
<b>ELR</b>	Exceptional forms of Leave to Remain	<b>S</b>	Studying
<b>UNL</b>	Unemployed and looking	<b>DK</b>	Don't know

Group	Family Composition	Arrival	BC/status	Like to Employ	Employment	
<b>STREET SURVEY</b>						
1	Turkish	39F, 46M, 17,15	1999	ILR applied BC	Applied	UNL, E(PT)
2	Kurdish	44F, 47M, 3,5, 22	99, 98	ILR		UN, E(PT)
3	Colombian	36F, 30M,8,10, 2ws	96	BC		UN, FT
4	Kosovar	43M, 40F,11,8,5,8m	99	ILR like BC	Yes	S
5	Eritrean	54F,20,16 +3 away	1990	BC		UND
6	Turkish	28F, 33M, 6,4	1995	BC		UN, E(PT)
7	Turkish	31F,38M, 12,8,5	1992, 89	BC		UN, UND
8	Ethiopian	31F, 5,2	1999	BC		S
9	Somali	29F,70,35M,10,7,1,6m	99,03	ILR applied	Applied	UL
10	Ecuador	24F,46Moth,52 Fath	1996	ELR like	Yes	S
11	Afghanistan	30M, 24F,4,3,1	2000	BC		UNL
12	Somali	33F,35M,8,6,5,5mths	1992,94	BC		UL bus
13	Turk. Alevi	37M,30F, 11,5	1997	BC		UND
14	Somali	28M,45Aunt,18,15,7,4	96,94 aunt	BC		E
15	Ethiopian	33F,10, 3, 20mths	1995	BC		UN
16	Kosovar	34M, 27F, 5,3,1,	1999	ELR poss	Possibly	UND liketo
17	Congolese	40M, 34F, 9,7,3,	91, 92	BC		UL

18	Turk/Kurd	33F, 38M,14,12	1999	BC		UND
19	Colombian	54F, 55M	92,04	BC		UL
20	Turk/K	37M,32F,10,6,1	1990	BC		UND
21	Ethiopian	38, 50, 18, 16, 7	2001.2003	ILR yes	Yes	UL

### ORGANISATION/VENUE INTERVIEWS

1	Eritrean	49F 5 children	1998	ELR like ILR	refl LR	E
2	Algerian	53M,44F,23,21,17,16	1997	BC		
3	Iraqi	29M	1993	ELR yes	Yes	UL
4	Morocco	41F, 3 divorced	1996	ILR yes	Yes	E
5	Iraqi Kurd	20F, 58 Mother	1994	BC		S
6	Iraqi Kurd	49M,41F,62 (mother),19,17,15,10	1992	BC		
7	Iraqi Kurd	37M, 30F	1990	BC		E(RCO)
8	Algerian	35M,32F,8,7,1	2004	Waiting appeal		
9	Zimbabwe	43F,18,12	2000,05	ILR		
10	Sierra Leone	84 F	1991	ILR		
11	Congo	37M	2001	appealing		
12	Somali	43,38,11,8,6,4	1997	BC		UL
13	Somali	35	1996	BC		E (RCO)
14	Somali	38F,9,8	2000	ILR applied	applied	
15	Somali	60F	2002	ILR yes	Yes	
16	Somali	48M	2002	ILR yes	Yes	
17	Chinese	37F, 16, 2UKborn	2003	ILR DK	Don't know	
18	Chinese	39F	2004	Waiting DK	Don't know	
19	Chinese	41M,15, 2 Born here	1999	Waiting yes	Yes applied	

20	Turkish/Kurd	31F, 32	2003	Waiting Of course	
21	Kosovar	29F,32, 7,6,5,	1999	ILR yes applied	Yes applied
22	Kosovar	24F, 8,5, Born here	1999	BC	
23	Kosovar	33(2000), 41(1999)9	2000	ILR yes applied	Yes applied

### Household Totals

Turkish	4
Turkish/Kurdish	4
Congolese	2
Kosovar	5
Eritrean	2
Colombian	2
Ethiopian	3
Somali	8
Ecuador	1
Afghanistan	1
Iraqi/Kurdish	3
North African	3
Zimbabwean	1
Sierra Leone	1
Iraqi	1
Chinese	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>

## Appendix 2

### Street Survey Results

#### Streets survey statistics – numbers

Code	Output Areas											Total	
	BunHill	Caledonian		Finsbury Park			Mildmay		St. Peters	Tollington		numbers	%
<b>Total Rows</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>1,888</b>	
<b>EXCLUDED FROM SURVEY<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>233</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>625</b>	
ACCESS PROBLEM	76	0	0	0	1	2	1	30	85	95	6	296	
NOT DONE YET	29	0	1	10	1	1	4	12	0	0	4	62	
NON RESIDENTIAL	41	3	21	14	5	4	7	28	3	4	35	165	
WORKS IN PROGRESS	87	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	91	
NOT OCCUPIED	0	0	0	4	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	11	
<b>DOORS KNOCKED</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>1,263</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>NON IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>68.8</b>
NO ANSWER	86	94	157	72	37	45	58	36	43	30	131	789	62.5
NO OPEN	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	1	0	0	2	9	0.7
NOT INTERESTED	5	3	2	9	11	10	11	5	0	2	0	58	4.6
NO ADULT	0	0	0	3	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	8	0.6
NO ENGLISH	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	5	0.4

<sup>1</sup> Addresses were excluded from the survey for the reasons stated in the table, principally because they were non-residential, had works in progress or access was impossible. As can be seen from the table, the OA in Bunhill was particularly problematic on all these counts. Unfortunately, this did not become apparent until it was too late to organise an alternative OA.

<b>IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>31.2</b>
<b>NON REFUGEES</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>26.7</b>
NO REF BRITISH	10	13	18	25	34	29	31	42	5	0	15	222	17.6
NO REF OTHER	2	5	6	19	20	16	19	8	2	7	11	115	9.1
<b>REFUGEES</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>4.5</b>
REF1 (not interested)	0	0	2	0	2	3	2	3	1	3	0	16	1.3
REF2 (interviewed)	2	0	3	0	1	3	1	4	0	1	0	15	1.2
REF3 (not target)	0	0	4	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	10	0.8
REF4 (poss ref*)	0	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	16	1.3

\*= possible refugees or possible interviewees

## Streets survey statistics – percentages

Code	Output Areas											Total
	BunHill	Caledonian		Finsbury Park			Mildmay		St. Peters	Tollington		
<b>DOORS KNOCKED</b>	105	117	194	134	113	117	137	174	52	45	160	1,263
<b>%</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>NON IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>86.7</b>	<b>82.9</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>65.7</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>51.3</b>	<b>56.5</b>	<b>43.1</b>	<b>82.7</b>	<b>71.1</b>	<b>83.1</b>	<b>68.8</b>
NO ANSWER	81.9	80.3	80.9	53.7	32.7	38.5	46.8	35.3	82.7	66.7	81.9	62.5
NO OPEN	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.9	1.7	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	0.7
NOT INTERESTED	4.8	2.6	1.0	6.7	9.7	8.5	8.9	4.9	0.0	4.4	0.0	4.6
NO ADULT	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.2	0.9	1.7	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
NO ENGLISH	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	1.8	0.9	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4
<b>IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>34.3</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>43.5</b>	<b>56.9</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>28.9</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>31.2</b>
<b>NON REFUGEES</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>32.8</b>	<b>47.8</b>	<b>38.5</b>	<b>40.3</b>	<b>49.0</b>	<b>13.5</b>	<b>15.6</b>	<b>16.3</b>	<b>26.7</b>
NO REF BRITISH	9.5	11.1	9.3	18.7	30.1	24.8	25.0	41.2	9.6	0.0	9.4	17.6
NO REF OTHER	1.9	4.3	3.1	14.2	17.7	13.7	15.3	7.8	3.8	15.6	6.9	9.1
<b>REFUGEES</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>5.7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>6.2</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>4.5</b>
REF1 (not interested)	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.8	2.6	1.6	2.9	1.9	6.7	0.0	1.3
REF2 (interviewed)	1.9	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.9	2.6	0.8	3.9	0.0	2.2	0.0	1.2
REF3 (not target)	0.0	0.0	2.1	0.0	1.8	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8
REF4 (poss ref*)	0.0	1.7	1.0	1.5	1.8	1.7	0.8	1.0	1.9	4.4	0.6	1.3

\*= possible refugees or possible interviewees

## Streets survey statistics – percentages progress

Code	Output Areas											Total
	BunHill	Caledonian			Finsbury Park			Mildmay		St. Peters	Tollington	
<b>1st round – mornings and afternoons – updated July 6th</b>												
DOORS KNOCKED	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
NON IDENTIFIED	86.7	82.9	82.0	88.9	74.6	79.5	69.1	80.6	82.7	71.1	83.1	81.0
<b>IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>13.3</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>18.0</b>	<b>11.1</b>	<b>25.4</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>30.9</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>17.3</b>	<b>28.9</b>	<b>16.9</b>	<b>19.0</b>
NON REFUGEES	11.4	15.4	12.4	9.7	18.6	13.1	27.8	16.1	13.5	15.6	16.3	15.0
REFUGEES	1.9	1.7	5.7	1.4	6.8	7.4	3.1	3.2	3.8	13.3	0.6	3.9
<b>2nd round – evenings – updated July 17th</b>												
DOORS KNOCKED				100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0				100.0
NON IDENTIFIED				65.7	46.0	51.3	44.9	59.6				70.2
<b>IDENTIFIED</b>				<b>34.3</b>	<b>54.0</b>	<b>48.7</b>	<b>55.1</b>	<b>40.4</b>				<b>29.8</b>
NON REFUGEES				32.8	47.8	38.5	50.7	34.0				25.3
REFUGEES				1.5	6.2	10.3	4.3	6.4				4.5
<b>3rd round – evenings – updated August 17th</b>												
DOORS KNOCKED							100.0	100.0				100.0
NON IDENTIFIED							56.5	43.1				68.8
<b>IDENTIFIED</b>							<b>43.5</b>	<b>56.9</b>				<b>31.2</b>
NON REFUGEES							40.3	49.0				26.7
REFUGEES							3.2	7.8				4.5

## Legend

Code	Description
<b>TOTAL ROWS</b>	total rows in the original OA table (houses, flats non residential, etc.)
<b>EXCLUDED FROM SURVEY</b>	places/doors we did/could not knock on
ACCESS PROBLEM	security doors or other problems to access
NOT DONE YET	places not done yet (but to be done in future)
NON RESIDENTIAL	non residential places (shops, etc.)
WORKS IN PROGRESS	works in progress in the house/building
<b>DOORS KNOCKED</b>	total number of doors we knocked on
<b>NON IDENTIFIED</b>	nobody answered or questions not answered
NO ANSWER	nobody answered (nobody in)
NO OPEN	somebody in, but didn't want to open the door
NOT INTERESTED	open the doors but is "not interested", has "no time", etc.
NO ADULT	child opens the doors: no adult in the house
NO ENGLISH	nobody able to speak/understand english
<b>IDENTIFIED</b>	total number of people who opened the door and answered the questions
<b>NON REFUGEES</b>	total people saying not to be a refugee
NO REF BRITISH	british/english nationality
NO REF OTHER	other nationalities
<b>REFUGEES</b>	total people saying to be a refugee
REF1 (not interested)	not willing to be interviewed
REF2 (interviewed)	interview done
REF3 (not target)	"old" refugees or not in target for other reasons (e.g. too many of that group)
REF4 (poss ref*)	possible refugees and/or potential interviewees: to call back

## Streets survey statistics – Nationalities of identified people (17 August 2005)

Code	Output Areas											Total	
	BunHill	Caledonian		Finsbury Park			Mildmay		St. Peters	Tollington		numbers	%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>100.0</b>
BRITISH	4	12	8	18	18	21	21	35	3		10	150	38.1
ENGLISH	6	1	10	7	16	8	10	7	2		5	72	18.3
TURKISH	3	2	4	4	5	5	6	3	1	1	2	36	9.1
IRISH		1	3	2	2	3	4	1			2	18	4.6
SOMALI		2	3	0	2	2	2	0	1	1		13	3.3
GREEK				1	3	0	1	0		1	1	7	1.8
ERITREA				0	0	4	0	2				6	1.5
BANGLADESH				0	1	1	0	1	1			4	1.0
JAMAICA				2	0	2	0	0				4	1.0
KURDISH				0	0	1	0	2		1		4	1.0
PORTUGUESE				1	2	0	1	0				4	1.0
VIETNAM			1	1	1	0	0	0			1	4	1.0
CHINESE				1	0	1	0	1				3	0.8
COLOMBIA				0	0	1	0	1		1		3	0.8
CONGO				0	1	1	0	0		1		3	0.8
CYPRUS			1	0	1	0	0	0		1		3	0.8
ETHIOPIAN			1	0	1	0	0	1				3	0.8
FRENCH							1	1		1		3	0.8
GHANA				0	2	1	0	0				3	0.8
INDIAN				2	0	0	1	0				3	0.8
ITALIAN				0	0	1	1	0			1	3	0.8
NIGERIA				0	0	1	0	1	1			3	0.8

PHILIPPINE			0	0	2	0	0		1	3	0.8
POLAND		1	1	0	0	1	0			3	0.3
TURKISH CYPRIOT			3	0	0	0	0			3	0.8
ECUADOR		2	0	0	0	0	0			2	0.5
KOSOVAR			0	0	1	0	1			2	0.5
SPANISH			0	0	0	1	1			2	0.5
TRINIDAD		1	0	0	0	1	0			2	0.5
WEST INDIAN			1	0	0	0	0		1	2	0.5
AFGHANISTAN		1	0	0	0	0	0			1	0.3
ARGENTINA				1	0	0	0			1	0.3
AUSTRALIAN									1	1	0.3
BENGALI									1	1	0.3
BRITISH AFRICAN									1	1	0.3
CARIBBEAN	1		0	0	0	0	0			1	0.3
EGYPTIAN			0	0	0	1	0			1	0.3
GEORGIA			0	1	0	0	0			1	0.3
GERMAN									1	1	0.3
GREEK CYPRIOT			1	0	0	0	0			1	0.3
GUJARATI			1	0	0	0	0			1	0.3
IRANIAN									1	1	0.3
LUXEMBURG		1	0	0	0	0	0			1	0.3
MAROCCO									1	1	0.3
MONTENEGRO						1	0			1	0.3
SCOTTISH									1	1	0.3
SIERRA LEONE				1	0	0	0			1	0.3
SERBIA									1	1	0.3
ST LUCIA				1	0	0	0			1	0.3



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