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City Flight migration patterns in the East Midlands

Final Report to the
East Midlands Development Agency (*emda*)

March 2007

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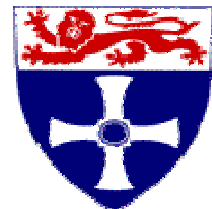


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0 Executive Summary

This is the Final Report of research on migration to and from the Three Cities of the East Midlands (Nottingham, Leicester, and Derby). The basic questions addressed here relate to *city flight* issues in the current migration patterns:

- do the Three Cities lose more migrants than they gain from more rural parts of their city regions?
- do they also suffer net out-migration due to flows to/from further afield?
- is the *selectivity* of migration flows tending to produce changes in city profiles (e.g. in terms of ethnicity and skills)?

This report ‘unpacks’ the city flight concept, and then looks at the Three Cities in turn to see which processes are operating in each. It draws on interviews with regional and local stakeholders, along with statistical information and published reports. Before that, it summarises a diverse literature to clarify the key features and drivers relevant to city flight. The report also includes a summary of the relevant current policy frameworks, identifying those that are under review at present. The report ends by examining policy priorities and opportunities in the Three Cities collectively, and also individually.

The city flight concept

Although extensive, the existing literature’s relevance is limited due to, for example, focussing on other countries (especially the USA), on very large cities, or on earlier periods when cities were declining rapidly. Two key points to emphasise are:

- migration is a two-way process and cities experiencing strong outward flows often also have very high rates of inward migration
- it is essential to separate shorter-distance moves (mainly for housing and ‘neighbourhood quality’) from flows across the city region’s outer boundary (mainly for labour market, higher education or family reasons).

In modern cities, economic growth relies on highly skilled people and entrepreneurs. Attracting and retaining more professional and managerial people will also help cities’ fiscal viability, and their social and cultural vibrancy. Many of these key people are among the owner-occupying family-age households who are usually looking for reasonably priced houses with gardens, in low crime areas with access to good schools and – ideally – the ‘feel’ of a village. Some research suggests city growth may be more closely associated with the presence of creative people. City flight patterns may be mitigated if long-distance migration flows tend to be toward the city: this is seen to be dependent on the local economy performing at a rate above the national average, supported by the key labour market groups mentioned above. More generally, the drivers of migration can be summarised in six groups of factors:

- demographic
- cultural/social
- labour market
- housing
- environmental
- policy.

The threat is that continuing population loss through migration can bring urban housing market failure, lower economic growth due to skill shortages, plus degraded quality of life due to long-distance commuting and congestion. Thus the risk is the twin failures of urban stagnation along with increased pressure for development within more rural areas nearby.

The policy context

The present period of multiple policy reviews at different scales may make more innovative responses to city flight issues possible. In particular:

- The Sustainable Communities Plan has re-opened the question of settlement planning
- New Growth Points re-visit the mid-twentieth century Expanded Towns issue
- many neighbourhood-scale policies assert mixed communities bring benefits, but the evidence base is unclear.

At the national scale, policy is not well 'joined up' across policy remits: for example, the transport investment essential to sustainable city development is often either not happening or not happening quickly enough. In the East Midlands the various regional strategies are well articulated but there are severe limits to regional powers and funding. Almost all the local authorities have responded positively to the call for sub-regional policy frameworks, including housing market assessment.

This study revealed much interest among key stakeholders in the city flight concept. Respondents saw both positive and negative aspects of city flight: on the one hand, it creates opportunities for some households to meet their aspirations but, on the other hand, it increases levels of socio-economic and possibly ethnic segregation.

The current position: key findings

All the Three Cities appear to be losing Higher Managerial and Professional (HMP) people but, in part, this is exaggerated by low levels of graduate retention. All the cities are seeing HMP people move out to nearby more rural areas at a faster rate than most large English cities experienced.

International in-migration has increased, and diffused out from the cities, but there is still a major gulf in levels of diversity between city and rural areas.

There are important differences between the Three Cities' migration geography:

- Nottingham has strong local net outflows but strong inflows from further away,
- Leicester is broadly similar, but young people nearby tend to move to the city,
- Derby is close to being in balance, both across the age range and over most spatial scales.

Rather than seeing major population loss, the Three Cities show more signs of new re-urbanisation forms such as city centre apartment developments.

The main drivers of longer-distance migration were expected to be job related but the data here was ambivalent on that. There was also a possible link to crime rates, with Nottingham in particular having a strongly negative image on this issue.

Crime risk was more clearly related to shorter distance migration and the analyses confirmed local out-migration from cities may be related to differing burglary rates.

The other key influences on shorter-distance migration were:

- access to good schools (as local perceptions in Nottingham had stressed)
- opportunity to owner-occupy attractive properties at reasonable prices, and
- the distribution of non-White residents in the area (although the evidence for this 'White flight' pattern was rather marginal, and limited to Leicester alone).

Future issues

None of the Three Cities seems likely to experience city flight on a scale that risks area abandonment. A key issue here is that accelerating residential sorting may put at risk cohesion, due to migration flows polarising the city region's richer and poorer – and White and non-White – residents between its urban and more rural parts.

Gradual decentralisation of affluent residents is not new. The concerns now are:

- the central city local authorities may lose fiscal strength while having to work in partnership with other conurbation local authorities to achieve regeneration;
- inner area problems could escalate with wider consequences such as raised crime risks, lower the city region's attractiveness to possible in-migrants; and
- many skilled city centre workers live far out, causing road congestion and pollution due to insufficient high capacity high quality public transport.

One summary of the city flight issue for the Three Cities is that it poses a dilemma. In effect, it queries the commitment to prioritising development in the cities, given the risk that mobile people and investment may leave the region. There are two options.

- 1 Focus development on cities so as to fuel urban regeneration, with regional GVA possibly not maximised because more priority is given to the region's environmental and social sustainability.
- 2 An alternative strategy emphasises economic growth: a *laissez faire* approach, it down-plays social and environmental priorities, accepting much development in non-city locations (with the Three Cities becoming a polycentric region).

If the more 'pro-urban' interventionist option 1 is to be pursued then policy agenda identified by stakeholders and the relevant academic and policy literature include:

- improved city educational services, and better secondary schools in particular
- tackling city problems of crime and anti-social behaviour
- improving public transport on high density corridors
- facilitating new employment growth sectors which favour clustering in cities
- upgrading and extending urban and suburban retail and leisure facilities
- providing a more diverse housing 'offer' in the main urban areas
- putting further emphasis on development on brownfield sites and
- improving access to open space and enhancing the quality of the local environment including the public realm.

Implementation of such policies requires them to be tailored to local circumstances, not only between the cities but also within each city. Policies which might once have been directed at broad categories such as 'ethnic minority groups' should be more closely targeted at specific categories of potential migrants. Surveys of attitudes and housing aspirations may be needed in each sub-region as delivery partners in both public and private sectors complete Housing Market Assessments: one requirement is raised aspirations, so developers avoid 'more of the same' (e.g. city-centre flats).

A fairly new policy option is the urban extension: this may provide a sufficiently different urban housing offer to attract more of the mobile and affluent groups who tend to leave cities. In addition, the opportunity provided by New Growth Points calls for imaginative development, diversifying the housing and neighbourhood types which the Three Cities offer to current and potential residents.

Acknowledgements

The research team are very grateful to all the participants in both the face-to-face and telephone interviews: the organisations represented are listed at the very end of this report. Input was also received from the Regional Housing Working Group and its policy advisor members including Government Office East Midlands and the Housing Corporation (who both provided valuable responses to an Interim Report). The research team are grateful for the many inputs from numerous colleagues at **emda** and especially to Margaret Leopold and Steven Harley for their considerable support throughout the project.

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Annexes

1 Research Strategy

This is the Final Report from research on migration flows into and out of the three largest urban areas in the East Midlands region. In descending size order, these Three Cities are Nottingham then Leicester and Derby: it is worth noting as context that it is likely that in the near future Northampton will become larger than Derby and so become the region's third largest city. In this report, **“city” refers to a physically built-up area or conurbation**, following the usage in the seminal report State of the English Cities (Parkinson *et al*, 2006).

The report is centrally concerned with migration patterns. The term **“migrant” here refers to a person moving house within the UK**: as such, it is distinct from “immigrant” which refers to people moving to this country from abroad. (A small part of this report considers these international movements.) Like most of the large cities in England and similar countries, the Three Cities tend to lose more migrants than they gain from surrounding rural and more suburban areas. Different groups fit this broad pattern to different degrees, leading to a selectivity of the net migration flows. As a result, migrant flows alter not just the number but also the profile – by ethnicity, skill level and income – of city residents. It is these patterns of net outward migration that are referred to by the term “city flight” and which were the focus of attention for the research reported here.

The remainder of this chapter of the report outlines the policy background which led to the commissioning of the research, and shapes its objectives. In general, the rest of the report is structured so that the focus of attention narrows down progressively to the Three Cities from an initial literature review which considers both national and international studies to provide the analytical framework for the following empirical research within the region. The third chapter identifies the current policy structures and issues which set the region-specific agenda, whilst the fourth chapter begins the focus on the Three Cities themselves, bringing out both their common problems and their distinctive concerns. The fifth chapter presents selected statistical findings about migration patterns and processes in the Three Cities before the final chapter reviews the conclusions from the study, focussing on policy implications which are partly specific to individual cities and partly at the regional scale.

The report ends with a substantial bibliography of literature referred to anywhere in the document, then Annexes include some additional statistical analyses plus ‘raw material’ from the literature review and the interviews with stakeholders which provided the evidence base for the main part of the report.

1.1 Background to the study

It was the 2004 Regional Housing Strategy that identified city flight as an issue that needed to be better understood in the East Midland context in particular. This study was commissioned in response by **emda** to establish the nature of the phenomenon, and to assess the scale of the issues arising in the region. Although some cities face a risk of population loss, the recent State of the English Cities research report (Parkinson *et al*, 2006) concluded that city economies are central to a successful national economic growth strategy. In fact, policy frameworks at the national level are currently geared much more positively towards cities than they have been for some considerable time: cities are seen as the key to strategies such as the growth of knowledge-based sectors, and the promotion of clusters in sectors ranging from high-tech to cultural industries. Within the East Midlands these national priorities are strongly echoed in the Regional Economic Strategy which sees cities driving growth, as well as in the Regional Spatial Strategy with its aim to concentrate new development in the region's larger urban areas. This positive scenario may not lead to stable or growing city populations if there is inadequate city housing; housing acts as a potential constraint on urban growth (Martin 2005).

Immediately prior to the start of the research reported here, the Department for Communities and Local Government announced approval of the proposal that the Three Cities become New Growth Points¹ and so receive extra funding to help provide additional housing. This policy initiative is the latest development in rolling out the Sustainable Communities policy strategy (ODPM 2003) in which the need for more housing is a high priority. From this perspective, there is a clear need to reverse population losses from the Three Cities because otherwise there is the risk of the urban areas experiencing the low demand discussed by the Barker (2004) review of housing supply and demand, potentially leading on to under-use or even actual abandonment. Planning for the region's housing provision will build upon definitions of sub-regional housing markets in the region (DTZ Pineda 2005) in which the Three Cities were seen to be key focal points.

There are important differences between the Three Cities and the research reported here examines this variation. Another main objective has been to understand the processes underpinning the migration patterns. The evidence on migration patterns and determinants (or 'drivers') shapes the attempt to identify policy implications, whether for the whole region or for individual cities. To summarise, the research can

¹ A particularly important feature of this initiative is that the Three Cities are collaborating with the three county authorities into which their urban areas extend; it is also noteworthy that Newark & Sherwood is separately designated as a further Growth Point within Nottinghamshire (as are Grantham and Lincoln within Lincolnshire).

be seen as a timely response to sets of opportunities and threats. The opportunities are provided by new policy frameworks and claimed economic dynamics making cities the focus both for private sector development and for public sector promotion. The key threats include the continuing trend for most cities to lose population through migration, bringing with it a set of risks ranging from urban housing market failure and damaged economic growth through skill shortages, through to degraded quality of life due to long-distance commuting and congestion and, more generally, the twin sustainability failures of urban stagnation with high development pressures leading to over-development in the countryside.

1.2 Scope of the research

Although there was a large amount of information to be drawn upon for this study, there were several difficulties with this evidence base. The sheer volume of the literature to review posed one challenge, but this was greatly complicated by the fact that there is a scarcity of very directly pertinent material so the net must be cast more widely to find material offering insights relevant to the Three Cities: the main limitations to the existing literature's relevance include its:

- empirical focus on other countries (especially the USA) rather than Britain
- emphasis on metropolises (e.g. capitals) rather than medium-sized cities, and
- analysis of periods when deindustrialisation was still dominating city trends.

In addition, the empirical evidence in the literature often refers to administrative areas and not to the full built-up areas used here. A robust understanding of city flight needs to focus specifically on flows between urban and more rural areas, whereas analyses that simply use local authority areas will interpret migration from, for example, Leicester to Oadby & Wigston as city flight, when it is more properly seen as suburbanisation. (Annex 1 identifies the areas included in these definitions of cities as continuously built-up areas, or conurbations.)

Another key part of the approach here is the distinction between migration flows over shorter and longer distances. In practice, longer-distance migration is defined as the flows between a city and the areas *beyond* its own city region; by the same token, shorter-distance migration embraces local flows to or from the more rural areas near to the city. In making this distinction between shorter- and longer-distance migration, a relevant city region boundary definition is needed, and the analyses carried out here use the Housing Market Areas (HMAs)² defined by DTZ Pineda (2005) for the housing market assessments now underway: see Annex 1 for further detail on these boundary issues. This standardisation on HMAs is not always possible because the

² HMAs (DCLG 2007a) were defined by analysing migration flows to identify groupings of local authority districts within which migration flows are mostly internalised (ie. for most migrants, their former and their new addresses are both within the same HMA boundary).

analyses must use whatever areas the relevant datasets are provided for; there are also situations in which no data exists to answer a key question. In fact the detail required to allow all the ideal analyses to be undertaken is formidable, with the information needing to cover all migrants and to report their

- broad demographic characteristics, including age, ethnicity and family status
- employment position, particularly identifying those working in key sectors
- housing situation, ideally with indication of unfulfilled housing aspirations
- attitudes to neighbourhood of origin and destination (e.g. its social mix)
- views on local quality of life factors, and notably access to good schools.

In the inevitable situation of limited data availability from national statistical sources – especially for the most recent years and on the Three Cities specifically – the study has filled some of the information gaps by collecting views of stakeholders in the Three Cities and at the regional level. These interviews were also key to providing the base-line for developing policy recommendations, through recognition of what are seen as each city's distinct trajectory and particular problems. Drawing together this in-depth local knowledge with findings from analysing nationally-provided data and reviewing the international literature, the conclusions are as well-founded as this material can sustain.

2 City Flight

This chapter summarises key findings from an extensive literature review (Annex 2).

A review of the academic literature defined city flight as the net outflow of migrants: the number moving to a city is less than the number leaving. This pattern is widespread among cities in Britain and similar nations.

Migration tends to be a two-way process: cities experiencing strong outward flows often also have high rates of overall population growth due to very high rates of inward migration and/or natural growth. In most cities the vast majority of migrant flows are over a few kilometres so any city flight effects are based on the small proportion moving further afield.

City flight is a complex process that needs unpacking to get a better understanding of the factors involved and the policy options available. Migration patterns change as people move through the life course.

One seminal study identified six groups of migration drivers:

- » Demographic factors
- » Labour market factors
- » Environmental factors
- » Cultural/social factors
- » Housing factors
- » Policy factors

The most fundamental distinction is between shorter-distance moves (undertaken primarily for housing and 'neighbourhood quality' reasons), and cities' exchanges with the rest of the country beyond the city region (mainly prompted by labour market, higher education or family reasons).

Policy makers need to recognise this complex pattern of movements and motives when trying to attract or retain more migrants within cities.

The main policy concern related to longer-distance movement is the need to increase the city's job opportunities, in terms of 'quality' and also sheer numbers. The economic dynamism of a city may not be affected by shorter-distance migration, provided that the transport infrastructure in the city region supports more diffused growth. The more rural areas may attract mobile entrepreneurs, or provide a base for the growing number of dual-career households needing access to two suitable jobs.

At the same time, the fiscal viability of the administrative city and the social and cultural vibrancy of the broader city are helped if it can attract and retain more professional and managerial people. The relatively high turnover of these groups means that significant gains can be made from just marginal increases in their length of stay.

The ability of cities to house owner-occupying family-age households depends largely on providing the living conditions that have traditionally prompted them to move to more suburban and rural areas, most notably a reasonably priced house with a garden, access to a good school, separation from areas with crime and nuisance, and an ambience like that of a village, conveying the feeling of spaciousness and community.

The core of this chapter is a series of reflections upon a systematic review (Annex 2) of previous studies relating to city flight. The key findings are noted, with a particular focus on the factors seen to drive the patterns of migration. First the concept of city flight is discussed, before looking at British evidence on migration patterns. After this a more analytical view of cities' migration exchanges is presented separating out different types of migration, identifying what the literature sees as the main processes behind these flows of people, and whether these involve flows solely within the wider city region or instead are over longer distances. The chapter then concludes with a review of policy challenges needing to be addressed in any attempt to staunch the flows of people leaving larger urban areas.

2.1 The concept of city flight

What is commonly referred to as 'city flight' needs to be unpacked to get a better grasp of what is actually happening and why. The term is often used to describe the situation where a city is experiencing overall population decline, but such a decline can be due to what is called natural decrease (where the number of deaths is higher than the number of births) rather than the pattern of migration. Here the term city flight is only used to refer to situations with a net loss through migration. That said, such a pattern of net migration outflow is not likely to involve a purely one-way flow of migrants: the "flight" will arise from a net loss due to the number of people leaving a city being slightly higher than the number moving into the city.

Another aspect of the concept is a focus on **who** is moving from and to cities and also **where** they are going to or coming from. Much migration in to and out of cities is prompted by life-stage decisions such as moving to and from university, or getting a first position on a career ladder. By contrast, most house moves are of much shorter distance, they tend to be between two nearby neighbourhoods, within a city or outside it but not across an 'urban area' border that is the focus of attention here (see Annex 1). Most shorter moves are made for housing or quality-of-life reasons; despite being mostly over shorter distances they do in fact loom large in the understanding of why people leave cities for the more rural areas nearby. In fact, there are so many of these shorter-distance moves that a slight excess of outward over inward migrants can add up over time to a substantial net loss of migrants for the cities.

What makes these migrant flows so critical for the urban regeneration agenda is that city flight, like migration generally, tends to be a socially selective process, because it is the people with 'get up and go' who are most likely to leave. This was shown clearly in research on the 1981 and 1991 migrant flows between Britain's largest

conurbations and all the rest of the country (Champion and Fisher 2003). With the exception of London alone, the rate of net loss was highest for the professional and managerial group. In fact there was a fairly consistent pattern in which the higher socio-economic status groups were those most likely to be moving away from cities. As a result of the scale and selectivity of this city flight pattern – recently confirmed for large urban areas in the East Midlands by Experian (2007) – there are three major challenges for urban policy makers:

- losing people – and especially more skilled members of their labour force – through longer-distance migration beyond the city region can undermine the economic base of a city;
- socially selective decentralisation of an urban area's residents to surrounding areas can threaten social cohesion through creating segregation, whilst also risking housing supply/demand imbalance in both urban and rural areas;
- population loss from a city council area – which is usually just part of the wider urban area – reduces the fiscal viability of the council and this can lead to underinvestment in the facilities and amenities which may attract migrants.

Wherever the evidence allows the distinction to be made, this research *focusses* only on the first two of these, setting aside any consideration of the last one. To take an example, the research is not concerned with migration between Leicester city council area and Oadby & Wigston because they are both in the same urban area. Thus the term 'city' in this report refers to a continuously built-up area, as in the *State of the English Cities* report (Parkinson *et al*, 2006).

The implication is that in reviewing a very wide range of documents related to city flight and its drivers, it was critically important to be alert to three questions which determine how far they were appropriate for this research.

- In terms of 'city' definitions, does the evidence or theory in that document refer to the city centre, or the administrative city ('central city' in US parlance), or the urban area, or the wider city region?
- In terms of 'flight' itself, does it refer only to the gross movement of people out of the 'city' or to the net population effect – that is, the outflow *subtracted* from the inflow – of the two-way movements across the 'city' boundary?
- In terms of city flight, are the net flows examined between the city and all other areas (including all the rest of the nation or even the rest of the world), or only with its immediately surrounding area (e.g. the rest of its city region)?

2.2 Migration patterns and processes

Although there has recently been an increase in city-centre living, British evidence so far is that this is only proving attractive to population groups such as mobile young single people (Nathan and Urwin, 2005). There is far more consistent

evidence on movement away from inner cities – ‘sprawl’ as it is termed in the USA – with the policy literature discussing ‘smart growth’ and ‘mixed neighbourhoods’ in the search for ways to counter the dynamics of ever more extended suburbanisation. Europe is also experiencing these trends: for example, Italians are now discussing ‘la città diffusa’ and there is French literature on ‘peri-urbanisation’ (Guérois and Pumain, 2002). Nearer to home, almost two-thirds of England’s largest 56 cities had net migration losses to the rest of the country in 2002-3 (Champion, 2006), while the same period saw net migration from London and the metropolitan counties to the rest of the UK rise well above 1990s levels (Champion, 2005; Champion *et al*, 2007).

A full understanding of the nature of the policy challenge posed by a city’s migration patterns must be based on knowledge of ‘the laws of migration’ propounded initially by Ravenstein (the nineteenth-century father of migration studies). Migration in and out of a city is merely part of a much larger migration system which is linked together through causal relationships. These wider processes will shape the potential effectiveness of any policies designed to alter established patterns of residential movement to or from cities in particular. Distinguishing migrants by distance of move is essential because distance is directly connected to the drivers which are involved.

In terms of migration processes, a key point is that one person changing address will both affect, and be affected by, other people’s moves within what has been termed chain migration. One form of chain works over time, building on itself in cumulative fashion at several scales. At the individual scale, subsequent migrants follow the first mover due to their personal knowledge of the benefits gained by the initial migrant. At the macro level, this dynamic is enhanced by the economic and social effects that the population movement has on both the origin and the destination areas, with the exporting area experiencing a vicious spiral of decline and the importing seeing the opposite effect. In terms of urban-rural migration, the decline spiral was seen as key to explaining low demand in some British cities (Bramley *et al*, 2000; Power, 2000). At the same time, the lure of the countryside seems to have strengthened as the difficulty of accessing housing there, and the social cachet linked to this, has risen as a result of the demand increasing faster than the supply of suitable properties (Champion *et al*, 1998a; Murdoch, 1997).

The second form of chain migration relates to the ‘vacancy chain’ concept. A mover typically needs a vacant dwelling to move into and, in the owner occupied sector, there normally has to be a buyer before a household leaves a dwelling. In this form of chain, however, it is by no means clear which group of migrants is really in the driving seat. In terms of urban-rural migration, Champion *et al*, (1998a) faced this question on finding that the majority of people moving out of Greater London and the six English metropolitan counties were not moving from the most problematic parts

of these conurbations but from the best-off areas. Taken on its own, this observation casts doubt on the importance of push factors in the urban exodus. From a much broader context, it can be seen that the only way in which wealthier suburbanites can move out of cities is because there is a satisfactory demand for their existing properties, which – in net terms at least – is provided mainly by people moving into these suburbs from the inner areas.

To understand migration processes, a life-course perspective is vital. Age is the single most powerful determinant of the likelihood of someone changing where they live. Migration is most likely in early adulthood and declines substantially after this, until rising to a smaller peak in older age. Societal changes that have occurred since the 1960s have, of course, eroded the traditional pattern in which few young adults would leave their parents' home before marriage, after which family building followed. By contrast, a high proportion of address changing is now generated by people before they become parents, while divorce or separation and new partnerships create more household change, and older people living separately from their grown-up children is also on the increase (Grundy, 1992). As a result, there is no single 'housing pathway' that everyone is expected to follow. The life course perspective also recognises that not everyone starts from the same position. For instance, people who leave school during an economic boom have been shown to have better life chances from then on; in a rather similar way, retirement migration is easier for those who retire when house prices are booming.

Even so, migration research shows strong age-related patterns of migration which have persisted for a long time. Within city regions, there remains a very strong outward movement of households as they reach the family-building life stage. At an inter-city level, age is key to the 'regional escalator' (Fielding, 1992) by which younger adults gravitate to the London region because it offers the greatest chances of finding work and getting rapid promotion. They may later move away if they decide to prioritise the quality-of-life factors on which economically booming regions tend to score less well. These age-related migration patterns are so fundamental that economic cycles and deep-seated societal trends tend to change them only marginally, at least in the short to medium term. That said, marginal changes can have quite significant impacts on the net migration balances of places. The problem for local and regional policy makers is that they have relatively little influence on the factors which might bring about such changes.

2.3 Migration determinants

This section outlines the principal determinants of migration generally, and with respect to studies of migration in Britain in particular. It is followed by two sections

that look specifically at the drivers of city migration, dealing with longer-distance and more local migration separately.

Champion *et al*, (1998b) drew on a wide range of literature when identifying six sets of migration determinants. In relation to urban/rural migration flows, these six types of determinant were illustrated by reference to some of the major processes which drive them (Champion *et al*, 1998b, page 102).

- **Demographic** factors: urban-to-rural migration is selective of family and retirement ages, with a reverse flow of young adults
- **Cultural/social** factors: the better off migrate towards rural areas; ethnic minorities tend to concentrate in the larger cities and their inner areas
- **Labour market** factors: there are more self-employed in rural than urban areas, associated notably with pre-retirement migration; the suburbanisation of jobs may permit workers to commute from further away
- **Housing** factors: housing shortages and higher house prices (type for type) force people to look further out of a city, while owner occupiers choose locations with good chances of capital appreciation
- **Environmental** factors: when the 'environment' is viewed as a category which includes local services as education and other quality-of-life concerns, it may become the main driver of urban-to-rural movement within city regions
- **Policy** factors: land use policies such as green belt restrictions, plus urban regeneration efforts

(Other sets of factors also need to be taken into account in any migration modelling, to handle the effects of time and space.)

These sets of factors were then included in the largest migration modelling exercise of its kind undertaken (Fotheringham *et al*, 2002). The areas used for the modelling – 47 shire counties, 35 metropolitan districts and 16 groups of London boroughs – are not ideal for drawing conclusions about city flight, but the evidence warrants attention here. The modelling first examined the likelihood of residents leaving their home area, and then it modelled the destination choice of those who do move home. Key results were consistent across 14 years, and for all the age and gender groups whose migration patterns were analysed separately. The results showed that higher rates of out-migration are found in areas with:

- poorer air quality
- wetter, colder climates
- relatively high proportion of people who commute long distances
- lower levels of deprivation
- higher employment growth
- large proportion of urban population
- higher household incomes

- lower house prices
- relatively low house prices in nearby areas
- high proportions of non-white residents
- lower levels of new house-building on brown-field land
- higher levels of relets in the social sector
- fewer vacant dwellings
- less deprived areas nearby
- more students.

In addition, areas in London were more likely to lose older people, whilst young adults were unlikely to move away from the capital.

Although the above list of factors may seem to offer a 'check-list' for policy action, the position is not so simple. This is because areas with high out-migration rates tend to have even higher in-migration rates; as a result, reducing an area's number of students (for example) could mean that it actually tends to lose more migrants overall because its in-migration rate declines faster than its out-migration rate does. As a result, it may be safer to derive the policy implications from the modelling work on the results from the analyses based on areas' relative attractiveness to migrants. The factors affecting destination choices did vary a little more between different age groups but there are several common factors.

- Areas which had a greater attraction for all groups had warmer and drier climates, and also higher concentrations of listed buildings and less building on recycled land.
- Areas with lower Council Tax rates were attractive for all migrant groups except the 16-19 year olds, while older age groups also tended to favour areas which had lower crime rates, higher house prices and lower proportions of vacant or derelict land.
- Areas with higher household incomes attracted the middle aged group but not the older age groups.
- Areas with lower rates of age-specific unemployment attracted people at either end of the working age range.
- Young adults were, not unexpectedly, attracted to areas with more university places, as well as to larger cities in general.

Most of these results are in line with expectations based on other literature as well as general knowledge. One of the most surprising outcomes was that some aspects of deprivation, like higher crime, were associated with *lower out-migration* from the affected areas. The explanation lies in the fact that low out-migration rate areas tend to have *even lower in-migration* rates: these less attractive areas thus have a slow net loss of migrants. Many residents of these deprived areas experience poverty and this lowers their mobility, making longer-distance moves especially difficult to tackle.

2.4 Drivers of city flight: summary of findings on longer-distance migration

Migration over longer distances is the more complex and less researched part of the processes which can produce city flight. One reason is that analyses of labour migration have traditionally been inter-regional in nature and so are limited in what they can say at the city scale (except for a huge city like London where one or more such regions can be taken as a surrogate for its city region). This is unfortunate, given the great policy and academic attention that is now being given to the urban dimension in tackling the regional problem, and the importance to city economies of skilled labour. Human capital has emerged as one of the most critical elements of competition between cities, not least because of the widespread attention given to knowledge based activities. Lundvall (1992) and Knight (1995) emphasise that certain cities provide specialist forms of knowledge, much of which is embodied in the people who work there. Hall (1998) paints a much broader canvas, with the most dynamic cities thriving because of the interplay between their various cultural and other assets and the people attracted to live there. At a more pragmatic level, if the high skill element of a city's labour force is growing, then local firms will be more able to find the range of specialised skills in the large numbers seen as critical for them to compete most effectively (Porter, 1998).

Along with the recognition of skilled labour as a key factor of production for city firms, there has been a growing interest in the ideas of Florida (1995, 2002) who stresses the influence of the 'creative' individuals in cities. Even if they have no conventional job with a major employer, their presence in a city in large numbers is associated with economic growth. This particular perspective on urban regeneration leads to great interest in the relative success of a city holding on to, and recruiting additions to, its pool of creative people. Another set of specific skills that can make a strong contribution to a city's economic development is the higher education sector which was seen by GLA Economics (2004) to boost London's human capital.

The most recent study to separately analyse the migration between cities and areas beyond their city regions does not paint a very encouraging picture for most larger and medium-sized English cities (Champion *et al*, 2007). The most positive result was for London where 2000-1 migration patterns were found to confirm the pivotal role in the national migration system which had been found by previous studies (Coombes and Charlton, 1992). In fact London's great attractiveness for people with higher managerial and professional skills may even have increased, both in relation to other parts of the UK in general and in competition with most other cities. Of the 26 provincial cities, Nottingham's in/out ratio puts it among the three which were the least successful in retaining, or attracting, these high skilled people in competition with the capital (Champion *et al*, 2007).

The general finding for all England's larger cities other than London (and its neighbours Reading and Brighton) was of a net loss of people through migration exchanges with areas beyond their city regions. In addition, the high skilled group were even more likely than other groups to be leaving the cities as a result of these longer-distance migration flows. The only fairly consistently positive feature for these cities was that most were gainers from the moves of full-time students. That said, few cities succeeded in retaining many of the graduates of their universities.

2.5 Drivers of city flight: summary of findings on local decentralisation

By contrast with cities' longer-distance migration exchanges, there is a huge and growing literature on the more localised dimension of city flight. This allows more detailed examination here of the drivers operating at this scale. The international literature commonly differentiates between 'permissive' factors and 'active' drivers. From a long-term perspective, the blurring of urban-rural differences in way of life and living conditions made possible a reversal of the earlier long-established pattern of rural to urban migration, with many aspects of city life now available in rural areas. Allied to this is the improvement in transport and communications, so that rural living is not problematic even though modern life typically requires access to a far wider range of services than was previously the case. Some services have been brought into homes (e.g. washing machines replacing the need for laundry services). As yet, only limited use is being made of telecommunications to remotely access services or for teleworking, as was recently shown among small businesses in the East Midlands (BMG Research, 2007). Further loosening of the ties holding some activities and their users to cities and nearby areas could follow from more intensive broadband adoption and, at a broader scale, the same process could lead to further spill-over growth to the East Midlands from the London region. These speculations are largely based on extrapolating from the trends observed following improvements to transport links, and the flexibility offered by car ownership, which clearly did facilitate population decentralisation from large urban areas.

Of course, permissive factors hold no significance for the location of population growth if there is no desire to move for other reasons. In terms of the active drivers, it is conventional to distinguish between push and pull factors, although in the urban/rural context most of the drivers constitute relativities in people's residential choices between one type of environment and another. On this basis, people move from the core of a city to the suburbs, or further afield, because this will help them both escape the more negative features of city life and at the same time benefit from the more agreeable aspects of life in a more rural setting. The literature on urban sprawl generally suggests that for many people there are important negative

features of urban life, even though there are no longer the same problems as there were in nineteenth century British cities with their disease, smoke and squalor. Economic considerations also played an important role then and continue to do so, owing to the generally higher price commanded by land and housing in locations closer to the city centre.

In his seminal work on people who had moved deep into the English countryside and become *urbs in rure*, Pahl (1966) identified the reluctant commuter to London as one of the principal categories of people interviewed. In general, however, the majority of people moving from urban cores to the suburbs and beyond are drawn from the wealthier segments of society, with the least well-off left behind in older, cheaper parts of the city or subsidised housing schemes. Studies of the reasons for urban-rural migration in England consistently quote the importance of both the physical and the social qualities of life in the countryside (e.g. Halfacree, 1994 and Champion *et al*, 1998a). According to Murdoch (1997), country life holds two main attractions for people, allowing them to live in something resembling a natural setting and holding the potential for participating in real communities. It is possibly rare that they attain the 'rural idyll' they seek, but successive surveys since the 1930s have shown as many as 72% of the population stating a preference for living in the countryside.

The cultural preference for country living that is specific to England (Newby 1987) has been overlain by other factors promoting centrifugal shifts of population.

- There has been a long-term dispersion of jobs as part of an urban-rural shift in economic activities (Turok and Edge, 1999).
- The strong growth in two-earner, and especially two-career, households has led some people to select home locations in between two or more urban areas to have easy access to the jobs situated in all of these centres.
- The population capacity of the housing stock is effectively reduced by the continuing long-term fall in household size produced by smaller family size and the growth in numbers of single person households (Champion, 2001).
- Rising wealth and aspirations have placed a premium on larger houses, including those with space for several cars.

Government policies have also played a part – albeit usually less direct – in the promotion of population decentralisation. Subsidies for rural activities and services have helped to offset the cost penalties of rural living, while the welfare state more generally has enabled the retired and unemployed to move to lower-cost smaller towns and rural areas. The promotion of home ownership has encouraged the outward push of development at the edge of cities, while slum clearance and urban renewal generally involved rebuilding at lower densities to reduce congestion and pollution in the urban areas.

2.6 Challenges for policy makers

The separation here of longer-distance and more localised migration patterns clearly reveals two distinct sets of challenges for policy makers in most cities. For the longer-distance migration dynamic, the key issues are in economic regeneration because migrants – and talented people in particular – are not very likely to stay in, or be drawn to, a city where the career prospects do not stand comparison with those elsewhere. In this context, it is worth remembering that a city is part of a wider labour market and it is not necessarily important whether the job growth takes place in the main urban area or another part of the city region. For example, it is possible that the Three Cities may develop into a polycentric region³ (Coombes *et al*, 2006), so that they together constitute a single labour market, at least for well-paid workers. In such a situation the policy issues which could arise are more similar to those provoked by shorter-distance migration, as discussed below. Given that no policy can alter a city's relative standing in terms of many factors associated with higher levels of migrant attraction – ranging from warmer climate to having more listed buildings – the focus seems to return to the economy and perhaps especially the knowledge-based sectors which are known to favour city locations and are linked with the presence of universities and the higher household incomes who are identified as 'migration-prone' in the modelling of Fotheringham *et al*, (2002).

It would be a more speculative strategy to promote 'lifestyle-led' city growth based on the Florida (2002) thesis that 'creative' people fuel a broad urban regeneration, although increases in cultural industries and activities more generally may well support other strategies to attract more talented migrants. The same thesis argues for the benefit of greater diversity among the population, but in Britain as yet the evidence is unclear as to whether it is true that any increase in diversity will bring benefits or – as is at least as possible – whether a city's attractiveness tends to peak at a certain level of diversity and then begin to decline at levels beyond that.

The localised component of city flight is the more amenable to policy intervention. The principal characteristics of areas which have been identified as associated with the attraction of more migrants, and which are within local or regional policy remits, are lower levels of crime, Council Tax and vacant or derelict land. There are also other factors which would be linked to more socially diverse cities, such as the presence of more people with higher household incomes and – rather less certainly – higher local house prices. That said, it should be noted that these are factors found to be positively associated with in-migration at the whole city scale: they do not

³ That is, a city region which is not dominated by a single city but has at least two centres which have substantially over-lapping areas of influence (see further explanation in Coombes *et al* 2006)

necessarily imply that mixed communities⁴ which exist at the neighbourhood scale are strongly attractive to migrants.

It may seem to be stating the obvious, but it has to be recognised that 'rurality' has an appeal for people in the family-building ages which is difficult for cities to match. Putting this point in a more general frame of reference: an understanding of the importance of the life-course is essential for the development of suitable policy responses to city flight. The range and type of urban housing is a key consideration, especially for people approaching the start of both their family-building and their owner-occupier housing careers. As well as the housing offer in terms of finance and 'bricks and mortar' there are neighbourhood-scale issues such as crime risk and the quality of local schools and other community facilities, and access to open space. From this wider perspective, it becomes clear why there is much to be done before urban areas can be seen to provide most of the 'package' offered by the more rural and suburban areas in order to tackle the perceived advantages of moving out.

The deeper understanding of city flight developed in this chapter has both positive and negative implications for urban policy makers. On the one hand, it is comforting to know that at any particular time there are substantial numbers of people choosing to move to cities, even if they are not quite as numerous as the leavers. It also means that for many cities just a relatively small increase in in-migration – or small decrease in out-migration – would reverse the net flow. On the other hand, the sheer diversity of migrants and their motives for moving suggests that no single solution will be likely to have this effect. As a result, policy makers need to recognise the nature and role of the many factors which affect migration and residential choice, alongside the other aspects of population change which are contributing to changes in the scale and nature of the demand for housing within cities and their city regions.

⁴ Areas in which the resident population is mixed in terms of characteristics such as housing tenure and/or income and/or ethnicity/religion and/or social class.

3 Policy Context

This chapter outlines the key elements of a rapidly evolving policy environment.

The present period is one of intense policy review at national and regional scales, opening up opportunities for innovative approaches for responses at various levels of governance to city flight issues.

Debates over the Sustainable Communities Plan policy open questions of settlement planning not aired in Britain since the New and Expanded Town schemes of 30 or more years ago.

However the Treasury-led policy framework generally prioritises economic growth over all other priorities; the one advantage here for cities is that they seem to be favoured in the current private sector investment climate.

There is little hard evidence as yet to support the 'received wisdom' that mixed communities are a key to regenerating deprived neighbourhoods.

Transport investment is widely seen as essential to sustainable city development but investment in the region remains slow; there is similarly slow progress on other improvements needed to boost city liveability.

Policy at the national scale is not just timid in degree of interventionism, it is also still not 'joined up' between policy remits; at the regional scale, the various strategies are well articulated but there are severe limitations on powers and funding.

Local authorities are actively engaging in cross-boundary partnerships, at the sub-regional scale, in ways which would not have been imagined a few years ago. This very positive trend now extends across all the Three Cities with the Leicester and Leicestershire housing market assessment initiated very recently.

This chapter moves on from the attempt to understand the processes underpinning city flight migration patterns to examine recent policy developments which may have, or perhaps have not, been responding to this emerging evidence base. The chapter proceeds through a series of policy scales, starting at the national level and looking at policies which are directly addressing city flight issues. Next there is a section covering certain particularly important 'sectoral' policies which may help to address, or may exacerbate, city flight processes. Finally there is a section on policies at the regional scale, including those concerned with the Three Cities from the regional point of view. There is no section here on policies at the individual city scale; in the next chapter there are discussions of city-specific challenges and policy responses.

3.1 National settlement strategy policies

One key innovation creating new opportunities to debate processes related to city flight is the Sustainable Communities policy agenda. Debates on how to implement the aspiration of making settlements more sustainable open up questions scarcely discussed since the last phase of the New Town programme late in the 1960s. In stark contrast to many other countries, Britain does not have a tradition of national settlement planning. Indeed the New Growth Points policy – which is being taken forward in the Three Cities via the Regional Spatial Strategy review – could be seen as essentially ‘re-visiting’ the Expanded Town scheme from around 50 years ago (TCPA, 2007). Two key points can be drawn from this assessment:

- no evidence-based settlement planning has yet been developed, with new policies emerging which appear to be rather *ad hoc* and opportunistic, and
- there is a broadly consistent emphasis on brownfield urban development – and thus towards reversing city flight in practice – but city flight is not explicitly considered in most policies.

The unclear position of current government policies towards city flight can be shown with two examples. For all cities, the Barker (2006) review suggested that some new building in Green Belts may be appropriate: these are forms of urban extension (DCLG 2006a) which may be seen as sprawl, rather than strong urban containment. In the Sustainable Communities policy (ODPM 2003), the planned growth across much of south eastern England is a tacit recognition that city flight from London will continue and has to be accommodated. Providing additional housing in the south east is a choice in preference to using constraints there as a stimulus for a diversion of this growth potential to provincial cities which are at risk of further economic decline and population loss. This choice may indicate a view that policies to divert growth away from the south east will be unsuccessful in an era of globalisation when mobile capital can readily go off-shore rather than to cities where it has not voluntarily chosen to locate. This policy strategy to ‘work with the grain’ of prevailing location dynamics of the private sector may bring some better news for cities, according to the State of the English Cities report (Parkinson *et al*, 2006) which sees cities as the foci for the knowledge-based sectors which are central to much current policy. It may however be sensible to temper this optimism by recalling that for several decades at least such a *laissez faire* policy framework has not led to positive outcomes for the many cities which lost out in competition for economic development and the talented people who migrate to new opportunities.

More generally, a wide range of other policies have been put forward by central government to encourage greater household mobility. These include regional and sub-regional choice-based lettings in the social rented sector (Pawson *et al*, 2006)

and a strengthening of national mobility schemes (such as HOMES). There is a lack of definitive research investigating the impact of such initiatives on migration patterns including city flight. This is a particularly relevant issue for Derby and Nottingham because both cities have choice-based letting schemes and are discussing the possibility of extending them on a sub-regional basis in future.

3.2 Sectoral policies with city flight implications

In recent years it has become 'received wisdom' that mixed communities are a key to regenerating deprived neighbourhoods, many of which are to be found in cities. This issue can have a two-fold relevance to city flight:

- cities can ill-afford wasteful under-use or even actual abandonment of any areas when they face a shortage of land on which to supply the additional housing they require to stem population loss, and
- the social problems in deprived neighbourhoods have wider impacts which may make the whole city less attractive to people who can readily choose where they live.

As yet the hard evidence about the benefits of mixed communities is not in place. Meen *et al*, (2005) explicitly state that it is "not a panacea" to increase income mixing. Berube (2006) provides what is probably the most thorough review to date and concludes that the claims that people will be positively attracted to live in such areas are almost certainly over-optimistic: at best, the introduction of social mix helps the existing residents and is seen by incomers as nothing exceptional, in that most British cities have areas where houses of different tenures are near to each other. Tunstall and Coulter (2006) provide more detailed assessment of estates where residents' lives have improved, finding that increased mixing was not one of the major reasons for betterment and in one case had introduced significant problems. Galster (2007) offer theoretical grounds for seeing such uncertain outcomes as far from unexpected.

Before moving on from the social mix issue, it should be acknowledged that another dimension to social mix concerns social cohesion more generally, and ethnic and religious relations in particular (Cantle 2005). This is a major question within all the Three Cities – and Leicester most especially – but the clear point to make at this point in the report is that there is little in the way of national policy to guide local policy action. It is possible that the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in its final report in summer 2007 will comment on this issue. Although there is a clear wish for social cohesion, along with notable legislation to outlaw some behaviour which would threaten cohesion, there has not been a serious attempt to tackle the thorny question of how, or indeed whether, to actively promote a much greater mixing of communities of differing ethnicities and religions.

One rather distinctive policy sector with recent policy developments of relevance here is transport. At the EU scale there is increasing interest in the role of cities within their own regions and as a key to greater cohesion and, in the longer term, also to sustainability (European Commission 2006). From this international perspective it is clear not only that transport provision is fundamental to settlement patterns but that for some considerable time many other countries have used transport policy to facilitate the changes they seek to bring about. The recent Eddington (2006) report has belatedly recognised the importance which firms have increasingly placed on access issues. What is not yet clear is whether the policy response will be to facilitate dispersion out from cities, as may well be the expressed preference of many firms, or invest in high capacity public transport to support further urban development. A recent succession of failed proposals for urban tram schemes is not suggestive of 'city friendly' transport policy, but the biggest uncertainty remains the position taken by the government over the alternative future strategies for extending road pricing, now that the London congestion charge scheme is almost universally seen as having a positive benefit on the capital through cutting congestion and pollution (Crookston *et al*, 2006).

Issues such as pollution fall within the 'liveability' agenda which is another policy 'sector' where there has been recent innovation. The government has set out its aspirations for a "Cleaner Safer Greener" England and provided some guidance which highlights, in particular, the role of welcoming town centres and good quality parks and open spaces. Although it is noteworthy that Garrod and Willis (1992) found proximity to woodland measurably increases the price of houses, it remains less clear whether such broad objectives as "Cleaner Safer Greener" – which are unlikely to be opposed by anyone – will be backed by the government with much new funding or by a willingness to enshrine them in legislation with robust sanctions (Crookston *et al*, 2006). As yet, the evidence base is relatively weak on these issues, although Cabe (2004) claim support for the value of quality green space and Silverman *et al*, (2006) include this among the factors seen as important to families with children.

Recent research by Urbed (2007) on a small sample of medium-sized British and European cities placed strong emphasis upon improvements in the areas' liveability as an element in regeneration strategies which succeeded. Among other recent reviews is some work showing the importance to people of good quality public space – such as a market – and the benefits to social cohesion (e.g. Dines *et al*, 2006). What has to be recognised is that liveability is only likely to stand comparison with other migration drivers such as employment prospects if it is defined in a broad way which includes local service provision, and especially access to good quality schools

for all ages (e.g. Silverman *et al*, 2006). This broad definition can then also embrace quality of life factors such as the local level of crime (Innes and Jones 2006). Tunstall and Coulter (2006) have documented the gradual improvement in a range of liveability and many other attributes of previously unpopular estates: within some of these estates, action on liveability issues was especially important to residents, but in other cases it was very different concerns which were emphasised as either the priority issue or the key to any recent improvement. A final point here in relation to regeneration efforts which focus upon public realm improvements, or liveability more generally, is that it is nearly always difficult to attribute change to one particular policy instrument and so to assess any policy's effectiveness. This was recognised by Tunstall and Coulter (2006) and was strongly echoed by the study of a related Scottish policy by ODS (2007), with uncertainty seen as endemic in measures of the outcomes from regeneration programmes.

3.3 Regional strategies

Shifting attention to the regional scale brings a potentially more 'joined up' policy framework to the fore. The various regional strategies required by government can add up to an overall vision for the region which looks very different to the potentially conflicting policy-making in the various sectors of national policy. Certainly within the East Midlands the economic and spatial strategies are closely aligned in their drive for a growth in knowledge-based sectors based primarily within the cities. The bulk of new development is to be located in the region's main urban areas, and the need to raise the cities' housing profile is recognised as a priority to avoid choking off their potential growth. As noted already, it was the Regional Housing Strategy which identified city flight as a key issue to tackle. The partnership mode of working at the regional scale may be a key part of the reason for the coherence of these strategies. For example, the East Midlands Regional Assembly is initiating work on the new Regional Housing Investment Strategy (2008-2011) – to be followed by the revision of the Regional Housing Strategy – and one opportunity would be to consider more investment in decent neighbourhoods in cities. Perhaps what really deserves noting here is that a decade ago, before these arrangements were in place, it might have been thought impossible for a disparate set of local authorities to agree on a spatial pattern of investment priorities in the region. The government is now seeking to push further this changed policy environment by promoting more joint working at the city region scale, as well as implying in the local government White Paper (DCLG 2006b) that local authorities can expect to be legally required to work with neighbouring authorities and other stakeholders in the new 'place shaper' role assigned to them.

Local Development Frameworks to be prepared by local authorities need to fit with the Regional Spatial Strategy which is now a statutory document. Preparation of this

Strategy was led by the Regional Assembly but developed in partnership, with inputs from a range of stakeholders. It provides a strategic development policy framework for the region, covering housing, transport, and the spatial aspect of economic development activity. At present the Regional Spatial Strategy is being reviewed – with an updated version due in 2008 – and the outcome will have a key role to play in providing the policy context for where, and how much, new housing development takes place. Given the Strategy's importance to planning and regeneration policies related to city flight issues, the Strategy review is a key opportunity to address the challenges posed by current migration trends by responding specifically to the drivers of migration patterns in the Three Cities in particular.

An emerging level of policy making is the sub-region which is increasingly important in the East Midlands context especially. Groups of local authorities are currently underway with sub-regional housing market assessments (DCLG, 2007b) with the longer term intention of developing sub-regional housing strategies. In linking housing policy into a wider regeneration agenda, it is not ideal that the sub-regional HMAs have slightly different boundaries to the sub-regions which **emda** had earlier identified for economic development purposes. Possible local authority collaborative actions within city regions may create an additional set of sub-regional boundaries. Even so, this scale does seem to offer opportunities for addressing city flight issues, not least because the policy context for city local authorities is increasingly driven towards sub-regional partnership working.

Tackling the negative consequences of city flight is a fairly consistent priority across the three city regions, and on which both city and non-city authorities are most likely to reach consensus about broad objectives, if not detailed implementation strategies. There are some significant differences between the cities and these are discussed more fully in the next chapter. For example, the recognition by the government of the Core Cities group led to Nottingham joining it – after the group had been instigated by cities such as Manchester – and some Core Cities are in the vanguard of the development of city region working practices. In the key field of sub-regional housing market analysis and policy development, the early work by Derby City Council on its housing and planning strategies was supported by data on migration flows to and from adjoining districts, with city flight recognised as the core concern, and the situation in the Nottingham city region is likely to prove to be similar. It is very encouraging that the Leicester and Leicestershire sub-region housing market assessment process is now getting underway, allowing the city and the county districts to work together with their shared interest in curtailing city flight.

4 City Flight Issues in the Three Cities

This chapter draws out major themes from stakeholders interviews (see Annex 3).

There was considerable interest among key stakeholders in the city flight concept but it was felt that the term was at least potentially misleading. The simple net loss of population through migration was considered less important than the question of which groups of people were prevalent among the out-movers and which among those moving into the cities.

City flight (and migration more generally) is an under-researched topic that housing needs studies had so far failed to investigate in any depth. Housing market assessments provide an opportunity to develop a better understanding of city flight.

There are both positive and negative aspects of city flight. For example, it provides opportunities for some households to meet their housing and quality of life aspirations. At the same time, it could lead to increasing levels of segregation between neighbourhoods.

From a policy perspective, a key issue is balancing the need for strategies that ameliorate the negative impacts without affecting the positive issues.

It is a useful time to research city flight because there are opportunities to review existing policies and strategies over the next year. In particular, there are opportunities to influence the policy agenda through the forthcoming reviews of both the regional housing strategy and the regional housing investment plan.

Policies and strategies need to reflect the different local circumstances in the Derby, Leicester and Nottingham city regions. Here the role of the housing market assessments is particularly important, both providing the detailed evidence within a city region, and also enshrining a commitment by adjacent local authorities to develop cross-boundary policies aiming to counter the negative implications of city flight.

This chapter *focuses* down to the Three Cities and also shifts emphasis somewhat to highlight current policy agendas. Core source material here is a set of interviews documenting the perceptions of key local and regional stakeholders: Annex 3 gives a summary of the material collected. This information can ‘ground truth’ the general lessons emerging from the literature review by discovering the local and regional understanding of the situation in the Three Cities with regard to net population movements away from their main urban areas. The interviews included questions which asked policy makers to:

- explain what they understood by the ‘city flight’ concept
- identify any positive or negative aspects of city flight from their perspective

- consider distinctive features of any of the Three Cities in relation to city flight
- focus on the policy challenges in overcoming the negative features of city flight.

The answers to these questions are now reported in turn within the next four sections of this chapter. It should be noted that this part of the research was undertaken during the early stages of the project, so the findings from the literature review and statistical analyses were not available at the time. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted face-to-face or by telephone: Annex 3 gives a fuller thematic summary of the findings, and lists the interviewees who were from a wide range of relevant organisations.

4.1 Understanding of city flight by stakeholders

There was considerable debate among stakeholders on the definition of city flight. There was a general consensus that it – and the associated concept of white flight – was at least potentially a misleading term. A simple overall outward migration from cities was not felt to be city flight necessarily: what makes the process really significant is more wealthy economically active middle-income households with children moving out of the major urban areas, to be replaced by a more diverse and transient population. The latter category is likely to include students, migrant workers and family households with a lower socio-economic status.

It was emphasised that such a definition was a generalisation. There are complex patterns of movement at a neighbourhood level *within* as well as between local authority areas. Summarising across the interviewees, there was felt to be a need for robust assessments of migration occurring over several spatial scales:

- between local authorities in each of the city regions
- between each city and areas outside their city region
- between each city and adjoining rural areas
- between neighbourhoods with differing socio-economic profiles.

The overall view was that city flight is a significant but under-researched topic which has been over-looked in previous housing needs studies. As a result, some policies had been developed and implemented that did not fully take account of processes driving city flight or, more generally, of other key migration issues.

4.2 Positive and negative aspects of city flight

The reasons why city flight is becoming a more significant policy issue for many stakeholders were that it has numerous negative implications, although it was recognised that there was also a small number of positive factors associated with it.

The following main negative considerations were identified.

- 1 Potential loss from cities of household expenditure to suburban retail and leisure service centres: it was however acknowledged that there was relatively little empirical research to verify this assumption.
- 2 Contribution to a negative image of cities as wealthy households migrated away to suburban and rural areas and gave the reason as, for instance, poor schools.
- 3 Substantial numbers of out-migrants commuting back to work in the city would have impacts on levels of pollution, congestion and the demand for improved transport infrastructure.
- 4 Potential increase in socio-economic segregation and polarisation between the city and more rural areas.
- 5 Cost of delivery of services to, and the need for regeneration of, declining urban neighbourhoods with increased proportions of vulnerable and poor households.
- 6 Unintended consequences of tackling city flight through, for example, city centre living strategies resulted in over-supply of small apartments (in Leicester and Nottingham in practice).
- 7 Impact on suburban and rural areas, with increased pressure for residential land allocations, rising house prices and difficulties of meeting local people's needs.

Discussions of the impact of city flight on local economies did not reach consensus. If city flight is primarily seen as movement to suburban and rural areas within the same city region, then the direct impact may be limited because households are likely to remain in the same labour market and travel to work area.

Fewer positive aspects of city flight were mentioned, but they were not insubstantial.

- 1 Opportunity for at least some types of households to meet their housing aspirations and other needs (e.g. better secondary education for children).
- 2 Ability to regenerate inner city areas and develop new communities on the brown-field sites created as neighbourhoods change and decline.
- 3 Reducing the excess of housing demand in the cities where the lack of large sites for new house-building poses major constraints on the possibility of adding to supply within the built-up area.
- 4 The prospect of new innovative thinking to meet the aspirations of households.

The view was that city flight is a long-standing process that will be very difficult to alter by policy intervention. Thus the more realistic aspiration that stakeholders expressed is instead to ameliorate its more negative impacts.

4.3 Differences between the Three Cities

Although many of the principles and challenges affect all the Three Cities and their respective housing market areas, some significant differences were identified by the

key stakeholders. There were differences of emphasis in the positive and negative aspects of city flight in each city region, but first there were points made about the relative scale and significance in the different cities.

Housing Market Areas (HMAs) for Derby and Nottingham have been tightly defined geographically and there are significant levels of migration to areas beyond these HMAs and, to the south of Derby especially, over the East Midlands boundary itself. This is less evident in the Leicester HMA case, because it covers the whole of the Leicestershire county area. At a more local scale, socio-economic change was seen as particularly acute within the cities of Derby and Leicester as a result of household movement between neighbourhoods. In the two largest city regions of Leicester and Nottingham there was felt to be a strong flight from the urban to the more rural areas within the HMAs, and this could be obscured by too strong a focus on local authority boundaries because many of these included both urban and rural areas within them.

There was a considerable interest among most stakeholders in Leicester on the related concept of white flight: this was seen as increasing residential segregation based on ethnicity. Leicester was the city most likely to be cited as facing this issue most acutely. Not entirely different is the 'studentification' of some neighbourhoods, and the recent and further planned growth of student numbers in Leicester and Nottingham were discussed as possible triggers for increased city flight with families in particular moving out of neighbourhoods where students came to predominate. Alternative views were also expressed, noting that increased numbers of students had helped to revitalise city centres over the last decade. A linked debate focussed on Leicester and Nottingham concerned the mix of intended and unintended impacts of the promotion of city centre living for both young professionals and students.

In relation to the positive and negative consequences of city flight, there were some subtle and some strong differences in emphasis among the stakeholders concerned with the different cities.

- The potential impact of loss of household expenditure to the city economy from city flight was much more strongly emphasised in Leicester where the potential leakage of spending to the larger cities of Nottingham and Birmingham is already the cause for concern.
- One particular focus in Nottingham was on the pressures on transport infrastructure at peak times from commuting into the urban core if more city workers live further away.
- Leicester has a growing multi-cultural image, this was highlighted as a positive feature by some, notwithstanding the 'white flight' debate which is such a delicate political and policy matter.

- Less controversial is the issue of school quality in Nottingham because there city flight is very widely linked to the poor exam results in the city's schools.
- Nottingham also suffers from high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour which have a strong negative impact on the image of the city (as exemplified by police data on the city's crime rate featuring in a recent television programme on the worst places to live).

From the other end of the spectrum, city flight itself has strong negative connotations for the less urban local authorities in Leicestershire which wish to preserve what they see as their primarily rural character from the encroachment of urban dwellers.

4.4 Policy Challenges

The key policy themes discussed with stakeholders aimed to meet three objectives.

- 1 Understanding migration and socio-economic change at a range of spatial scales so as to help create more robust policies.
- 2 Identifying a policy framework with the aim of alleviating the more negative effects of city flight without detrimentally impacting on the positive aspects.
- 3 Recognising that the nature and scale of city flight differs in the Three Cities and their HMAs so policies need to be developed to reflect these local requirements.

The more detailed policy challenges discussed are now grouped into three themes. The first theme is the meeting of the needs of different communities and customers, the second theme is focussed on distinct 'sectoral' policy areas (such as housing, planning, urban regeneration and education), whilst the third theme centres on the policy-making process itself.

Meeting the needs of different communities and customers

A recurring area of debate was the implications of city flight for different communities and customers. In particular, policies have to be framed in the knowledge that they are dealing with the challenge of seeking to balance the interests of different groups. Numerous conflicting pressures were identified, including the following:

- aspirations of those wanting low density detached owner-occupied houses with gardens in the suburbs and rural fringe locations, together with the quality schools that are not necessarily available within the cities
- the constrained expectations of low income households in the cities who are wanting to get onto, or move up the rungs of, the owner-occupation ladder
- the requirements of young mobile economically active households for city centre living (including students and young professional households)
- the resentment of the existing rural communities at the urbanisation of their settlements' character where there is large scale new house-building and

- the needs of households living in declining neighbourhoods in the cities (although it was, of course, appreciated that there were many factors other than city flight that are implicated in this set of problems).

Policies on housing, planning, urban regeneration and education

In relation to substantive policy areas, the following challenges were highlighted.

- Intermediate housing, including Homebuy products, emerged as an important policy area. It was acknowledged, however, that even at 25% the affordability of Homebuy was increasingly problematic, especially when households would have to take responsibility for repairs, maintenance, buildings and insurance.
- The difficulty of developing low/moderate density market houses with gardens in the cities was blamed on the lack of sites, planning restrictions and limited financial viability. Ideal sites would be large, forming new neighbourhood and so justifying their own service provision (such as early age schools).
- RSLs tend to favour mixed tenure schemes, especially in regenerating former council estates. Shared ownership and low cost owner occupied properties can be aimed successfully at households who are able to afford the bottom rung of the owner occupied market, but such schemes would not meet the needs of households dependent on housing benefits.
- There are challenging issues (especially in Leicester) over the future of large areas of older private rented or owner occupied housing that were improved through GIAs/HAA's in 1970s. Clearance and redevelopment may become the policy option, but there may be considerable community opposition to any such strategies.
- City centre living is a significant issue, in that policies in all the cities focussed on attracting young mobile households. Leicester and Nottingham now have an over-supply and relatively high levels of vacancies for some types of flats. There was a consensus that more spacious and better quality apartments were needed. The unanimous view is that family housing in city centres is unattractive to most customers and unlikely to be financially viable.
- The importance of improving the perception of the quality of education provision in the cities, especially at secondary school level, was emphasised. This was considered to be a major driver of city flight for more affluent households with children. There is current over-capacity in all three city authorities' schools but the plans to improve the quality of provision are very long term.
- In the case of Leicester and Nottingham there was some debate on the impact of the growth of the student population. Both cities attract undergraduate and postgraduate students from the UK and elsewhere that mostly leave once they have completed their courses. The retention of more

graduates might help city economies, but for the present there are concerns over the impact of growing student neighbourhoods on local communities.

- There is a need for co-ordinated investment approaches at a neighbourhood level by key agencies so that, for example, the regeneration of social housing areas should be, as suggested by Hills (2007), linked to training and job opportunities and improved education facilities.

The policy making process

From a policy-making perspective, there was a general recognition that there was now an opportunity to rethink existing strategies. It is anticipated that the housing market assessments will provide the basis for the development of more robust cross-boundary policies that will tackle the negative implications of city flight.

At the same time, there are a number of other policy making developments that provide an opportunity during the next year. These include the on-going process for taking forward policies within local development frameworks, and most especially the work towards the Regional Housing Investment Strategy (due in summer 2007) in which funding could target initiatives that counter the negative effects of city flight. This can be linked to the review this year of the Regional Housing Strategy in which city regions have the opportunity to put forward policies to address city flight issues.

One general implication is that the various regional Strategies need to avoid being too prescriptive, otherwise they will not facilitate the development of policies which are 'fit for purpose' in individual city regions. The linkage at the sub-regional scale between the partnerships conducting housing market assessment and economic development planning is then important. New organisational forms, such as city region scale authorities or substantially extended city development companies, remain as possible policy process options.

5 *Migration Patterns in the Three Cities*

This chapter presents some specially-conducted analyses of migration statistics.

As elsewhere in this report, the Three Cities are defined as conurbations for the purpose of these analyses. They are all shown to be losing Higher Managerial and Professional (HMP) people, but this is somewhat exaggerated picture due to the limited level of graduate retention in the two larger cities especially.

All the Three Cities have seen HMP people move out to more rural areas within their city regions at a faster rate than most other large British cities experienced.

In terms of migration geography:

- Nottingham has strong local net outflows, but strong inflows from parts of the UK beyond its city region;
- Leicester has had a broadly similar experience, but with many young people from nearby more rural areas moving into the city;
- Derby has largely balanced flows, both across the age range and over most scales.

International in-migration has increased, and more recently has diffused out from the cities, although there is still a major gulf in levels of diversity between city and rural areas.

The main drivers of longer-distance migration were expected to be job related, but the indicators tested only partially confirmed this hypothesis: there was also a possible link to crime rates, perhaps due to the bad publicity Nottingham in particular has attracted on this issue.

Crime risk was expected to be more related to shorter distance migration and the analyses do suggest strongly that local out-migration from cities could be related to differing burglary rates.

Another powerful influence in the analyses is having good local schools; this echoes many local perceptions, with the situation in and around Nottingham a particular concern.

Another possible factor in localised city flight patterns examined in the analyses is 'White flight' – that is, a net flow of ethnic minority groups into the city at the same time as the net flow for 'White' people is away from the city – but the evidence on this was ambivalent in Leicester and even less convincing in the other two cities.

There was more supportive evidence for owner occupation as a key city flight issue; that said, finding an association between the higher home ownership levels in the outer parts of city regions' rates and these areas having higher in-migration rates does not prove a cause-and-effect link between decentralisation and home ownership aspiration.

This chapter pulls together the most reliable and recent statistical information and assesses the evidence on the extent to which the migration pattern in each of the Three Cities can be considered to be one of city flight. In part this is done through looking at each city's distinctive profile and 'bench-marking' it against that of relevant comparator cities. These analyses can establish whether the Three Cities – either all of them or one or two – are showing particularly clear evidence of the characteristics which the literature review had identified as strong indicators of a city flight pattern. In addition, it is important to examine the data to either support or cross-check the perception of the situation 'on the ground' which the local and regional stakeholders had reported. The analyses proceed first through an investigation of key recent migration patterns, then examines the evidence on a selection of migration drivers which have been cited in earlier chapters. Where appropriate, references are made to the two parallel migration studies commissioned by **emda** which reported during this research project (Green *et al*, 2007, Experian 2007).

5.1 International migration

International migration involves flows that for a number of reasons need to be dealt with separately and so is considered first here. One technical reason for considering these flows separately is that the relevant and available datasets are much less complete in their coverage with, most importantly, sources such as the Census only covering inflows and not outflows. International flows could be making a substantial contribution to city flight, with the most recent evidence (Green *et al*, 2007) showing

- a notable upward shift of in-migration from abroad,
- in the East Midlands as most English regions, the cities are prominent among 'gateway' locations,
- but the recent large inflow from central and eastern Europe has been different because many rural areas have seen very significant numbers arriving there.

The available datasets do not allow the tracking of the onward migration by previous international in-migrants: this means that it is not possible to discover whether even a large inflow to an area actually has any significant effect on demand for housing, for example, because the number of recent in-migrants who are living in the area may even have fallen depending on the number who during that year moved away (either to another part of this country, or as repeat international migrants out of this country altogether, such as back to their country of origin). Three points are worth making here about international migration and city flight patterns.

- The first is the least important: the recent strong inflow of migrants from eastern and central Europe provides, in passing, a justification for the decision here to take the whole built-up area as the Three Cities definitions. This is because Stenning *et al*, (2006) show that there was a more intense

inflow of A8 migrants to Gedling than to the 'core' local authority area of the city of Nottingham (with which it is grouped as part of the broad conurbation whose potential city flight patterns are analysed below).

- The second point is that the concentration on cities as gateway areas in the East Midlands – illustrated for 1995-2005 by Experian (2007) – appears to be declining in the most recent years (Green *et al*, 2007). This means that other areas may become more like the cities in having diverse population profiles, and this change will in fact loom all the larger in more rural areas because the diversity which has resulted from the rather sudden inflows of A8 migrants was a sharp departure from their previous very high levels of homogeneity.
- The third point is the most important. International migration to the cities – which may well increase given their expected knowledge-based growth (including overseas student flows) – can also have indirect impacts through the reactions of some existing city residents against rising levels of diversity. The term 'white flight' is relevant where a net inflow of non-White people can be linked with a net outflow of White residents: in practice, A8 migrants are White so this is not a relevant term in relation to the most recent large inflow.

It is impossible to fully analyse the impact of international migration on English cities due to the lack of data on out-migration flows: producing scenarios is one option for side-stepping the lack of actual data, as in the report of Experian (2007). Even if the flow datasets were more adequate, it is not at all likely that confident estimates can be made of the indirect impacts of international migration on city flight because the literature and the local stakeholders identify possibilities ranging from a negative response by existing residents through to a positive boost to the city economy through its enhanced cultural diversity (e.g. Stenning *et al*, 2006).

5.2 The geography of within-UK migration to and from the Three Cities

The literature review (Annex 2) emphasises the importance of distinguishing between longer- and shorter-distance flows of migrants. The focus here on cities means that the most relevant version of this distinction is that between the flows which are to or from the rest of a city's own city region, and the flows which cross that city region boundary. Annex 1 specifies how the term city region is defined here; it also relates these city region boundaries to the Housing Market Areas (HMAs) around the Three Cities and shows how the pattern of migration from the cities maps onto HMA boundaries in practice. Table 1 lists the local authority areas which make up the approximate built-up areas taken to define the Three Cities themselves in the analyses which follow below: these are PUAs (viz: Primary Urban Areas) as defined in the State of the English Cities research (Parkinson *et al*, 2006). Table 1 also lists the local authority areas which make up the city regions (Champion *et al*, 2007).

Table 1 Definition of PUAs and city regions of the Three Cities

Unitary local authority (LA) which is the 'core' City	other LAs included in the continuously built-up PUA (see Parkinson <i>et al</i> , 2006)	other LAs included in the City Region (see Champion <i>et al</i> , 2007)
Derby		Amber Valley East Staffordshire South Derbyshire
Leicester	Blaby Oadby & Wigston	Charnwood Harborough Hinckley & Bosworth Melton North West Leicestershire Rutland
Nottingham	Broxtowe Erewash Gedling	Ashfield Mansfield Newark & Sherwood Rushcliffe Amber Valley Bolsover

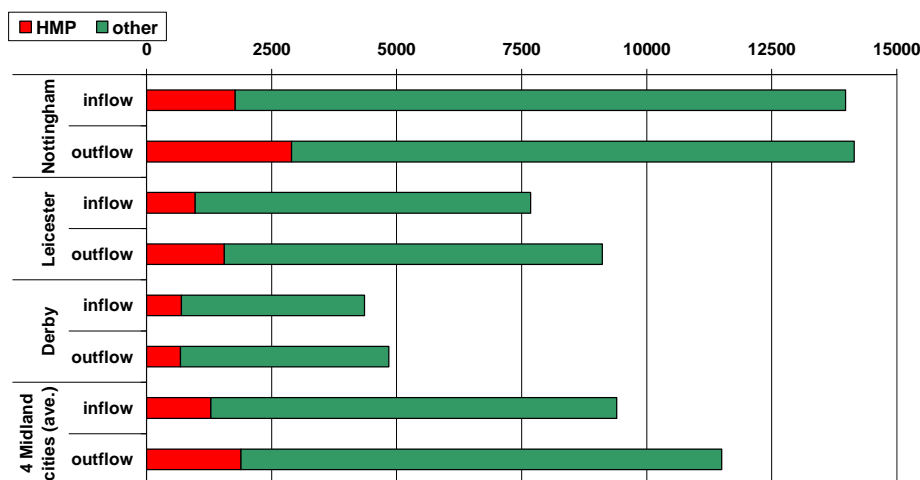
The analyses carried out especially for this research use the 2001 Census datasets on people who changed address in the previous 12 months. A point of clarification needed here is that some Census data tables report on flows of individual migrants (e.g. when they report migrants' age) whilst some of the most useful tables are for Moving Group Reference Persons (MGRPs): this category is defined so that it can **identify the person likely to be the highest earner** among any group of migrants living in the same household in 2001 who had also lived in the same place as each other 12 months ago. In fact, the term "Group" in the MGRP title could cause misunderstanding because a very substantial proportion of MGRPs were the only member of the "group" who migrated between those two addresses (nb. the large number of students in the migration data make up a large share of solo migrants). The major opportunity provided by the MGRP data is to look at the flows of highly skilled people. Following the approach of Champion *et al*, (2007), a principal focus here is on the Higher Managerial and Professional (HMP) workforce segment which is seen as potentially vital to cities' prospects for sustained economic development.

Migration flows: MGRPs

Figure 1 shows the level of MGRP flows to and from the Three City PUAs. The first finding here – echoing the results of Experian (2007) despite the rather different forms of measurement in the two studies – is that all the Three Cities are indeed net losers from these migration exchanges. For all three, the outflow bar is longer than the inflow one. Leicester is doing least well in this way, although its net loss is less

than the average value for the 4 comparator Midland⁵ cities: thus as Figure 1 shows, the gap between the lowest pair of bars is wider than that for any of the other pairs. Figure 1 also shows, in the left-most part of each bar, the values for HMP people. Here the results are perhaps most disappointing for Nottingham because its overall result – a near balance of inflows and outflows – masks a noticeable net loss for the HMP category which the city is seeking to attract to foster knowledge-based growth in particular (and this despite the ‘buzz’ of the city that Hardill *et al*, (2003) had found to be attractive to high skilled in-migrants). Derby has the healthiest result here, although HMP flows can be seen to play a relatively small part in its migration flows.

Figure 1: All MGRPs to/from PUAs in 2000/1



This relative success of Derby in tending to hold on to its rather small segment of highly skilled people may in part relate to its distinctive economic base of advanced manufacturing activities (Simmie *et al*, 2006). On a more technical note, there is an unmeasurable ‘bias’ in the Census data: areas’ departing graduates – unlike their arriving students – make up a fair proportion of HMP flows, with the consequence that the larger student populations of Leicester and Nottingham rather artificially inflate these two cities’ HMP outflows (Champion and Coombes 2007).

Migration flows: individual migrants

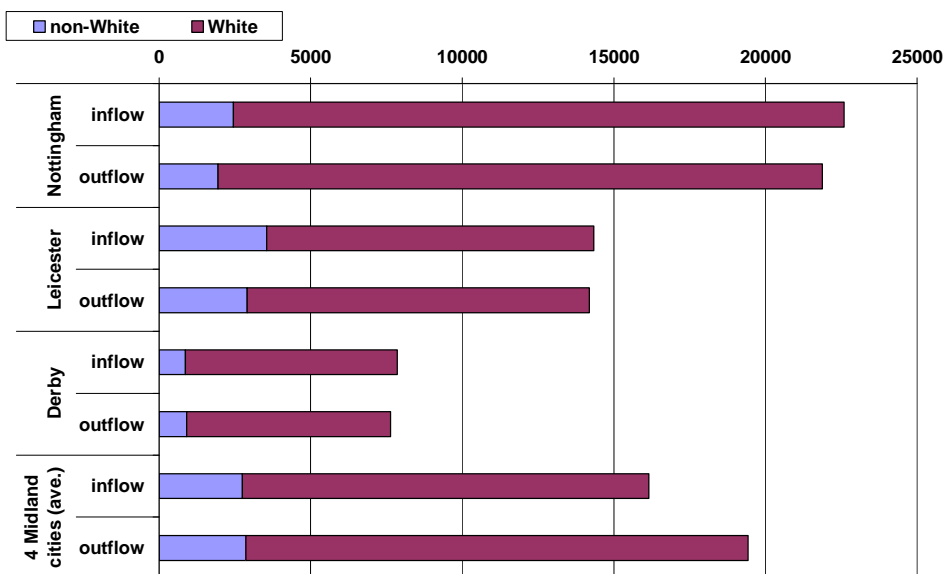
Figure 2 shifts the analysis to equivalent data on all migrants (that is, not MGRPs), and here the flows identified separately relate to the “non-White” category which the Census data identifies. It is notable that on this basis all the Three Cities become net gainers from migration, whereas the comparator Midland cities remain net losers. Without further rehearsing the complex statistical characteristics of the Census data, the simplest implications to draw from this are that (a) the Three Cities are not losing population through migration so rapidly as to produce negative results regardless of

⁵ Weighted average of Birmingham + Stoke + Coventry + Northampton PUAs (Champion *et al*, 2007)

how the measurement was done, and (b) are all doing rather better than the comparator group.

Figure 2 shows that in 2000-1 there was no net inflow to Derby of people from ethnic minority groups. There was a non-White net inflow to Nottingham but this was close to being in proportion to the overall net inflow to that city. Thus only in Leicester does Figure 2 find any evidence of ‘white flight’ in that there was a – numerically small – net outflow of White people at the same time as a net inflow of migrants from minority ethnic groups. Turok *et al*, (2006), for example, document a level of unease over the ethnic diversity of Leicester: this was felt less in the city itself than in the adjacent more rural areas.

Figure 2: All migrants to/from PUAs in 2000/1



Migration flows of individuals: shorter- and longer-distance movers

The next step is to distinguish between longer-distance flows and those within each city region. Figures 3 to 5 provide this breakdown, further disaggregating the longer migrant flows between those to or from the London city region and those to other parts of the country. Comparing across the three charts, and still *focussing* on the net migration shown by the relative length of the bars in each, it can be readily seen that the ‘odd one out’ is Figure 3 because it consistently has larger outflows than inflows whilst this is not true for the other two charts. Put simply, it is very common for cities to lose in their migration exchanges with the rest of their city regions, whereas the Three Cities gain from the balance of the migration inflows and outflows with areas beyond their own city regions. Experian (2007) show this level of decentralisation to be proceeding apace through to 2005 (although it should be noted that those analyses use unitary and county local authorities as to represent the cities and wider city regions respectively).

Figure 3 Migrants between PUAs and the rest of their City Regions in 2000/1

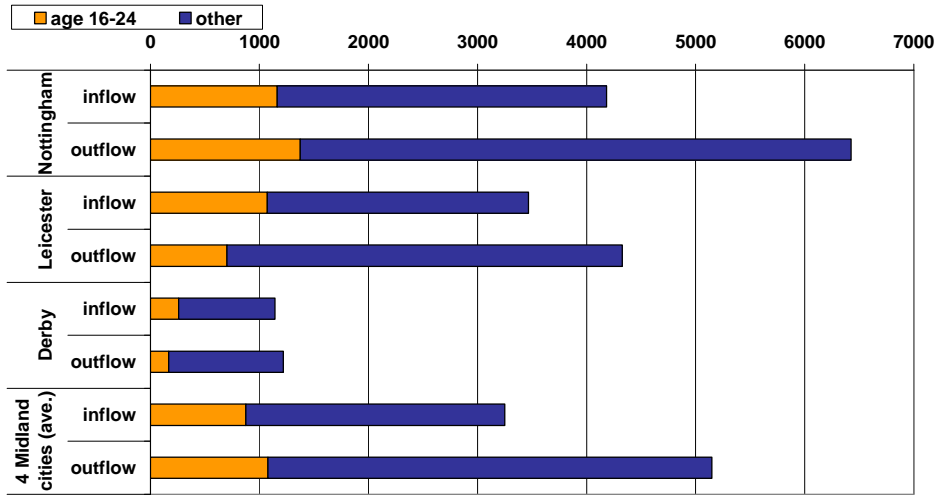


Figure 4 Migrants between PUAs and the London City Region in 2000/1

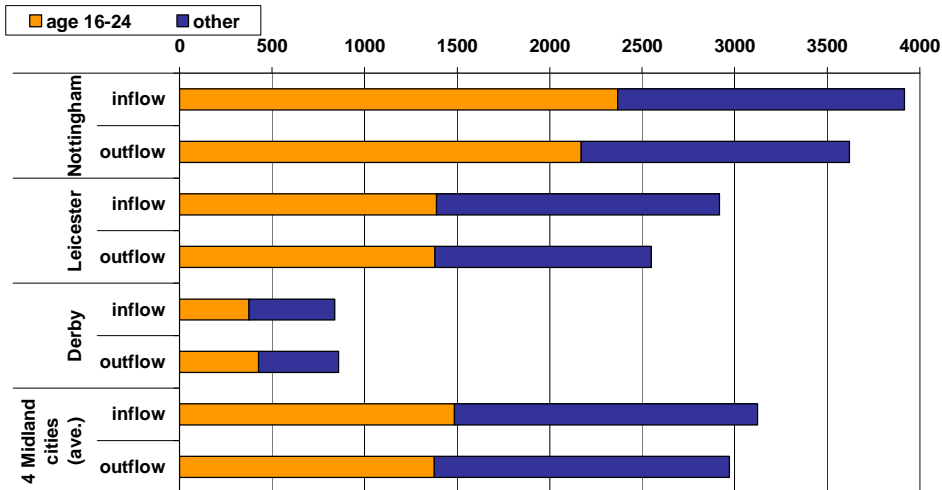
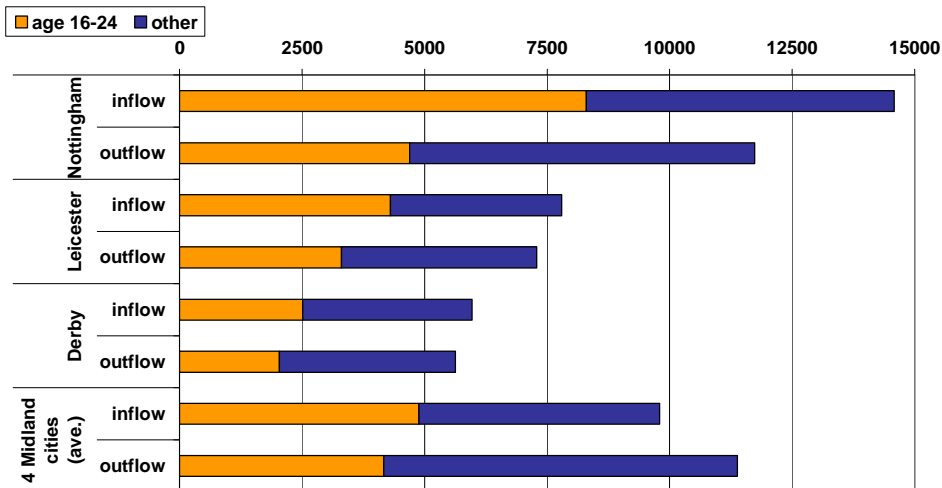


Figure 5 Migrants between PUAs and other parts of the UK in 2000/1



Here then is some clear evidence of a form of city flight: all the Three Cities have seen net out-migration due to larger flows to – than those from – the more rural parts of their city regions. By contrast, Figure 5 shows that all the Three Cities have seen net in-migration from the rest of the UK and once again the comparator Midland cities show that the Three Cities are performing relatively well. In addition, this positive result also applies to the migration exchanges between the two largest cities and the London city region (Figure 4).

Figures 3 to 5 also pick out a sub-group of particular policy interest, in this case the age group 16-24 who are the most likely to migrate longer-distances in fact. This full young adult age range aims to cover all the further/higher education period for most young people, so that net shifts over that age range indicate cities' relative success in 'replacing' school-leavers with a similar number of adults likely to be at an early stage in the labour market. Figure 5 shows that all the Three Cities gain young adults from parts of the UK that are not in either their own or London's city region, with Nottingham seeing a particularly strong net inflow for this group. Nottingham is the only beneficiary here from young people's migration to and from the capital, although Derby and Leicester are near 'breaking even' (Figure 4). Nottingham also proves to be the exception for young people's short-distance migration, but in this case it is the only city suffering net loss (Figure 3).

Migration flows of MGRPs: netflow balances between inflows and outflows

Figure 6 pulls together the key patterns in terms of net flows; note that in order to put the HMP category of migrants centre stage once again, the analyses shift back from numbers of individual migrants to counts of MGRPs (of which there is usually one per household). Figure 6 shows four bars for each city: the first represents flows between the city and the rest of its own city region, the second the net flow with the London city region, the third flows with all other parts of the country while the fourth shows the total of all within-UK net flows.

Thus it can be seen that **Nottingham**

- has local net outflows for both HMP and, more especially, other MGRPs
- also has net outflows – especially for HMP people – to London
- has a very strong net inflow of non-HMP people from the rest of the country
- in total, has migration flows which are almost in balance, but this is because
- there is a non-HMP net inflow as well as a strong HMP net outflow.

Turning now to **Leicester** the evidence in Figure 6

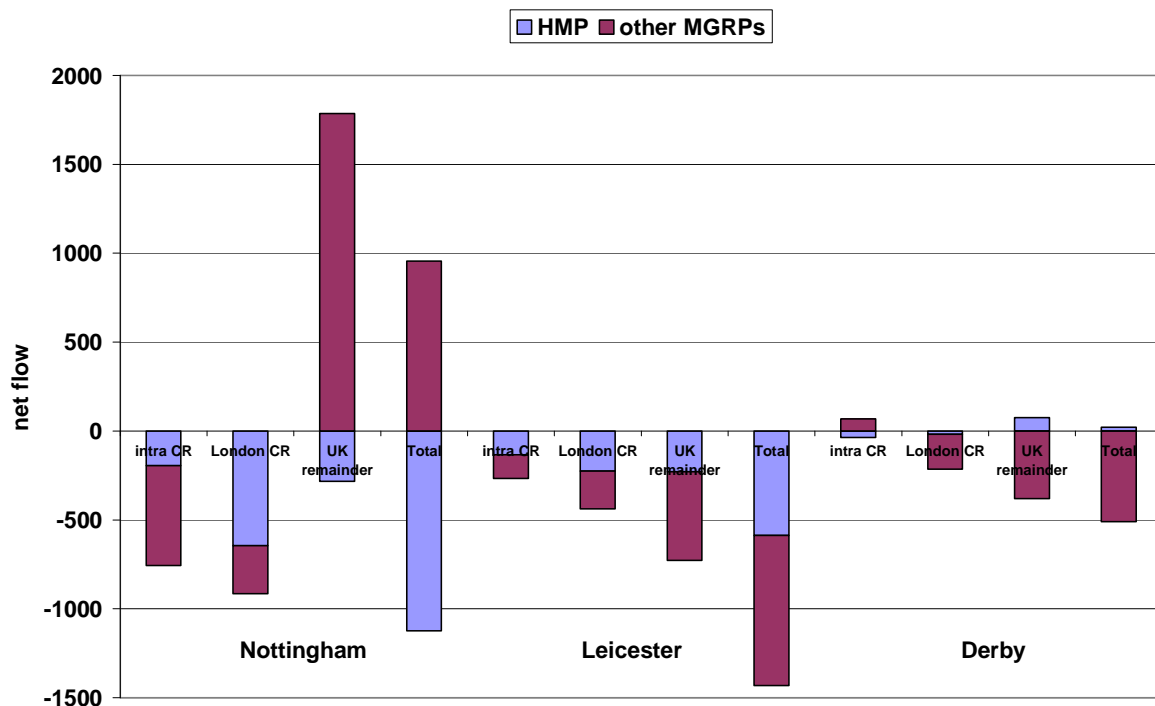
- shows net outflows for both categories of people in all three 'directions' and
- the net outflows are larger over longer-distances than more locally;
- although all the net flows are negative, no HMP net outflow is extremely high.

Finally the patterns for **Derby** show

- (as with Leicester) non-HMP flows are more negative over longer distances
- (unlike the other two cities) closely balanced flows of HMP people especially.

Three key points can be made on the basis of the Figure 6 results more generally. The first point is that the migration patterns of the Three Cities differ markedly as was anticipated. The second point is that for each of the Three Cities the results – whether they are more positive or negative – differ depending greatly on whether short- or longer-distance flows are being examined. The third point is that the sheer size of the net flows (as shown by the size of the bar, whether they extend upwards or downwards on Figure 6) for all the Three Cities is considerably greater for the longer-distance flows than for flows within their own city regions. What this suggests is that there may be more potential for changing the likelihood of a city losing people due to net migration flows through altering its attractiveness to people from outside its city region. That said, the factors which shape city attractiveness for longer-distance migrants were shown in chapter 2 to be mostly deep-seated and so not easy to change radically.

Figure 6 Summary of the net migration flows of the Three Cities in 2000/1



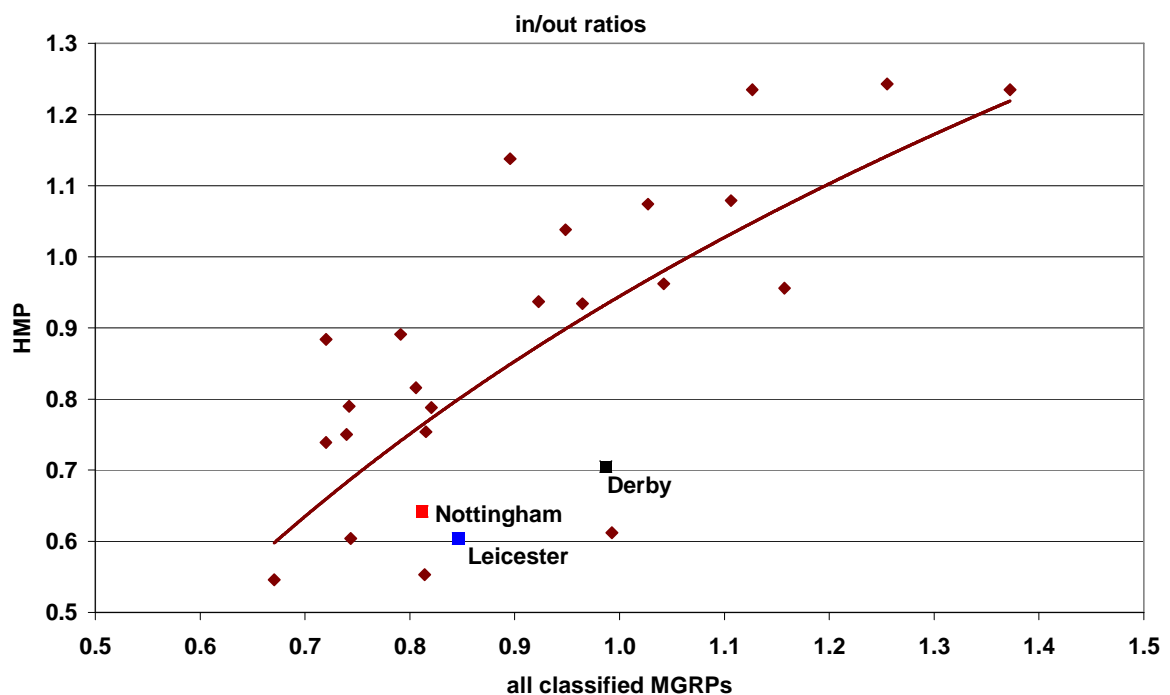
Migration of MGRPs: in/out ratios of flows within city regions

Figure 7 finally puts the focus on flows between cities and the remainder of their own city regions, plotting the in/out ratios for HMP people alongside those of all migrants who were classified by this socio-economic grading system. Figure 7 shows the results for the Three Cities in comparison to the other 24 large PUAs which are

analysed in a forthcoming report (Champion *et al*, 2007). Here the cities have their migration inflows and outflows measured with an in/out ratio which simply divides the number of in-migrants to a city by the number who moved in the opposite direction. Figure 7 plots the 27 cities by their HMP and total in/out ratios, and also shows the trend line for the general relationship between the two ratios. The majority of cities have values of less than 1.0 on both ratios, showing that decentralisation is the dominant pattern for England's larger cities.

All the Three Cities appear in or near the bottom half of the range of values on both the ratios, but this is especially true of the HMP values (the vertical axis of Figure 7). This pattern is common – if slightly less strong – in the clear majority of other cities. It is also true that this merely extends the suburbanisation by the better-off that has been happening over many decades. That said, it must also be recognised that the high status people are decentralising in the Three Cities' city regions more quickly than in most other city regions. All of the Three Cities are well below the trend line on Figure 7 (where the trend line shows the city HMP decentralisation rate that can be expected, for a given decentralisation rate of the city's total population). This indicates that – in comparison to most of the other 24 large British cities here – HMP people in the Three Cities are even more likely than their city neighbours to gravitate to the more rural surrounding areas. This could raise questions about urban/rural social polarisation, as well as sustainability concerns which follow if many of the out-migrants carry on working in the city.

Figure 7 Cities' in/out ratios with the rest of their own city regions



5.3 Drivers of longer-distance migration

Earlier chapters of this report have suggested a series of potential drivers of city flight migration patterns. The discussion in Chapter 2 especially broke down the influences between those more likely to influence longer-distance migrants and those particularly related to decentralisation within the same city region. This first part of the statistical analyses of migration drivers concentrates on the factors which relate to migration flows beyond a city's own city region. In brief, the key emphasis was placed on access to good job opportunities; there was also a possible link with higher house prices – though it is particularly unclear what is the cause and what the effect in this relationship – as well as access to universities for young adults. In the statistical modelling by Fotheringham *et al*, (2002) climate was a significant factor, but this is not examined here because no policy implications could follow.

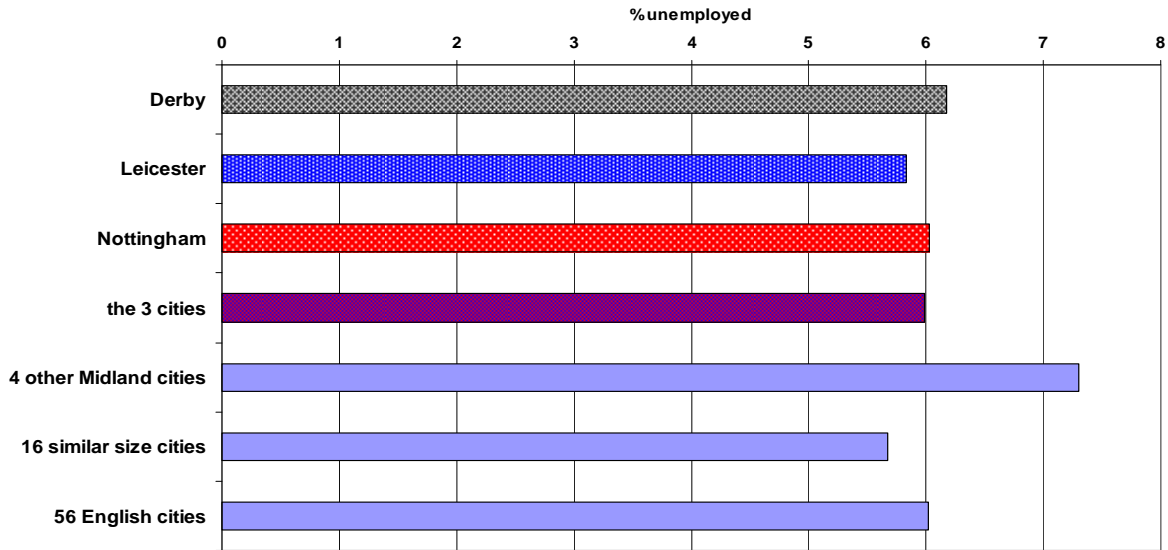
Looking at influences on longer-distance migration calls for a comparison of the Three Cities' values on the relevant indicators with values for cities with which they compete for the more mobile people. Data from the newly available State of the Cities Database⁶ gives values for 56 PUAs in England (Table 1 listed the groupings of whole local authority areas which approximate these continuously built-up areas). As well as this full set of cities, the following analyses present comparator data for the 4 other Midlands cities used in the earlier analyses, along with 16 cities which are of a similar size to the Three Cities of interest here.

Drivers of longer-distance migration: unemployment rates

Figure 8 illustrates the approach by comparing unemployment rates across the Three Cities and comparator groups. Although there is much evidence that levels of job opportunities are crucial to longer-distance migration patterns, this simple analysis does not focus on the more highly skilled groups who are the more prone to move long distances for improved job prospects. Put another way, the fact that there are relatively slight differences between the unemployment rates of these cities – and unemployment values highlight the experience of more marginal members of the workforce – helps to explain why low skilled unemployed people do not often migrate longer distances: they do not stand to benefit much by migrating.

⁶ This can be accessed at the following site: <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1504763>

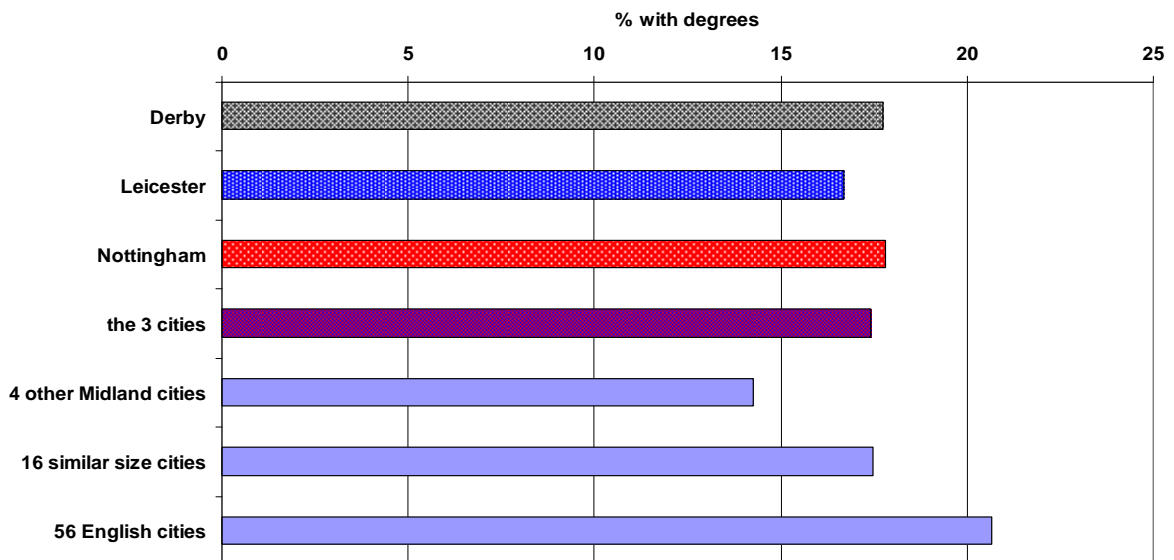
Figure 8 City unemployment rates 2001



Drivers of longer-distance migration: highly-qualified people

To follow up the earlier focus on longer-distance migration of HMP people, the next analysis concentrates on more highly skilled members of the labour-force (using the best available Census data viz. people with degree-level or higher qualifications). Figure 9 shows that all the Three Cities are found to be lagging in attracting well-qualified people behind the average for the set of 56 cities in the State of the Cities research, although they stand comparison with the more directly similar cities (the other 4 in the Midlands and the 16 of a similar size). Figure 1 earlier showed strong net outflows of HMP people from the Three Cities and at least part of the reason could be a movement to those other cities or regions where highly qualified people congregate: **London is the principal attraction for younger people such as recent graduates.**

Figure 9 City working age qualification levels 2001: % with degrees

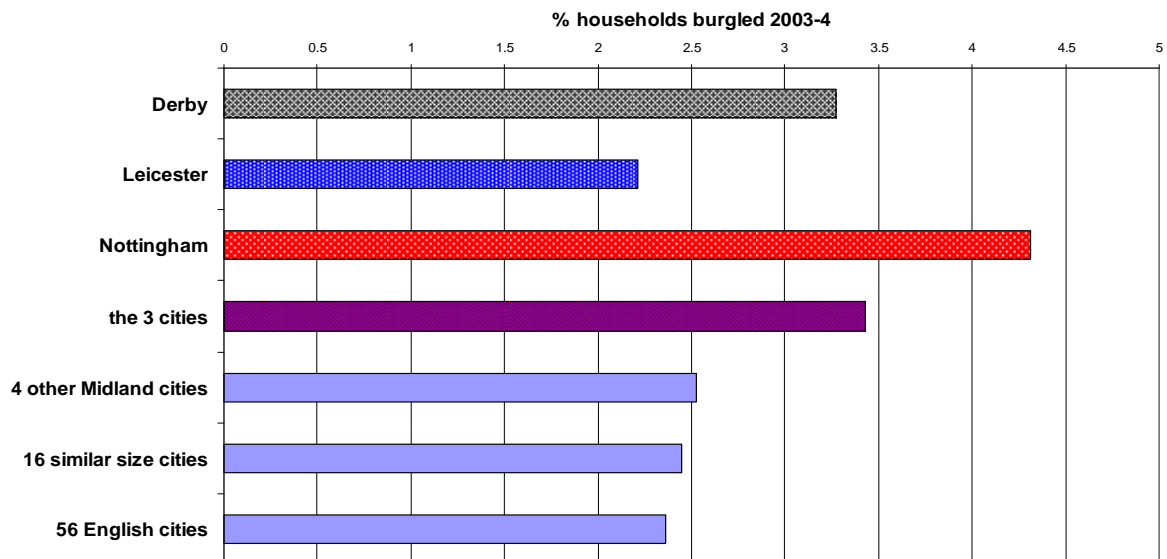


Drivers of longer-distance migration: crime rates

The literature review (Chapter 2) referred to the results of modelling of migration drivers which successfully predicted migration patterns, thereby providing empirical backing to hypotheses about the type of migration flow which a driver may influence. Yet in practice, a driver such as high crime levels may influence longer-distance and also more local migration patterns. As a result, a dataset on crime rates is analysed here to compare the Three Cities against other cities – as a potential driver of the longer-distance migration patterns – and subsequently it is also explored in the next section of the chapter which looks at more local drivers.

Figure 10 reveals a stark picture for Nottingham and Derby where households appear to be substantially more likely to be burgled than are their peers in the comparator city groups. Checking back against the longer-distance migration patterns shows that the crime risk values do not have a very close match to these migration patterns across the country; the longer-distance flows are not so strongly away from Nottingham in particular as might be expected from these crime rates. More detailed multi-variate modelling would be needed to see whether in fact the hypothesised relationship between crime risk and longer-distance migration does indeed hold true, but is being masked here by many other factors' influence which counter its effect for these cities.

Figure 10 City households burgled in 2003-4 (%)



5.4 Drivers of local decentralisation

This section of the chapter turns to migration drivers more associated with shorter distance moves, those remaining within city regions. At this point the key issue becomes the difference between the city and its surrounding areas, rather than

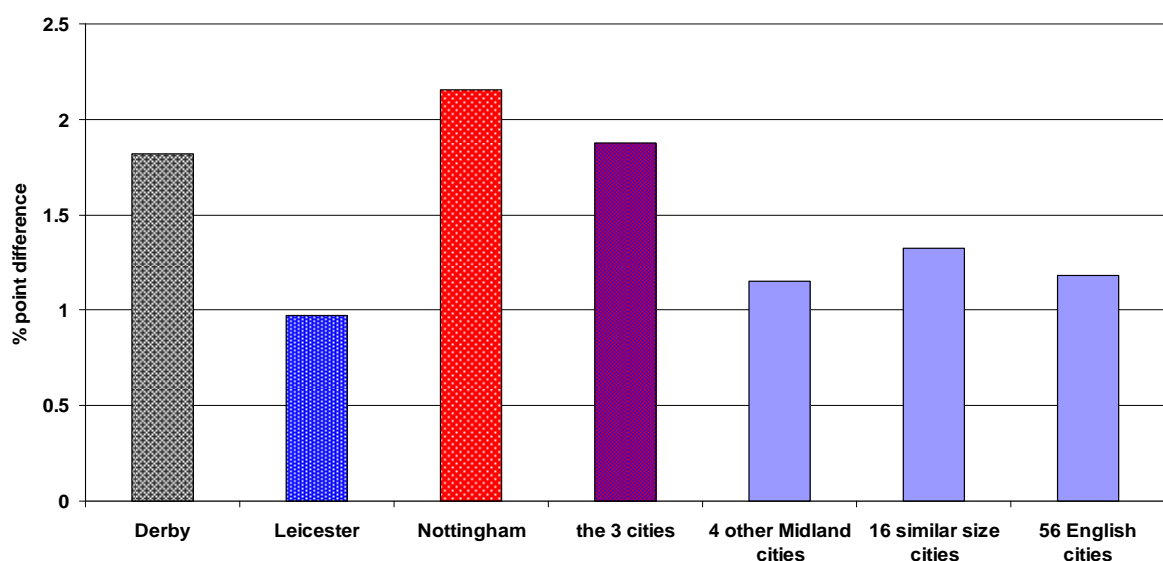
between it and other cities. Hence the standard measure for the remaining analyses is the **% point difference** between the value for the city on an indicator and the value for the other parts of the city's city region (nb. this section of the chapter represents the city region by the Travel to Work Area – TTWA – that covers that city, because this is the approach adopted in Parkinson *et al*, (2006) and hence the linked State of the Cities Database which is used here).

In the earlier discussions of the key drivers of more local migration flows, and a tendency for decentralisation in particular, the principal factors put forward were school quality and crime levels. There were also rather mixed messages about ethnic diversity and house prices. Other considerations were the area's ambience – which is rather too closely linked to rurality to be analysed here – and Council Tax rates, which are the responsibility of individual local authorities and so outwith the policy debates which this report is concerned with.

Drivers of local decentralisation: crime rates

Figure 11 carries forward the focus on crime risk but here looks at the relativities between each of the cities, or city groups, and their respective TTWAs. Given that Figure 10 showed most cities' burglary rates to be around the 2.5% level, it is quite startling that Figure 11 reveals almost all the city values to be over a full 1% higher than the same cities' wider city region rates. In other words, any person moving out of a city may halve their risk of being burgled. Looking back at the decentralisation rates of the Three Cities (Figure 3), the fact that Nottingham had the outlying value there when it also has a similarly extreme value here supports the suggestion that crime risk may be one of the stronger local migration drivers.

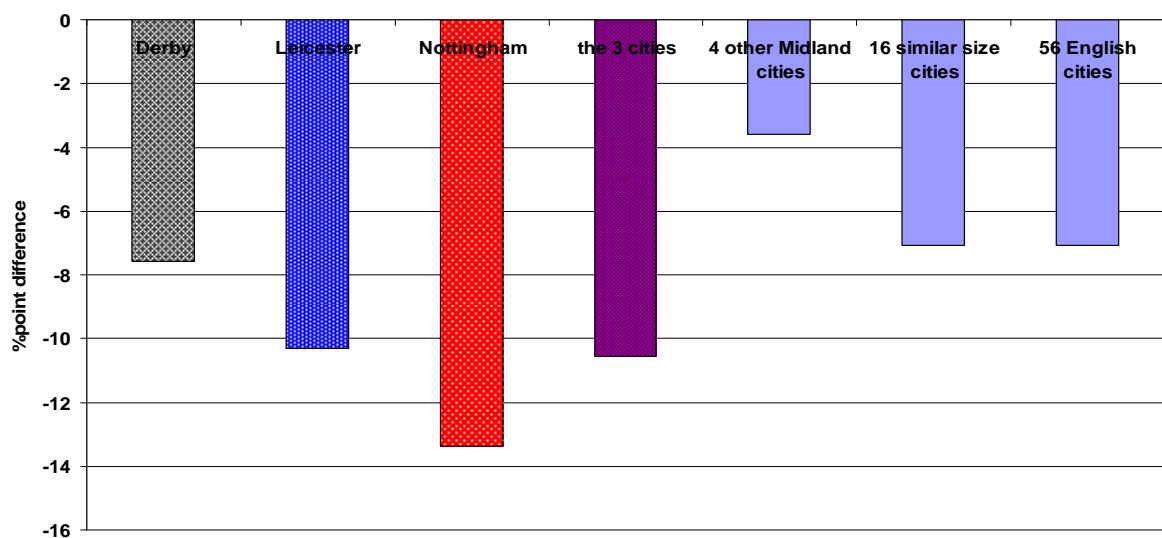
Figure 11 City-TTWA difference in risk of burglary 2003-4



Drivers of local decentralisation: school quality

Figure 12 turns to an indicator of the key 'good schools' factor in migration decisions. It is worth bearing in mind at this point the finding of Cheshire and Sheppard (2004) that there is statistically robust relationship between an area's house prices and the school quality measure used here *viz.* the % of 16 year olds who get five or more good GCSE results. It can be seen that Nottingham has a particularly large gap between the success rate in the main built-up area and in its wider city region. In this case the 'fit' with the migration pattern in Figure 3 is even closer, because the school quality values put Leicester rather than Derby as second to Nottingham and this is the same ordering as was found in the short-distance net out-migration levels for the cities.

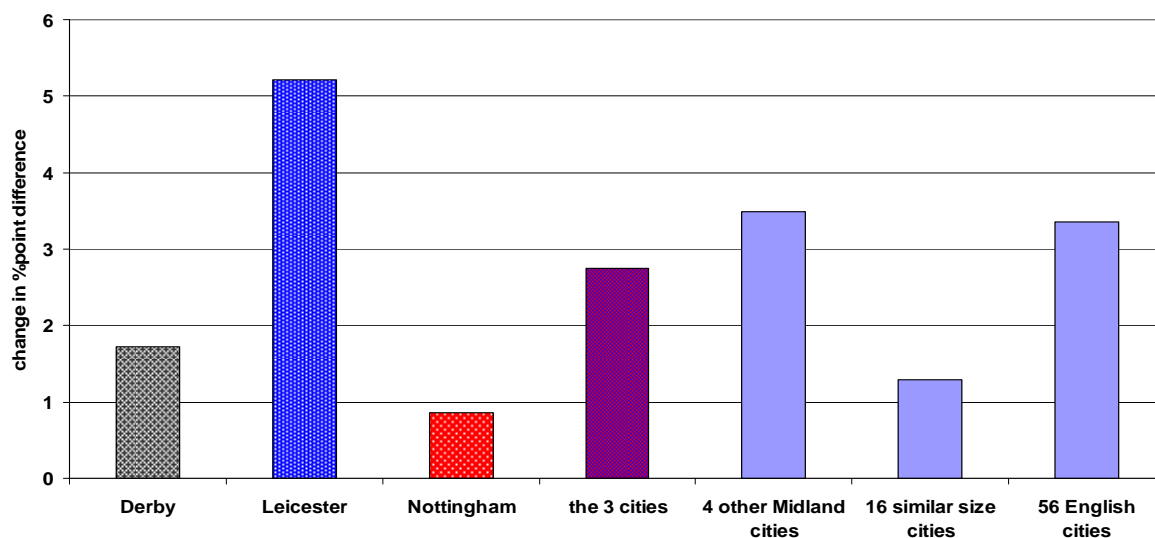
Figure 12 City-TTWA difference in proportion of 16 year olds getting 5 GCSEs



Drivers of local decentralisation: change in ethnic mix

It can be argued that for some factors the values at one point in time are less critical than the recent direction and scale of change. Figure 13 takes this perspective in its analysis of the proportion of non-White residents in each area, producing values which show how far the non-White proportion in the city is diverging from that in the surrounding areas. Here the 'stand out' value is for Leicester which proves to have seen the non-White proportion of city residents increase at a rate which is over five percentage points faster than the rate of increase within the less urban parts of its city region. That said, this rate is not very much higher than the equivalent values averaged across all the 56 cities in this analysis; it seems that as yet there is little evidence of a reduction in the very long-standing pattern of non-White groups being mainly concentrated in more urban locations.

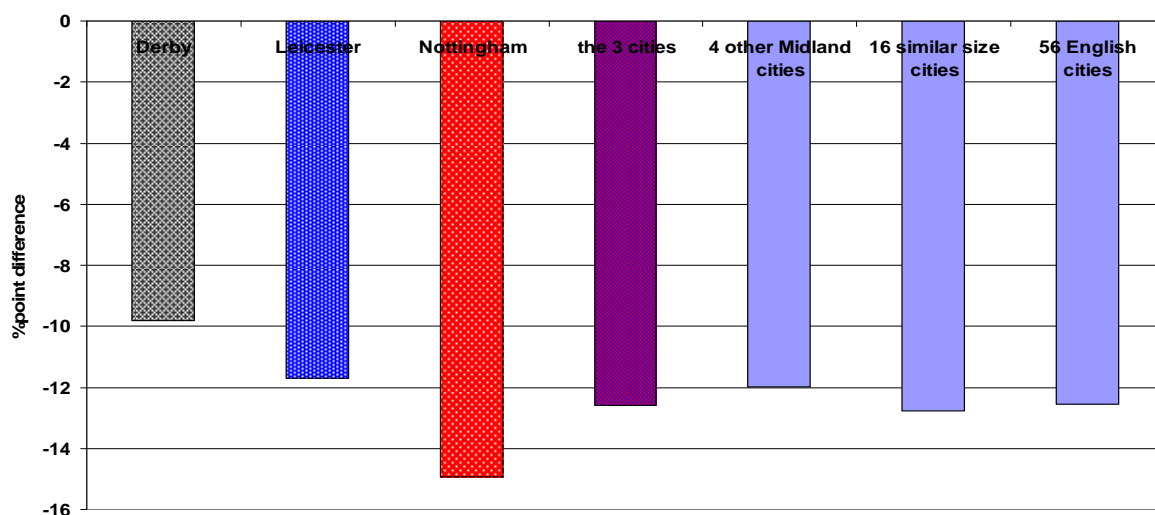
**Figure 13 City-TTWA difference in proportion of non-White residents
(change in % point difference 1991-2001)**



Drivers of local decentralisation: owner-occupation

This chapter ends with an analysis of a key indicator from the critical housing sector. Setting aside the contrasts between cities in these values – although some of those contrasts are indeed noteworthy – what really stands out are the sheer scale of the difference in the proportion of owner occupiers in cities and their wider city regions (Figure 14). The only city where this difference is not more than 10 percentage points is Derby where there is a legacy of higher owner occupation due to a more highly paid manual workforce, and the city includes within it a reasonable proportion of semi- and detached housing. Yet even in Derby the difference is only just less than 10 percentage points: this perhaps indicates the scale of potential further city flight migration, given that such a high proportion of the population repeatedly states not only that they would prefer rural living but also that they will not be satisfied unless they are owner occupiers.

Figure 14 City-TTWA differences in the proportion of owner occupiers 2001



5.5 Policy implications

The patterns of migration reported in this chapter are not readily summarised. Indeed the chapter has explicitly highlighted the differences in the patterns experienced by the Three Cities: this underlines the danger of relying on broad generalisations or assumptions as the basis for policy conclusions. The concluding remarks at this point are, as a result, rather specific.

- None of the cities is losing the huge numbers of people – through migration flows both over long-distances and locally – which could lead to the severe housing market failure seen in some northern cities and towns.
- Nottingham appears to be losing HMP people and gaining the less skilled: although this may partly be due to the way the Census deals with students, the data would still indicate a low level of graduate retention.
- Leicester is losing out in all the key migration exchanges measured here, although in none of them is the net outflow very severe.
- Derby is just about succeeding to hold on to its HMP people but loses out slightly in other longer-distance migration exchanges.
- Although the evidence here was ambivalent, longer-distance migration flows tend to be driven by economic performance relative to competitor places and so the patterns here seem likely to remain broadly unchanged unless the region sees dramatic shifts in its fortunes compared to the rest of the country.
- In terms of local decentralisation, the evidence here was supportive of the views of stakeholders that crime risk and especially school performance are critical drivers of shorter-distance migration patterns, and that these both impinge acutely on Nottingham (with crime the greater problem for Derby and school performance for Leicester).

5 Conclusions

The term *city flight* conjures up images of wholesale abandonment and perhaps a simple one-way migration by whole communities. From an academic viewpoint, there is scarcely a definable city flight concept because it risks being a chaotic amalgam of diffuse patterns and diverse processes, combined into a confused nightmare scenario. For this report, the term city flight is used to cover migration patterns producing a net loss for the city (although this is usually due to the number of people leaving a city being only slightly higher than the number moving into it).

The report has reviewed the migration patterns of the Three Cities – analysed here in terms of conurbations – to identify the city flight challenges they face. There are some positive messages from the findings of this study.

- All the Three Cities come close to ‘holding their own’ in what could be termed the national competition for human capital. This will be a result of the region recording above average economic growth.
- This means that intensive housing market failure, due to the abandonment of substantial neighbourhoods, is not a credible scenario.
- In fact, there are more recent signs of new forms of re-urbanisation in the Three Cities: developments such as a city centre apartment building boom, and the emergence of studentified and gentrified or even gated communities.

Yet the Three Cities are also clearly facing some challenges due to city flight migration trends and patterns. Many of the issues are around strengthened residential sorting, which puts at risk cohesion between communities who are separated not only by the neighbourhood they live in but also by culture or lifestyle, defined in terms of tenure, class, income ethnicity or religion. This research did not extend to investigating cohesion at a neighbourhood scale, but it seems clear that one concern is that current migration flows can lead to a polarisation of a city region’s richer and poorer residents, and also of its ethnic or religious groups. Given the regional objectives to reduce disparities and increase the well-being of all, this is an issue which requires a response from the region.

This report may be timely in that so much of the current policy landscape at both national and regional scales is under review at present. At the most general level there are questions over the interpretation of Sustainable Communities policy and, most especially, the balance between sustained economic growth on the one hand and social and/or ecological sustainability on the other. Within the region, the housing market assessments will assess city flight evidence and inform the regional economic and spatial strategies and also the regional housing strategy and investment programme. At the same time, detailed New Growth Points plans are

needed, and it is likely that consideration will be given to reviewing delivery mechanisms, such as the recent City Development Companies proposal, which is another vital element in taking forward a policy response to city flight concerns.

All the Three Cities appear to be losing Higher Managerial and Professional (HMP) people although, in part, this is an exaggerated picture which would look much healthier with higher levels of graduate retention. That said, the cities are seeing HMP people move out to nearby more rural areas at a faster rate than is true of most other large English cities. Only in Leicester are there trends that might be interpreted as a 'white flight' response to ethnic minority groups' movement into the city, but the evidence for this was ambivalent. All the Three Cities have seen significant numbers of international immigrants arrive recently. In fact international in-migration has also diffused out from the cities, but there is still a major gulf in levels of diversity between city and rural areas.

Yet it is nothing new for a city's more affluent residents to gradually decentralise. This is associated with one of the positive aspects of city flight: the process through which some households succeed in moving to satisfy their aspirations. Some recent innovations such as 'loft living' make it look less certain that better-off city residents will move away, especially with the expected growth in job opportunities in the cities.

The major findings from this research are that the city flight issues which face the Three Cities can be grouped into three categories of challenges.

- 1 The central city local authorities may lose fiscal strength, while they still have to work in partnership with other authorities in the conurbation to achieve sustainable urban regeneration.
- 2 Inner area problems could escalate, with consequences for residents of other parts of the city region through, for example, raised crime risks which in turn will tarnish the city's reputation and lower its attractiveness to migrants.
- 3 If large proportions of the skilled workforce of growing city centres live a long way out this may create road congestion and pollution in the Three Cities due to the limited high capacity high quality public transport provision at present.

This chapter ends by returning to the latter two issues – and considering some relevant policy options – after a review of evidence on the Three Cities in this report.

There is substantial social variation at the neighbourhood scale which is produced by the different groups having different migration patterns. Together with the working of the housing market, fairly marginal shifts in population build up over time to create a significant net effect. This polarisation between groups at the neighbourhood scale tends to have a broader urban/rural expression, with the better-off less likely to stay in the cities. The existing degree of polarisation is already seen as a policy concern,

so policies to reverse it – or at least to prevent it increasing in future by creating more attractive city-living options for the more mobile groups – should be a priority.

The evidence on drivers of longer-distance migration was not all that clear, but did not strongly run counter to the expectation that they mainly relate to access to better job prospects. There was some support for a link to crime rates, perhaps linked with the national publicity about Nottingham in particular. As expected, crime risk was even more strongly associated with shorter distance migration; in this it sat alongside the importance of good schools – a finding strongly echoing many local perceptions – and higher owner occupation rates.

A critical city flight issue for the Three Cities relates to the priority given to focussing the broader region's development in the cities: is this a higher priority than the need to 'capture' growth? Is the pursuit of city-favouring policies so high a priority that there is acceptance of the risk that mobile people and investment may go to another region altogether? To put the issue into stark relief, the choice can be polarised between two options.

- 1 A strong city focus would prioritise urban regeneration and could also create a more ecologically sustainable region due to limiting the long-term growth in average commuting trip lengths and greenfield development (but with the risk that 'East Midlands plc' does not maximise its GVA).
- 2 The alternative is placing the emphasis on economic growth, and accepting that this may lead to more dispersed development (perhaps envisioning the Three Cities as a polycentric region with considerable growth beyond the main urban areas); the economic growth may fund some urban regeneration.

What do these two alternatives imply for the younger skilled people who may be key to the development of the region? Young people are finding that the debt burden from university, and high house prices, makes it more difficult for them to become home owners than it was for their parents. Policy option 2 could offer a higher level of new housing provision in the more rural areas; option 1 faces the risk of the more mobile moving elsewhere if the only affordable options are city centre flats, or new provision in urban regeneration areas (perhaps infill sites on large social housing estates as proposed by Hills, 2007). As a result, option 1 may rely on developing urban extensions to improve the ability of the conurbations to offer aspiring home owners more attractive and accessible options in the broader urban environment.

There are other key groups of people who have different priorities. In particular, those in the family-building age group who are already owner-occupiers emphasise the need for better local schools. More generally, all the more mobile city residents need to find that their environs to meet their needs or they may further fuel city flight

patterns of migration. In particular, this report has reinforced the importance of crime levels as one of the stronger negative factors for cities.

In the future it is likely that there will be changes to the housing priorities which are currently associated with certain groups of the population. For example, the housing patterns of some ethnic minority groups have been quite distinctive over the years, but this can lead to them being fitted into restrictive stereotypes. The new generation may have very similar aspirations to young adults from the majority community: Bains (2006) explores the changing housing needs of South Asian groups in the West Midlands and suggests that those reaching household-formation age may well seek a more diverse set of housing options in the city region than their parents used.

At this point, it is appropriate to move on to the recommendations which emerge from the research reported here. It has just been emphasised that different groups can have different housing priorities, leading them to make different decisions about whether to migrate from where they live – and if so, where they may chose to move – but it is likely that more needs to be known about the priorities of many people living in the Three Cities at present. This implies a need for survey research on the housing and neighbourhood aspirations of a contrasting sample of households with, if possible, additional coverage of potential in-migrants (nb. this could include some who currently live in the more rural parts of the city regions). The likely need is not only for detailed surveys, but also focus group work with recent movers to build the necessary understanding of the ‘who’ and the ‘why’ of their moves.

The other recommendations emerging are all related to the objective of helping the Three Cities to perform better in the competition for more mobile population groups. These recommendations could be the key strands in a policy strategy to implement a ‘pro-urban’ development strategy. At the same time, the same recommendations could also play a part – if a more modest one – if the main policy strategy was to maximise development, whether it was focussed on the main urban areas or not.

The first set of policy priorities flow directly from the research set out here:

- improve educational services, perhaps especially at the secondary level;
- tackle crime and anti-social behaviour, and perceptions of crime, which affect image and reputation at the national and international level;
- improve public transport quality and capacity on the highest density corridors, to facilitate commuting while tackling the current dominance of car travel;
- facilitate new employment growth sectors prone to cluster in cities;
- respond to the ‘liveability’ agenda in terms of the quality of the local environment (public realm and access to open space); and also
- increase the availability of a wide range of good quality housing.

Other policy strands will be needed – an example might be to upgrade and extend urban retail and leisure facilities – but they did not flow out of findings of this report.

Housing is the most important single policy domain for addressing city flight issues. As a result, it is important to put a little more ‘flesh on the bones’ in this context. Moving beyond the need for a wider range of more affordable good quality housing, a first step is to consider location within urban areas. One option is to seek a more diverse housing ‘offer’ in city centres; this will call for careful promotion to attract groups other than the young and mobile who currently predominate in inner areas. In other city areas, the principal policy emphasis is often on the neighbourhood attributes around housing but this too is linked to life-course considerations because, for example, the school quality issue is not critical to some age groups. Within the existing urban areas, a key challenge lies in the regeneration of unpopular estates. The research has not found very strong evidence that the introduction of tenure and/or social mix brings important benefits, but there was even less evidence that new problems arose from such developments, so this is certainly a plausible option.

Hills (2007) has provided a new impetus to the introduction of mix into older estates, in part seeing the estates as akin to an opportunity for brownfield site development. Generalising still across the rather different Three Cities housing markets, city flight migration suggests that there are people who cannot find what they want within the existing city neighbourhoods, with their current range of density and housing types. This leads to the suggestion that urban extensions may be appropriate, not only because they can mitigate the pressure on supply overall, but also because they provide the opportunity to offer different urban housing products which may help retain more of the more mobile and affluent groups who tend to leave cities.

In taking the findings and issues raised here forward, it is the understanding of a city’s own characteristics, dynamics and policy frameworks which is indispensable. Both the quantitative and the qualitative information confirmed the unique situation in each city, shaped by its unique set of assets, constraints and recent trajectory of change. That there are locally-specific issues and opportunities for relevant partners to explore was illustrated by the findings from the interviews with stakeholders (reported in chapter 4). It is not appropriate to repeat here the issues which came up there in relation to each city – although these may provide a valuable check-list of issues for each partnership to address – but the general point is that the policy machinery which is needed must help all the local stakeholders share the responsibility for action. Some elements of that machinery can be sketched here.

- Within the Sustainable Communities Plan it is now appropriate to consider broad questions of settlement planning, making regional decisions on whether

to emphasise urban regeneration (with its social and environmental priorities) or to maximise regional growth (with its probable diffusion away from cities).

- The specific policy opportunity provided by New Growth Points calls for imaginative development which can offer something ‘missing’ currently from the Three Cities to keep more potential city flight migrants in urban areas.
- Within city regions, policy makers need to respond to strategic frameworks set by the regional economic, housing and spatial strategies, taking these forward locally (including within Local Development Frameworks).
- Partners engaged in the delivery of housing in both public and private sectors need to pool intelligence through the Housing Market Assessments and raise aspirations so developments avoid ‘more of the same’ (e.g. city-centre flats) and respond to wider ranges of needs and expectations.
- More broadly, regeneration bodies such as the URCs and the proposed City Development Companies will need to link their masterplan work with other policy developments; in particular, there are key roles in each city for
 - the education sector, in terms of the quality and location of new and existing school provision;
 - the transport sector, in the setting of policy and targeting of investment to promote more efficient and sustainable patterns of travel
 - the police and linked agencies, to address crime problems within cities.

Turning finally back to the regional scale, this report’s findings can best be set in the context of the Regional Economic Strategy which is the responsibility of a wide range of organisations and brings numerous public sector funding streams to bear on the challenges it identifies. In the Strategy for the East Midlands there are twelve Strategic Priorities and it is notable that the city flight issues discussed in this report are highly relevant to half of these, as indicated in the table below.

East Midland Regional Economic Strategy <u>Strategic Priorities</u>	<i>Policy needs to address city flight issues found in the Three Cities</i>
Employment, learning and skills	<i>Attract graduates and Higher Managerial and Professional people; improve poor schools</i>
Transport and logistics	<i>Provide high quality high capacity public transport in principal urban corridors</i>
Environmental protection	<i>Improve liveability; avoid increased commuting</i>
Land and development	<i>Maximise brownfield use; limit rural intensification</i>
Cohesive communities	<i>Redress tendency for increasing social polarisation by selective regeneration</i>
Economic renewal and inclusion	<i>Reduce unemployment/inactivity rates in the cities by further concentrating growth there</i>

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[for both the main text and the Annexes]

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Annex 1 The geography of city flight and city regions

Table A at the end of this Annex is a basic tabulation of areas included within the city regions and the Housing Market Areas (HMAs) which are used in analyses in the main part of the report. Before that, exclusive analyses of 2001 Census migration patterns are presented to relate the pre-defined HMA boundaries to what is seen here as a picture of the spatial relationships between each of the Three Cities and other parts of the region and some adjacent areas. The first type of analysis shows migration flows in both directions between any two places, looking at local authority areas separately, except for the Three Cities themselves, for which continuously built-up areas are used (as explained in Parkinson *et al*, 2006). Every migration flow is expressed as a percentage of the relevant total for each area which is involved. For example, the number of migrants from Derby to Mansfield is expressed

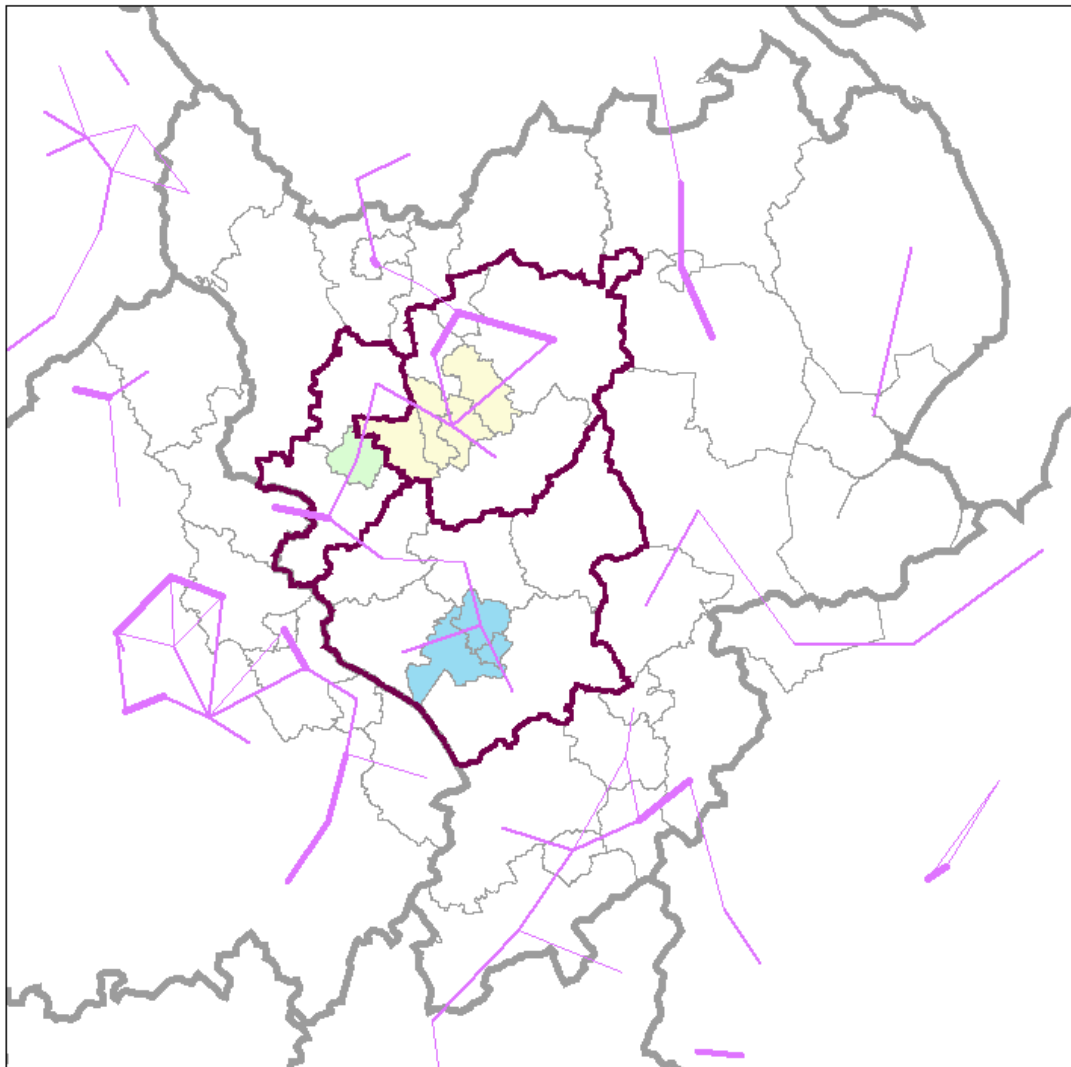
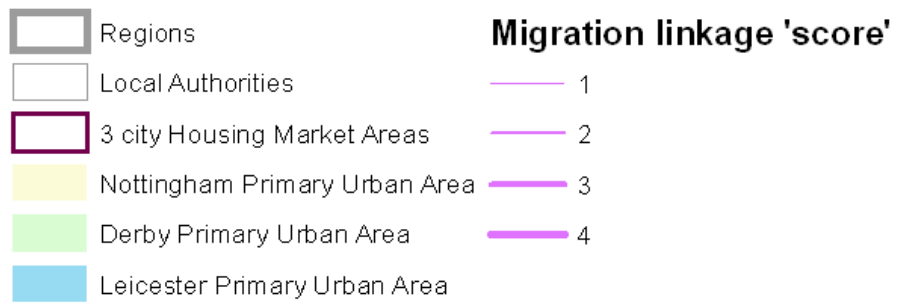
- (a) as a % of all people who were living in Derby in 2000 but had moved house by Census night 2001
- (b) as a % of all people who were living in Mansfield in 2001 but had not been in the same house a year previously.

With the flow of migrants in the opposite direction then also considered on the equivalent basis, there are four relevant calculations which between them show the relative magnitude of the migration flows between any two areas. The evidence can be summarised by counting the number of these percentage values exceeding 5%: if there are none then the link is not at all strong, whereas the maximum value of four indicates a substantial link in terms of its impact on both the areas involved.

Figure A shows the results of this form of analysis on the 2000-1 migration dataset. Unlike with commuting flows, links in to and out of major cities tend not to dominate the results. In part this is because the major cities have large total populations and so a flow has to be very large to make up 5% of all the in- or out-migrants of a city. In general, the patterns are supportive of the defined Housing Market Areas (HMAs) – which are also shown – and so those boundaries will be carried forward into the subsequent mapping.

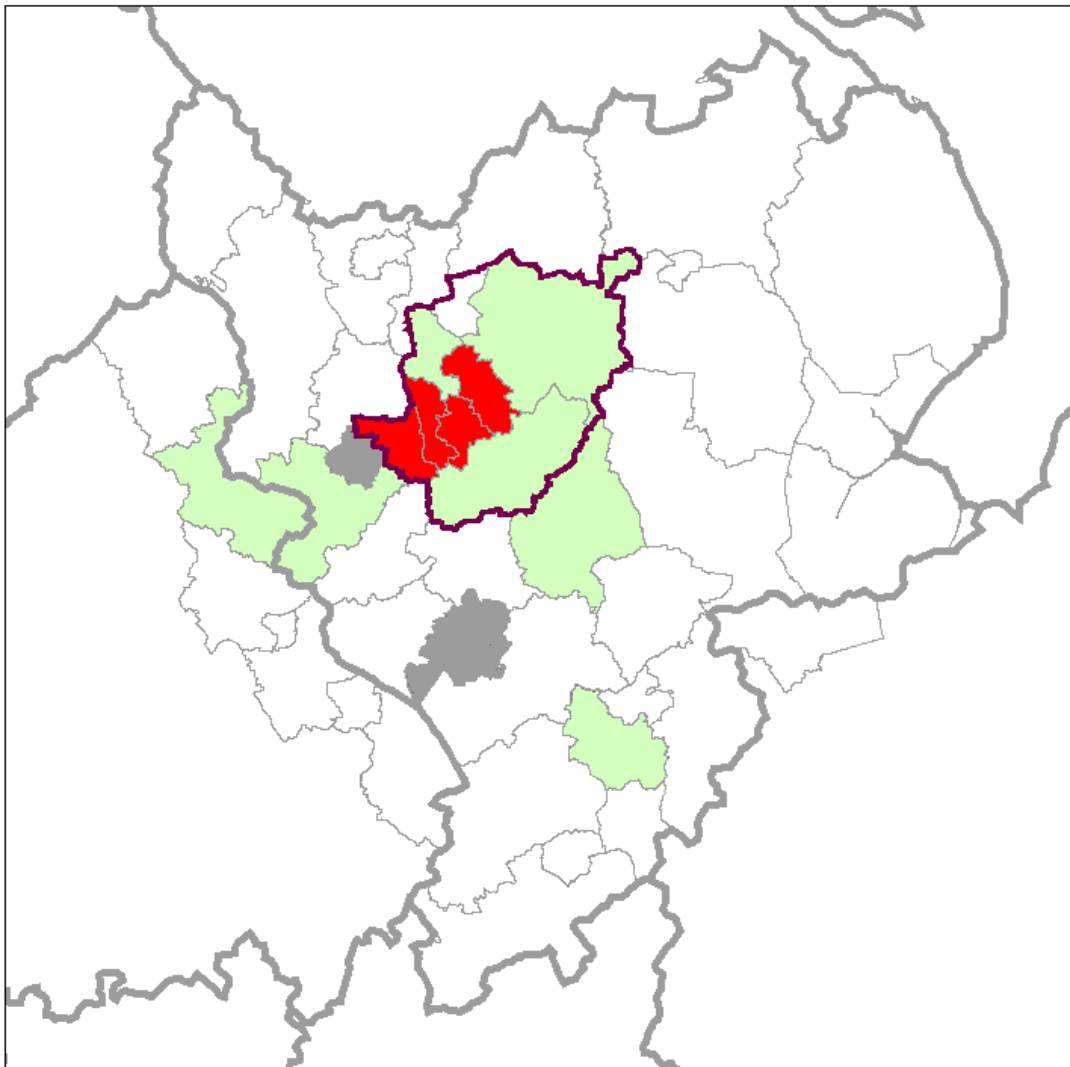
The concept of city flight emphasises not just a strong relationship between a city and another area, but also that there is a net flow of migrants outward from that city. Figures B to G present the results of analysing the 2001 Census data to identify the areas with net inflows of migrants from the Three Cities (looking at each separately). The first set of three analyses are of HMP migrants only, whereas the second set looks at all other 'moving group reference persons' (ie. people in lower status categories of the socio-economic classification). For all these maps, the areas shown as city flight zones had a positive net migration balance with the relevant city (viz. HMP net inflows of 9 or more; for the lower status migrants, 15 or more).

Figure A: Migration links between Cities and other local authority areas



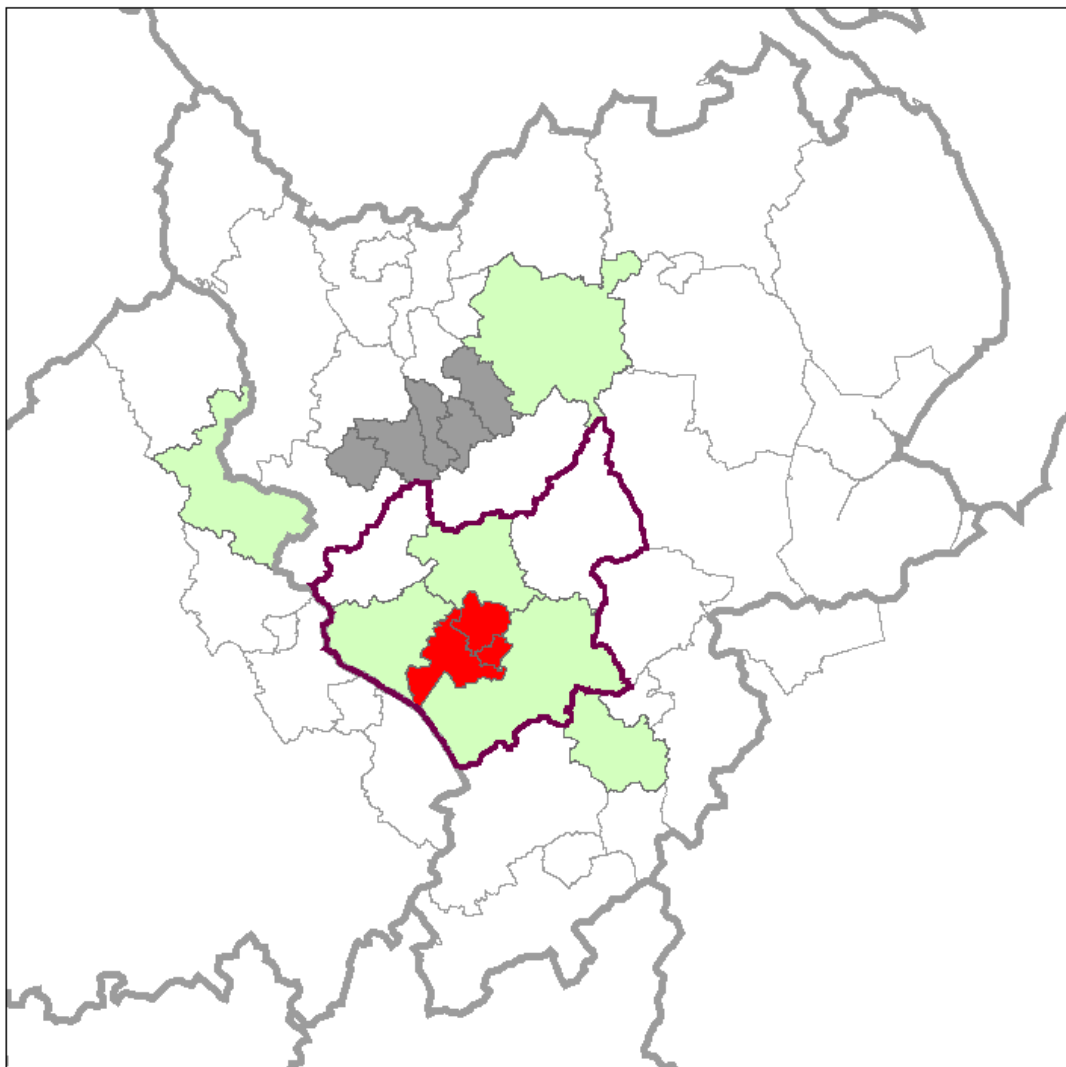
All six analyses show some evidence of a localised city flight spatial pattern, in that the areas having net inflows in their migration exchanges with cities are mostly found near the city concerned. As might have been anticipated from Derby having had the

Figure B: Nottingham's city flight zones (with net HMP out-migration)



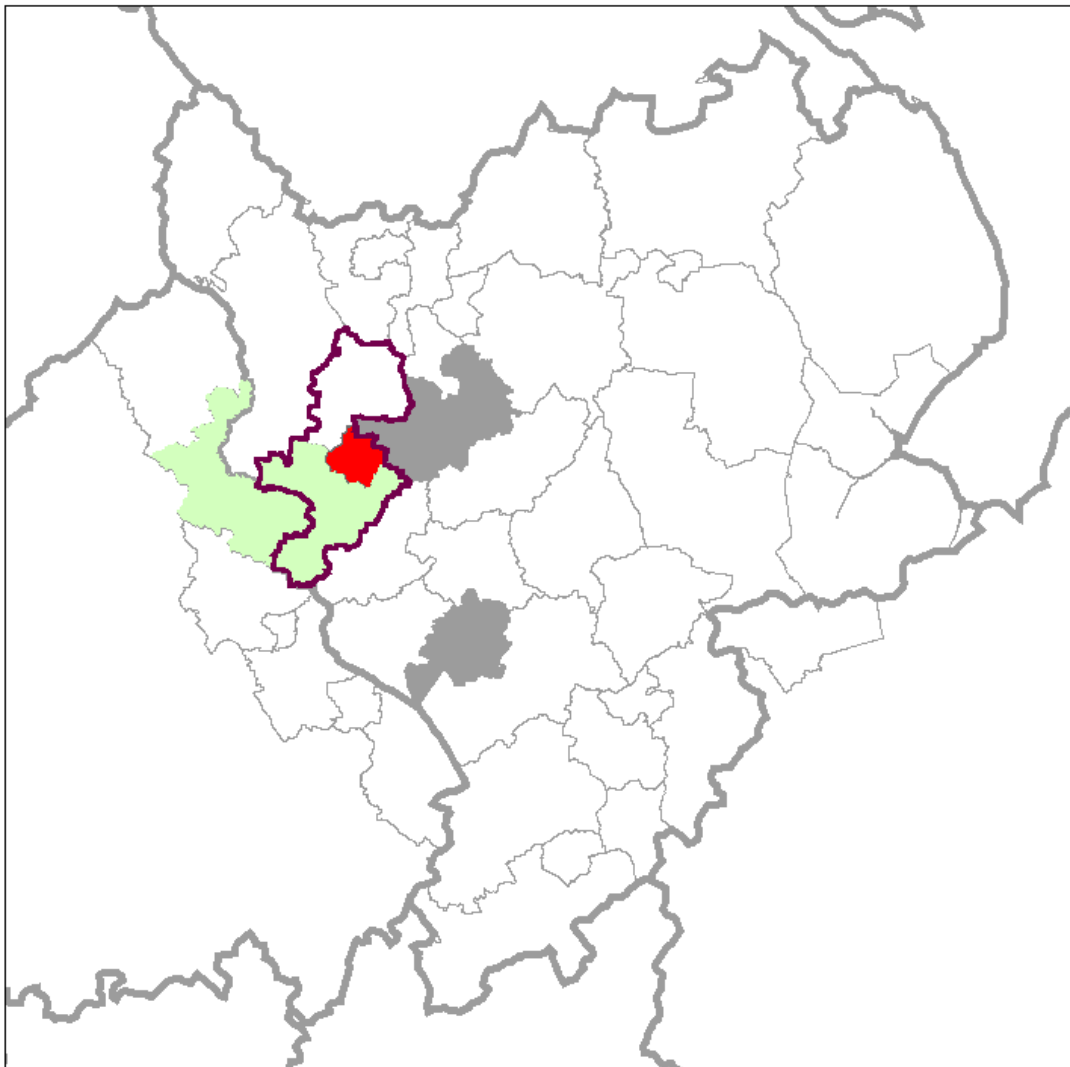
highest in/out ratios among the Three Cities for flows with the rest of its city region (Figure 3), it proves to be the city with fewest 'city flight zone' areas (Figures D&G). By the same token, Nottingham's low in/out ratios (combined with its greater size)

Figure C: Leicester's city flight zones (with net HMP out-migration)



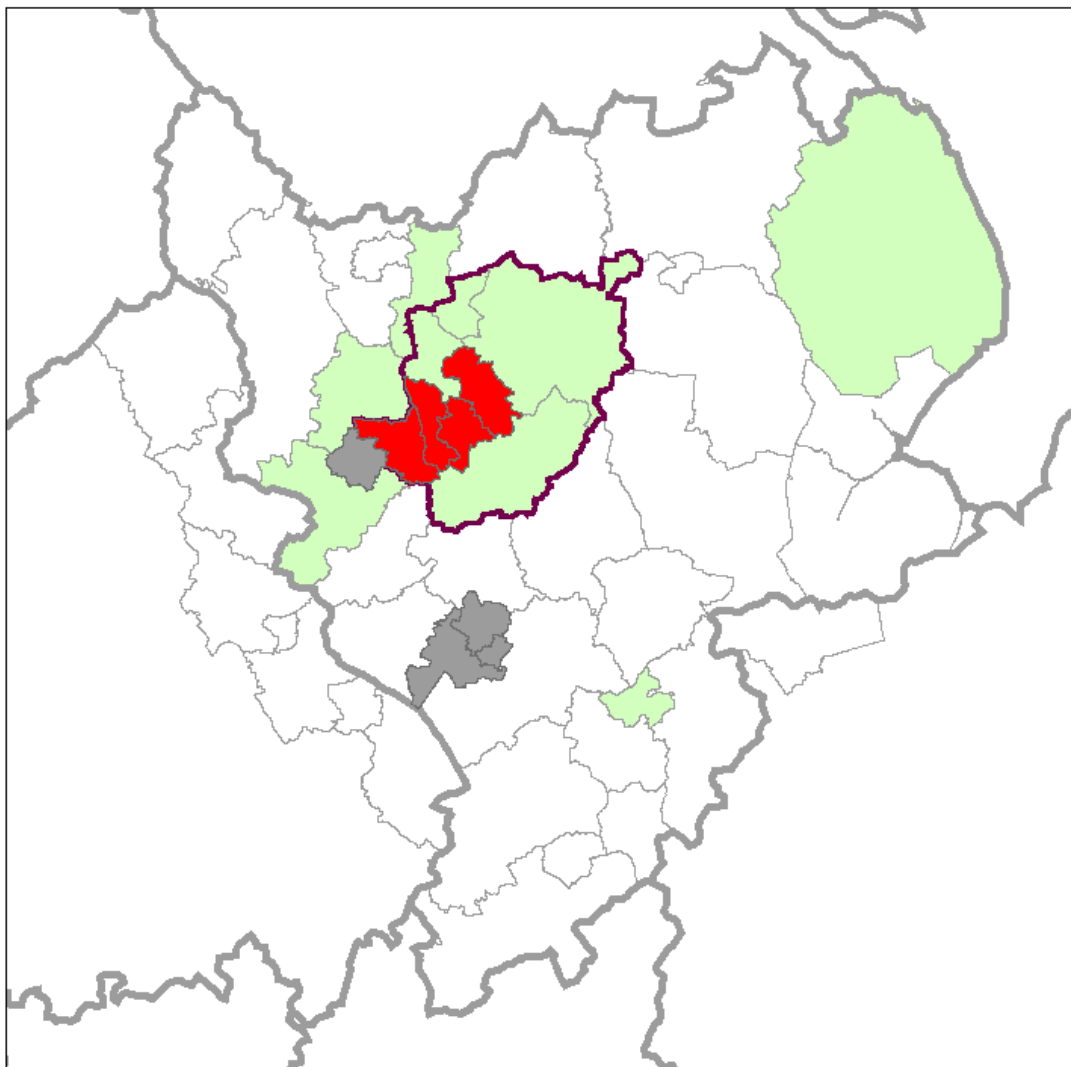
result in it having the most areas within this definition of city flight zones. For both groups of migrants, these zones include all – or all but one – local authority areas within the Nottingham HMA (nb. most of Nottingham's 'inner HMA' is within the

Figure D: Derby's city flight zones (with net HMP out-migration)



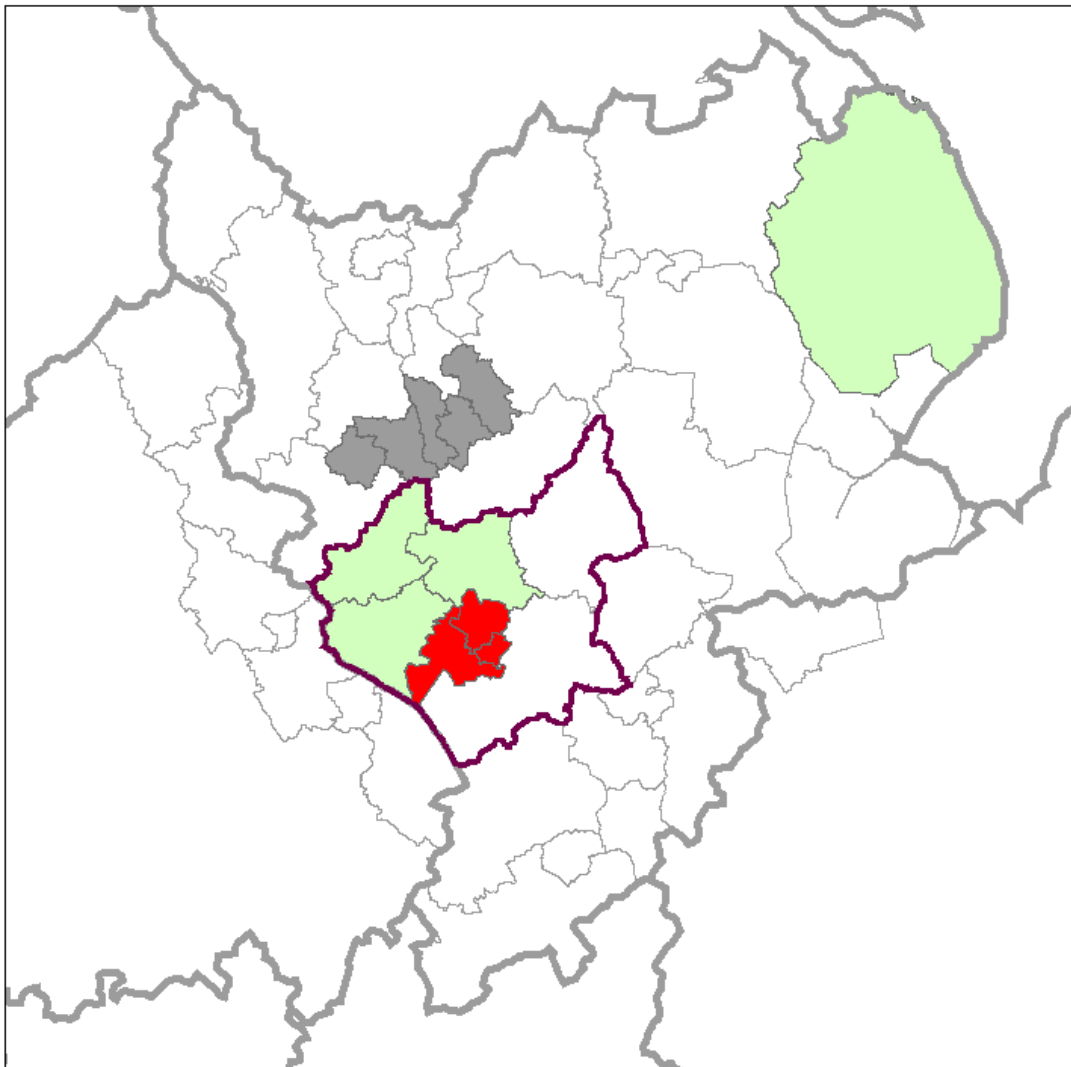
Principal Urban Area), plus areas near Derby and Burton (over the regional border). The results for Leicester also broadly fit with the current HMA definition, although the relationship with Harborough – which has been contested – is only echoed in the

Figure E: Nottingham's city flight zones (with lower status net out-migration)



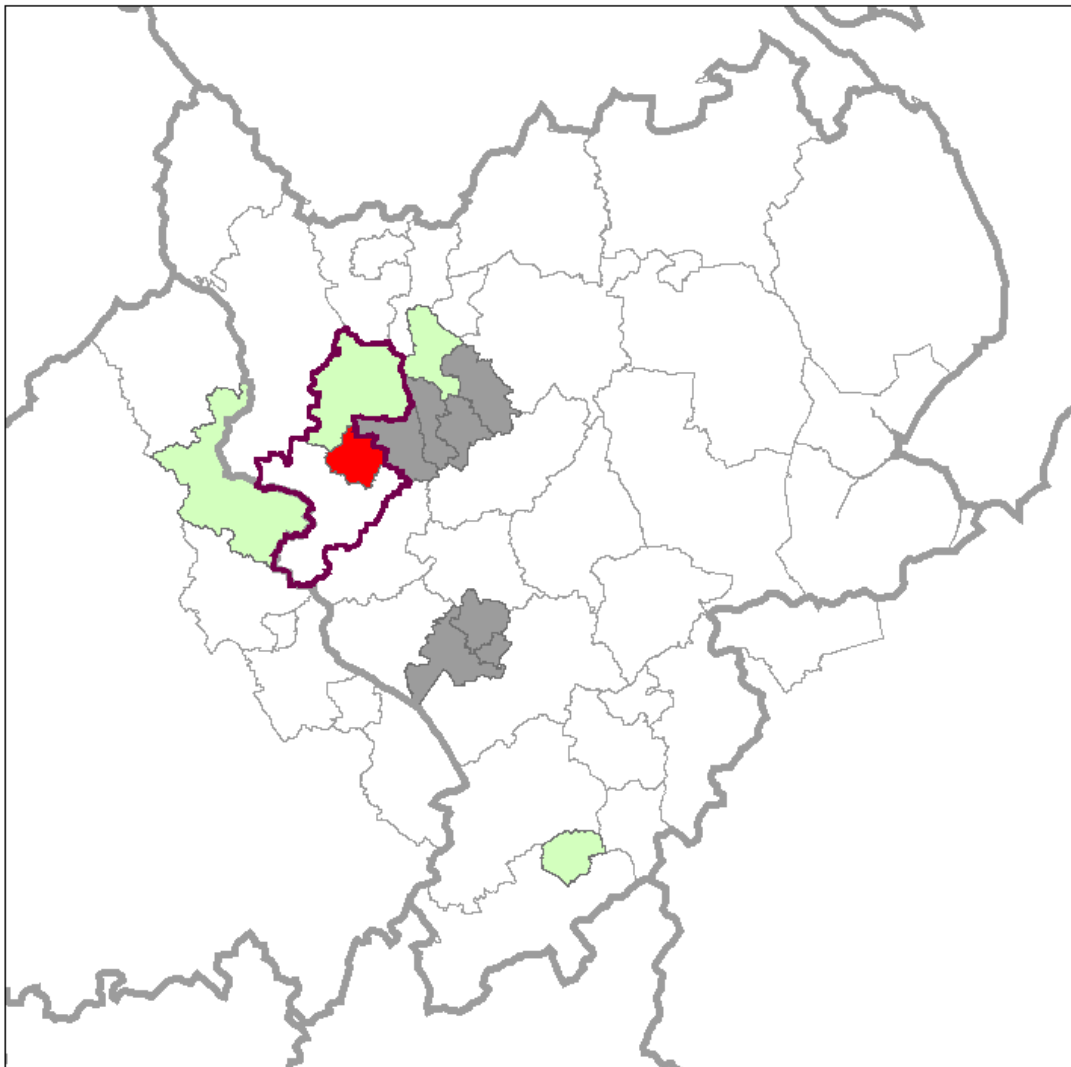
results HMP migrants (Figure C cf. Figure F). It is worth stressing that the net migration values are quite low for all but a very few pairs of areas. This means that any statistical analyses using the net flows as the primary focus could not be robust.

Figure F: Leicester's city flight zones (with lower status net out-migration)



These low values are especially worthy of stressing given that the Census migration statistics are from a 100% coverage of people changing address over a whole year. It is not then surprising that survey datasets like the Labour Force Survey (now the

Figure G: Derby's city flight zones (with lower status net out-migration)



Annual Population Survey) cannot give robust data on flows between pairs of areas, as found by the parallel research of Experian (2007).

The analyses presented above are all at the local authority scale, but clearly this can mask a huge variety of spatial patterns occurring closer to the neighbourhood scale. Figure H demonstrates this variegation vividly: both urban and rural parts of the city regions of all the Three Cities prove to have some wards with notable levels of net in-migration and others where out-migration is equally strong. In fact no spatial pattern can be readily discerned in the distribution of positive and negative values.

Figure I presents the results from ‘smoothing’ these ward-level values: an application of GIS-based techniques transforms each ward value to make it more similar to the values of nearby wards, thereby drawing out any underlying spatial pattern in the original data. Derby and Nottingham city regions can then be judged to each have one main area of net out-migration with a surrounding area of broadly neutral values; to the west (for Derby) and the east (Nottingham) in-migration is predominant. In the Leicester case, even the smoothing has not really produced a simple pattern which is convincingly concentric.







The main conclusion to be drawn here is that there are, as suspected, very high degrees of variability occurring at the neighbourhood level. The implication is that policy lessons drawn from the broader scale analyses in this report must be closely tailored to fit conditions at the point of implementation, and will rely upon detailed knowledge of the circumstances of each neighbourhood and the aspirations among each potential migrant group.

Table A Definition of PUAs, HMAs and city regions of the Three Cities

Unitary local authority (LA) which is the ‘core’ City	other LAs included in the continuously built-up PUA (see Parkinson <i>et al</i>, 2006)	other LAs included in the HMA (see DTZ Peda 2005)	other LAs included in the City Region (see Champion <i>et al</i>, 2007)
Derby		Amber Valley South Derbyshire	East Staffordshire
Leicester	Blaby Oadby & Wigston	Charnwood Harborough Hinckley & Bosworth Melton North West Leicestershire	Rutland
Nottingham	Broxtowe Erewash Gedling	Ashfield Mansfield Newark & Sherwood Rushcliffe	Amber Valley Bolsover

Figure H: Ward level net migration rate 2000-1

Net migration rate

-  Growth
-  Slight change
-  Loss
-  HMAs of the Three Cities
-  Three Cities (continuously built-up areas, ward basis)
-  other large urban areas

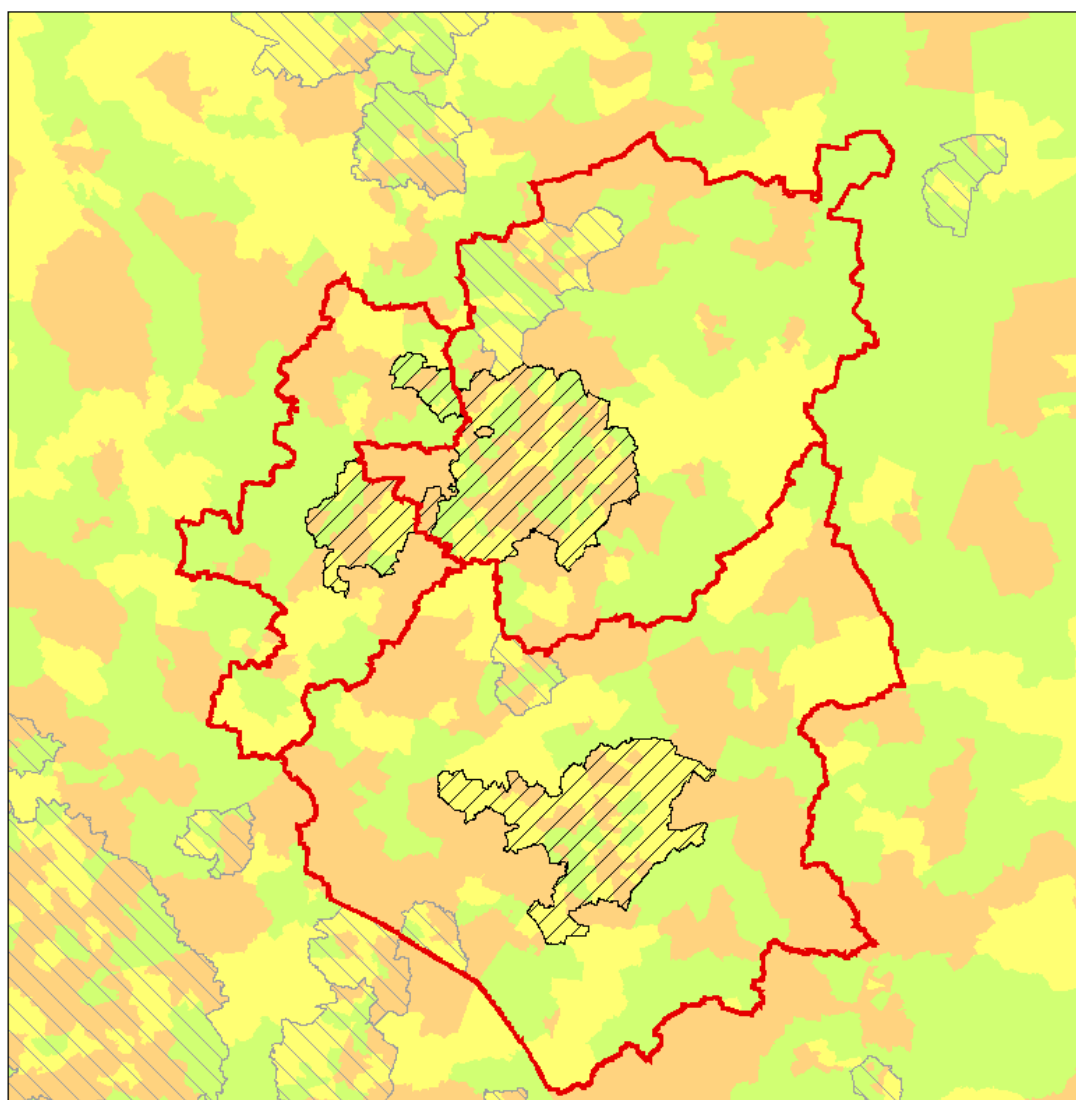
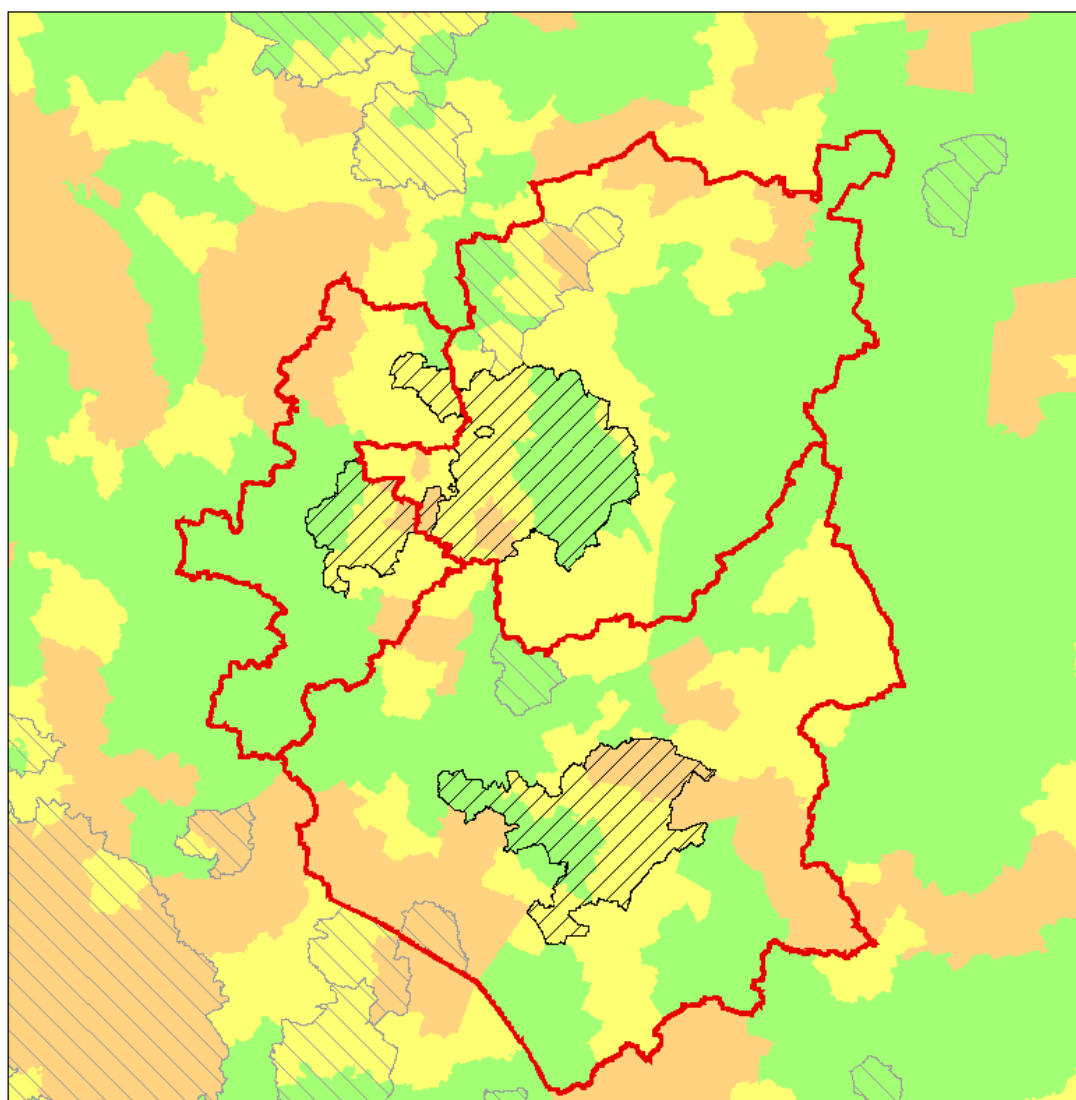


Figure I: Ward level net migration rate 2000-1 (smoothed)

Net migration rate (smoothed)

- Growth
- Slight change
- Loss
- HMAs of the Three Cities
- Three Cities (continuously built-up areas, ward basis)
- other large urban areas



Annex 2 Systematic review of literature related to City Flight

Across the more developed world, there is a wide mixture of reports concerning the population change and migration components of city dynamics. Looking at individual cases, there is the full gamut from strong growth through to dramatic decline (Turok and Mykhnenko, 2007; see also Cheshire, 2006). There is also a growing literature on the return of city-centre living and some on central-city living more broadly, but in most cases the numerical significance of this development is rather small. The overwhelming thrust of the literature is still on 'sprawl' and its main driver city flight, reinforced by the essentially reactive literature on 'smart growth' and 'mixed neighbourhoods'.

The USA is, as usual, leading the urban sprawl process, with commentaries suggesting that the urban expansion is running at the fastest rate ever recorded and with a mushrooming of attention paid to suburban 'boomburbs' and 'exurban growth' (see, for example, Lang, 2003; Berube *et al*, 2006). But Europe is also increasingly feeling this type of pressure. The French literature is now full of discussion of what is known there as 'peri-urbanisation' (Guérois and Pumain, 2002), while the Italians are now highly conscious of 'la città diffusa' as preferences for detached villas have grown strongly in recent years. Even the former Communist countries are now seeing a surge of suburban development. The UK, too, is feeling the strain. The 2001 Census data on within-UK migration revealed the continued negative association between net migration rates and urban status. Moreover, since then net out-migration from London has been running at the highest rate since these records began in 1975 (Champion, 2005).

In coming to this broad conclusion about the persistence and prevalence of city flight, however, it is important to stress that its scale, its nature and sometimes even its existence depends on what aspect of population change is being measured and for what definition of the 'city'. For instance, most of the literature on urban sprawl is based on data showing overall population change, irrespective of whether the recorded growth is due to people moving out from the city or to people moving there from other parts of the country (as is often the case in the settling of informal settlements by rural-urban migrants in developing countries).

Even where studies are based on origin/destination records that explicitly record migration between cities and their surrounding areas (i.e. excluding migration into the latter from other parts of the nation or indeed from overseas), it is important to recognize that migration tends to be a two-way process: very few migration streams between places are largely one-way, or – in migration terminology – have high 'effectiveness' scores.

On this basis, even suburban (or exurban) areas with zero migration balances with their city are likely to be receiving residents moving from the city, though losing similar numbers to the city at the same time (though the latter people may well be different in their socio-demographic characteristics of age, income, etc.).

In similar vein, a city that is gaining in overall population numbers can still be experiencing city flight, not just in terms of there being a process of people moving out from the city but also in net terms. Quite often, cities that are experiencing a net migration loss to their surrounding areas are gaining population overall because of net migration gains from elsewhere and/or because of surplus of births over deaths. In fact, it is quite normal for the cities that are experiencing the strongest suburban and exurban growth to also be those with the highest rates of overall population growth. Many 'sunbelt USA' cities are in this category, as is London, with local net out-migration being generated by rising personal wealth and capacity pressures that are reflected partly in soaring city house prices.

In discussing these processes, studies also vary in what they mean by 'city'. Traditionally, it was common to conceptualise the research in terms of city versus suburb. But city/suburb distinctions have faded over time, with 'the urbanization of the suburbs': now it is increasingly common for the city to be defined as the 'urban area' (i.e. the continuous built-up area, as in the State of the English Cities Report, see Parkinson *et al*, , 2006). Indeed, much research on the performance of cities is nowadays measured on the basis of functional definitions such as labour market area, metropolitan area or city region, the latter having just emerged also as a planning concept in Britain.

Therefore, in moving towards a review of city flight and its drivers, it is important to be clear about three things, or at least to be aware that studies relating to this may not always be referring to one and the same process.

- In terms of 'city' definitions, are they referring to the city centre, or the administrative city ('central city' in US parlance), or the urban area, or a functionally-based area or region?
- In terms of 'flight', are they referring to the gross movement of people out of the 'city' or the net population effect of the two-way movements across the 'city' boundary?
- In terms of city flight, does this include the city's migration with all other areas (including rest of nation or, indeed, rest of world) or only with its immediately surrounding area (e.g. between the urban area and the rest of the city region)?

Finally, while city flight is a common enough term in daily usage, it is not very helpful when considering either the full picture of migration affecting the 'city', and even less so in considering the drivers. As just mentioned, there is rarely a one-way 'stampede' out of the city: even the 'white flight' process is seen to be powered by the influx of non-whites to the affected area. Secondly, the term 'flight' suggests the operation of just push factors behind the departure of people from the 'city', whereas in practice these rarely operate in isolation from pull factors and the latter could be the more powerful. While 'urban exodus' is a more neutral term to describe out-migration from cities, we will stick to the more formal 'migration' terminology.

Migration drivers: analysis of the type of origin and destination

Classifying people's changes of address by the type of place that they were living in before and after their moves is one of the most common ways of describing the main dimensions of a migration system, but it also says a great deal about the drivers, even if only implicitly.

The most fundamental distinction is whether the change of address involves crossing an international boundary. The literatures on international migration and internal (or domestic or intranational) migration have developed almost entirely separately, with completely different concepts and theories about their determinants and consequences. For one thing, normally a person cannot be considered an international migrant unless intending to live in the destination country for at least 12 months (and then actually doing so), whereas there is no recognised 'length of stay' threshold for distinguishing an internal migrant from a (temporary) visitor: only that both addresses should be considered a person's 'usual address' before and after the move. On the other hand, with increasing international mobility ('from settlers to transients') and with more varied types of international boundary (e.g. within a supranational entity like the EU), in practice some of the traditional differences between international and internal migration have faded – something that the research community is only beginning to come to terms with in terms of concepts, theory and analysis of drivers.

Turning to within-country migration, the longest-established distinction (going back to the father of migration theory, Ravenstein, in the 1870s) is based on the concepts of 'rural' and 'urban'. At that time, the primary focus was on urbanisation and rural-to-urban migration. A century later, though the latter still continued in some respects, the main focus had switched to 'counterurbanisation' and urban-to-rural migration, or the 'urban exodus'. As neatly summarised by Ebenezer Howard (1898) in his 'magnets' diagram, both the countryside and the town each denote a package of characteristics that could be seen as drivers pushing or pulling people as they made

decisions about where to live, leading him to devise a third 'town-country' magnet which contained all the positive aspects of both and none of the negative ones, these forming the basis of his 'garden city' model.

This characterisation of the migration system has been adopted by Zelinsky (1971) in his 'hypothesis of the mobility transition', put forward to parallel the earlier 'demographic transition model', and its subsequent adaptation by Jones (1990) to include the urban-to-rural dimension. This approach now recognises the importance of separating out the full four-fold typology of moves: rural-to-urban, urban-to-rural, urban-to-urban and rural-to-rural. Census-based research has shown that the people involved in these four types of migration have characteristics that are clearly different from each other, and has therefore inferred different packages of drivers.

But this four-way classification retains its power only so long as it is the urban and the rural that provide the most powerful discriminators of the national settlement system. The latter has long been under challenge, most notably as the rural proportion of the population has shrunk and the number of urban centres has grown. It is a rather small step to subdivide 'urban-to-urban' migration by whether the move is within the same urban settlement or between cities/towns ('intra-urban' versus 'inter-urban' migration). It is not a much bigger step to subdivide the latter according to the sizes of the urban centres involved, most basically whether a move is towards a larger or a smaller urban centre (sometimes referred to, respectively, as an 'urbanising' move as opposed to a 'counterurbanising' one).

A further degree of complexity and insight is achieved by including a geographical-scale dimension that recognises that a metropolitan area or city region contains not only a large city but also some smaller towns and villages. As demonstrated by Halliday and Coombes (1995), one can conceive of an 'anti-metropolitan' move that can also be 'pro-urban', as for instance if a person moves from a village in London's outer metropolitan area (e.g. in Hertfordshire) to a large city in a less metropolitan environment (e.g. to Plymouth in the much less pressurised 'shire county' of Devon). They, in fact, identified three distinct forms of move out of London, each with their own population profiles and sets of drivers: anti-metropolitan, anti-urban and pro-rural.

The final step on this road is to consider a more differentiated classification of settlement types. As mentioned above, cities are not homogeneous but can be divided into inner and outer parts, giving at least three migration zones: city, suburb and beyond (with the latter being exurb to the extent that it lies within the broader region of the city. Frey (2004) has argued for greater differentiation of the inner and outer suburbs (distinguishing the more urbanised parts of each from the less densely

developed parts). Going further, in the context of the polycentric urban region, Kunzmann (1996) notes that different localities are emerging with different combinations of built-form and function, while at an even finer scale it is possible to distinguish between different housing areas and neighbourhoods. While one may not want the complexity of a multi-way classification of the migration streams linking all possible pairings of these place types, nevertheless the main approach to analysing migration patterns and thereby identify the push and pull factors behind them is to regress these place-to-place flows against the characteristics of their origins and destinations.

Migration drivers: analysis of distance of move

Short-distance moves (which are by far the most numerous of the totality of address changing and would very largely be within-city moves) are primarily related to housing factors, especially in terms of the type of housing itself (dwelling type, size, tenure, other attributes like garden and garage/off-street parking) but also in terms of the wider 'housing package' (noise, congestion in surrounding streets, local transport, nearby park, access to good schools and other facilities).

This is clearly different from long-distance moves, which are seen as job-related. The latter refers both to change of job (or of workplace with a continuing employer) and to entry to and exit from the labour market, i.e. including move to first job and retirement migration. Long-distance moves can also be motivated by social and family considerations, such as return migration to an area with family and friends and including moves by older parents to be closer to their grown-up children to support the latter's child-rearing or to be supported by them in their own increasing infirmity, or possibly vice versa with their children moving closer to the ageing parents. Under this heading, increasing attention is now being given to school-leavers going to university, partly because of increasing participation in higher education but mainly because – with more of these living as 'student households' as opposed to living in 'communal establishments' or 'digs' and with their rising labour force participation at termtime address – they are now increasingly seen as 'residents' at their place of study rather than mere 'visitors'.

Some studies have also recognised a third type of 'intermediate-distance' migration that they associate primarily with environmental considerations (see Gordon, 1988). The latter refers primarily to settlement type and the lifestyle available there. This set of drivers has come to prominence as quality of life has become more important as a factor in expressed residential preferences, and is seen to underpin the 'counterurbanisation' phenomenon that was first identified as such in the 1970s but has its antecedents. That term primarily refers to the move from a large city to a

smaller city, town or rural area, i.e. a shift down the settlement hierarchy but normally staying in the same broad economic region. But environmental and quality of life factors can also be applied to young adults moving to the 'big city lights' from suburbs, small towns and the countryside.

This two-fold or three-fold classification of migration types and their associated drivers can overlap on the ground, especially with the increasing distances that people are prepared to travel to work and also with the decentralisation of jobs from the city core to suburbs, edge cities and more dispersed sites within an evolving polycentric urban region. For instance, in practice, there is little to distinguish the residential locations of suburbaniser and counterurbaniser: to the extent that both are people moving from the city, they are both likely to be related to a change of residential environment that goes beyond the 'housing package'. But researchers would tend to consider as a suburbaniser someone who continued to rely on the city for work etc., while a counterurbaniser (possibly living next door) would be a person now relying mainly on more local facilities including labour market. Of course, in a longitudinal sense, the two can be the same person, as the suburbaniser tires of the long commute back to the city and gets a more local job, and to complicate matters further, the move may have been made with just such an eventual outcome in mind.

Migration analyses: the 'chain' concept

There are two aspects of chain migration. One relates to the everyday concept of the 'vacancy chain': except where a migrant is joining an existing household (and even in this situation there has to be an 'opportunity space'), there needs to be a vacant dwelling to be moved into, and in the owner occupied sector there normally has to be a willing purchaser to enable a household to leave a dwelling.

What this means is that, for a lot of migration (and an increasing amount as the level of owner occupation has risen), one migration – or one migration stream between two places – cannot be understood without taking into account the context of all the other migrations affecting these two places. Choice is obviously an important thing to study – choice as to deciding whether to leave or stay at a particular address and then choice of where to move to – but opportunity and constraint, or facilitating and restricting factors, must also be part of any explanation.

The evidence for this is well documented. All research shows a close positive relationship between the annual in-migrant and out-migrant numbers for any place: the only exceptions are small 'estate-size' areas of recent new build or neighbourhoods experiencing large-scale demolition or abandonment. A particularly dramatic example of this is provided by London's two principal types of migration: in

recent years, the capital's net loss to the rest of the UK has been quite similar in magnitude to its net gain of international migration.

The Champion *et al*, (1998a) study of urban exodus for CPRE provides further evidence, which also raises the question as to which group of migrants is really driving this process. Perhaps that study's most important finding was that the majority of people moving out of Greater London and the six English metropolitan counties were not moving from the most problematic parts of these conurbations but from the best-off suburban areas. By itself, this cast doubt on the importance of push factors in the urban exodus, instead seeming to lay stress on the 'lure of the countryside'. Seen in a broader context, however, the wealthy suburbanites could leave the city only because there was a satisfactory demand for their existing properties, which – in net terms at least – was shown to derive from people moving into the suburbs from the inner parts of the conurbations. Maybe, therefore, it was the latter that should be seen as key to the urban exodus process even though they were not leaving the city themselves, not during that time period anyway. Then again, many of these (i.e. the owner occupiers among them) would not have been able to move into the suburbs if there had not been a ready supply of takers for their inner-city properties from first-time buyers and migrants arriving in the city from elsewhere in the UK and from overseas. Others (not previously owner occupiers) would also probably not have moved to the suburbs in such large numbers if their inner-city rents had not been so high, that also being partly a function of the strong demand for housing generated by these other migration streams.

The second aspect of chain migration that is highly relevant to understanding migration patterns, especially trends over time, is that a migration stream, once in existence, tends to build on itself in cumulative fashion, even if the original cause is no longer in operation. At a micro level, this is because of the pull provided by personal acquaintance with, or knowledge of, people who have made that move previously with apparently successful results for themselves. At the macro level, this dynamic is enhanced by the effects that this population movement has on both the origin and the destination areas, these experiencing vicious and virtuous circles of change respectively. The chain process has been set out most elegantly by Böhning (1972) in his concept of 'the maturation of a migration stream', applied to guest workers moving from villages in southern Europe to France and Germany in the 1950s and 1960s, initially involving just single men, then families, then shopkeepers and ultimately the village priest as virtually the whole settlement relocated to the destination country. Closer to home, the decline spiral has been widely used to explain the acceleration of the low-demand phenomenon in British city neighbourhoods in the 1990s (e.g. Bramley *et al*, 2000; Power, 2000). At the other end of the scale, it has also been suggested that the 'lure of the countryside' has

become even greater as the difficulty of accessing housing there, and the social cachet that comes with this achievement, has grown as a result of the demand increasing faster than the supply of suitable properties (see Champion *et al*, 1998a; Murdoch, 1997).

Migration analyses: the life-course perspective

A life-course perspective is now seen as essential to the understanding of both the residential moves of the individual and the aggregate pattern of migration flows between places. The most fundamental element of this is that age is the single most powerful determinant of the probability of address changing, as represented most clearly in Rogers's 'age migration schedule' (Rogers *et al*, 1978). The likelihood of someone changing usual address peaks in early adulthood and declines substantially after this, reaching a low point around 70-75 before rising to a 'late age' peak, while there is also a trough at secondary-school age. This pattern is associated with what used to be called 'stage in the family life cycle', and for all the obvious reasons.

More recently, reflecting the societal changes that have occurred since the 1960s and are encapsulated in the concept of the 'second demographic transition' (van de Kaa, 1987), it has come to be recognised that the 'family life cycle' is far too simple. Whereas in the past relatively few young adults would 'leave home' before marriage and the onset of family building, a rather significant proportion of all changes of usual address is now generated by people before they become parents, while divorce/separation, new partnerships and older people living separately from their grown-up children have all increased (Grundy, 1992). The replacement concept of 'life course' (e.g. Warnes, 1992) incorporates these extra stages, which potentially can include young adults returning to live with their parents for a while as well as the often highly fluid household arrangements of the single and the divorced/separated.

A key element of the 'life course' perspective is that there is no single, classic 'cycle' that everyone is expected to follow. As with the parallel 'housing career' concept, different people can be seen to follow different trajectories through their lives. Socio-economic status and partly associated type of housing tenure will likely open up certain residential 'pathways' while closing off other avenues. Decisions about the importance of career versus family building and the timing of any child-rearing activity, as well as sexual orientation and a host of other factors, will also affect residential preferences and migration behaviour.

In addition, the 'life course' perspective contains a further ingredient, in that it recognises that not everyone starts from the same position. In the demographic

literature, this has been most clearly set out in terms of the successive 'birth cohorts', with the so-called 'Easterlin hypothesis' suggesting considerably different 'life chances' for those who leave school during an economic boom compared to those leaving during a labour market slump (see Jones, 1990). Such time-specific factors can apply at any stage of the life span; for example, retirement migration is easier for those who retire at the time of a house-price boom. Such cohort-specific factors also apply spatially, with there now being a large literature on the geographical differences in people's life chances, some of which are over and above the effects of socio-economic status etc.

Nevertheless, having said all this, the migration literature does indicate some rather strong age-related patterns of migration behaviour that seem to be persisting over time. In relation to the city, there remains a very strong centrifugal movement of households as they reach the family-building stage. This is perhaps even more important in numerical terms than in the past: while a somewhat larger proportion of people nowadays remain childless or raise children as single parents (with more limited ability to buy their way into the suburbs), there has been a big increase in the proportion of young adults who live away from their parental home beforehand, and this is usually in an inner-city environment providing suitable housing and easier access to jobs and a 'big city lights' lifestyle.

At an inter-city level, this is reflected in the so-called 'regional escalator' phenomenon. This is where people tend to move to the region that offers the greatest chances of finding work and getting rapid promotion at an early stage in their working careers and then 'step off the escalator' at a later stage, once their thirst for advancement and material wealth has been satisfied or at least has taken second place to quality-of-life considerations. South-east England's role in this process is now well documented, with London's labour market as the primary dynamic. The process is less clear for other British cities, most of which have been found to suffer from problems of graduate retention following the recruitment of large numbers of school leavers to their universities.

These sorts of age-related patterns of migration are so fundamental in the UK (and are observable in many other countries, too) that neither short-term fluctuation in conditions (e.g. in labour and housing markets) nor longer-term societal trends (e.g. in the level and life-stage timing of child-bearing) are likely to produce more than just change at the margins in the short term. On the other hand, such marginal changes can have quite significant impacts on the net migration balances of places. As documented in the urban-exodus research, in 1990-91 England's metropolitan counties in aggregate received almost 8 migrants from the rest of Britain for every 10 that they lost, so that just a 10% increase in in-migration or a 10% reduction in out-

migration would have had a substantial dampening effect on the scale of their net loss (Champion *et al*, 1998a).

The impact of societal change on migration

As indicated above, there are certain societal developments that are affecting migration. Mention has already been made of the second demographic transition's association with the leaving-home process, household formation and dissolution later in the life span, and the extent and timing of child-bearing. The other major demographic trends likely to affect both the level of address changing and the profiles of residential preferences in the population at large are changes in population composition by age and ethnicity, most notably the ageing of the population, the long-term effects of baby booms and bulges (e.g. the 1960s baby boom is now moving towards age 50) and the growth of the black and ethnic minority (BME) populations (resulting from immigration and subsequent family building). The effects of these sorts of changes need to be factored into any scenario development or projections modelling.

Mention has also been made of the changing settlement pattern, most notably the increasing numbers living in suburban and 'exurban' areas and the apparent evolution of cities from a primarily monocentric structure to a more polynuclear form. On the one hand, in relation to what has just been said about life-course trajectories, the population's aggregate migration behaviour will be affected by the balance of types of residential environment that they have been brought up in and that they find themselves in at any subsequent point in time. On the other, as they come to decide to move, they are faced with a changing 'offer' of alternative locations that may be providing new 'niches' for some types of people or perhaps closing off other options. The role of public sector interventions (planning policy, subsidy and tax regimes, social housing provision and allocation criteria, etc.) cannot be ignored here, as it provides the context within which the market sector operates.

Two aspects of societal change that have been given less attention thus far relate to the major changes that have been taking place in both housing and labour markets. The main types of impacts on migration have been clearly set out by, respectively, Munro (1992) and Green (1992), which would seem to have stood the test of time so far, perhaps not surprisingly as what they are dealing with are long-term trends. Munro discusses the implications for migration of housing market restructuring, notably the processes of tenure restructuring, privatisation and residualisation within housing provision. Her main conclusion is that one of the primary aims of housing privatisation in the 1980s – increasing people's residential mobility and thus their ability to 'get on their bikes' to free up labour market bottlenecks – is fundamentally

flawed: council tenants exercising the right to buy do not suddenly turn into long-distance migrants for various reasons, and there are plenty of constraints on mobility within the owner-occupied sector (see Forrest and Murie, 1992).

Green (1992) highlights the manifold changes taking place in the labour market. These include changes in the industrial, occupational and gender structure of employment, increases in part-time, temporary and casual working, increases in the number of dual-earner and especially dual-career households, the growth of self-employment, changes in firm-size structure and the changing structure of internal (i.e. within-firm) labour markets. Some of the changes operate in favour of increasing migration propensities, some in favour of decreasing them, and several also lead to changes in the types of location and housing that people prefer to live in (Green, 1992, pp 115-116).

These sorts of societal change affect both people's willingness to change address and their choice of destination. For example, the growth in dual-career households dampens down long-distance migration, unless one partner is prepared to undergo some career setback and at least a temporarily reduced income. Similarly, two-earner households are likely to choose residential locations that maximise their chances of finding new jobs without moving home, which would be expected to be in a larger city (like London) with its greater number of opportunities or, in a more polycentric settlement pattern (such as in the East Midlands), possibly in a village situated equidistant from several of the larger employment centres.

A classification of migration determinants

Reviews of these types of literature have led to the compilation of lists of the factors that influence migration behaviour, thus providing the basis for selecting the independent variables to be used in both the explanatory and the forecasting modelling of migration patterns. Probably the most comprehensive review is that of Champion *et al.*, 1998b: in any case, it indicates a useful approach to this task, which was in fact followed through in a major modelling exercise (see below). Six main sets of migration determinants were identified: demographic factors, cultural/social factors, labour market factors, housing factors, environmental factors, and policies. Examples of the effects of these were then set out with regard to several types of migration: migration between England and overseas, migration between England and other UK countries, North/South migration within England, urban/rural migration and inner-city/suburb migration.

In relation to the urban/rural dimension, the following examples were shown in the summary table (Champion *et al.*, 1998b, page 102):

- Demographic factors: urban-to-rural migration is selective of family and retirement ages, with a reverse flow of young adults.
- Cultural/social factors: the better off migrate towards rural areas; ethnic minorities tend to concentrate in the larger cities and their inner areas.
- Labour market factors: the self-employed are more common in rural than urban areas, associated notably with pre-retirement migration; suburbanisation of jobs permits workers to commute from further away in the surrounding region.
- Housing factors: housing shortages and higher house prices (type for type) force people to look further out of a city, while owner occupiers choose locations with good chances of capital appreciation.
- Environmental factors: possibly the main driver of urban-to-rural movement within city regions, as people move towards the countryside.
- Policy factors: land use policies, e.g. green belt restrictions, plus urban regeneration efforts.

In addition to these factors are:

(1) shorter-term temporal trends affecting the volume as well as the direction of migration, e.g. building cycles in terms of new housing provision, and housing and labour market cycles in relation to the availability and affordability of housing; and (2) impedance factors relating to the barriers to migration, notably the prevailing short-distance nature of most moves (distance decay effects in the gravity-modelling approach) but bearing in mind the changes (generally increases) in personal day-to-day mobility.

Examples of results of migration analyses

Drivers of migration in England: development of a migration model

Fotheringham *et al*, (2002) carried out the largest modelling exercise of its kind undertaken for England, and probably for anywhere in the world. It used between-area migration data from the NHS Central Register for 14 age/gender groups (the ages being 0-15, 16-19, 20-24, 25-29, 30-44, 45-59, 60+). The areal units – 47 shire counties, 35 metropolitan county districts and 16 groupings of London boroughs – are not exactly what one would choose for analysing city flight, but the overall weighting is somewhat towards the city (or part-city) level. A 2-stage model was employed that replicated the common decision making process: the decision to leave an area, then the choice of destination. The most significant results (and most consistent across age/gender groups except where indicated) were as follows:

Higher rates of out-migration, modelled across 14 years up to 1997/98, were for areas with:

- poorer air quality
- wetter, colder climates
- relatively high proportion of people who commute long distances
- lower levels of deprivation (more deprived areas have more trapped people?)
- higher employment growth (higher turnover areas?)
- large proportion of urban population (more mobile, or less settled, than rural people?)
- higher household incomes (wealthier more able to move?)
- lower house prices (more people at the beginning of housing careers?)
- relatively low house prices in nearby areas
- London (older people only; lower rates for young adults)
- high proportions of non-white residents (white flight or non-whites more mobile?)
- lower levels of new housebuilding on brownland (older urban areas less attractive?)
- higher levels of relets in the social sector (unsettled population?)
- fewer vacant dwellings
- less deprived areas nearby
- more students (graduates moving away, but affects older age groups too).

More popular as destination choices, modelled for 1996/97 only but checked against the six preceding years for robustness) were areas with:

- lower rates of age-specific unemployment (especially for younger males and older age groups)
- warmer and drier climates
- lower crime rates (especially for females and older people)
- lower council tax rates (for all migrant groups except 16-19)
- higher household incomes (for <45s; older people more likely to move to lower income areas)
- higher house prices (except for 16-19; stronger for older people)
- higher concentrations of listed buildings (places with character)
- less building on recycled land (avoid older urban areas, perhaps more deprived areas?)
- larger populations (for young adults only)
- more university places (for 16-19 and 20-24 only)
- lower proportions of vacant and derelict land (especially for older people)

Overall, the results were in line with expectations. Where the results were counter-intuitive, the elaboration (shown in brackets ending with ‘?’) attempts to rationalise these. In particular, lower out-migration was commonly associated with indicators of

higher deprivation (like higher crime), with the interpretation being that deprivation reduces people's ability to leave an area the size of a city district or shire county.

Note that, in each of the two models, the relationships are all independent of each other and contributing to the 'explanation' of between-area differences in their out-migration rates or in the destination choices of their exiting people. But this does not preclude the possibility that some of these variables may not be acting in their own right: they may be proxies for other drivers that were not offered to the model (usually for reasons of lacking sufficiently accurate data). What these results show is merely migration's associations with areas having particular characteristics. This caveat is extremely important when attempting to move on to policy recommendations.

Drivers of migration in England: measuring destination attractiveness

A more modest exercise (Fotheringham *et al*, 2000) was undertaken as part of a project funded by the ESRC Cities Programme. This produced for each of the 1991 local authorities of mainland Britain a measure of their 'relative intrinsic attractiveness' (RIA) by comparing their actual in-migration 1990-91 with the level expected on the basis of their population size and their distance from the rest of the population that was considered as potential in-migrants to the area.

The more rural local authorities performed even more strongly than expected, while the major conurbation centres performed much less well bearing in mind the large numbers of potential in-migrants living in their surrounding areas. Sandwell, Walsall, Dudley, Knowsley, St Helens, Stoke-on-Trent, Wigan, Oldham, Wolverhampton and Barking & Dagenham were the 10 worst performers. The 10 strongest were all in rural Scotland, which probably reflects the fact that the late 1980s economic boom was still working here then, though it could also result from a lower significance being attached to each mile of distance in such a low-density region.

A model with just six determinants was found to account for 89% of the variance in RIA (unstandardised by population size) between the 451 places. Besides having large populations, the areas with higher scores were those with healthier people, more in the higher social classes, location in the more peripheral areas, larger proportions of households in private rented furnished accommodation, and higher rates of recent immigration from overseas. Clearly the RIA scores are averaging across more than one type of migration; for instance, with the last two variables picking up the types of places that young adults tend to move to and the other three being more associated with the types of places seen as attractive to older people. In fact, however, when RIAs were calculated for 15-24 year olds alone, the broad geography was little different to the all-age results just described, though this could

perhaps be affected by the economic recession being felt most severely across southern England at this stage (and also by the fact that in the 1991 Census students were enumerated at their parental home and so their university-related moves were not treated as migration).

Three earlier studies of city flight

The Champion *et al*, (1998a) report on “Urban Exodus” for CPRE was directly aimed at a better understanding of people leaving cities. The cities examined here were Greater London and the six metropolitan counties, with the data (from the 1991 census) being for their 1990-91 migration exchanges with non-metropolitan England and Wales, i.e. the shire counties. The statistical analyses used the district-level units: 32 London Boroughs and 36 metropolitan districts, 68 areas in all. Three main groups of determinants were expected to be involved in explaining gross out-migration rates from these areas to the shires: proximity of the area to non-metropolitan areas, the type of people living in an area (whether of the more migratory types) and the inherent characteristics of the area.

Stepwise regression analysis on the natural logarithm of out-migration rate, drawing from a list of 24 potential explanatory variables, produced a model with just 6 variables accounting for 90% of the variance between the 68 areas. Out-migration was positively associated with closeness to non-metropolitan areas, overall population density, negative equity, and social class, and negatively associated with mortality and people aged 50-64. Thus, variables representing all three groups of determinants, were included. Closeness to non-metropolitan areas emerged as the second most significant variable, as expected from the ‘law’ that most moves are over short distances. Of the two person-related variables, social class takes into account that the higher-order occupational groups are the more likely to change address, while the negative association with older people reflects their lower propensity to move (clearly offsetting the effect of any tendency for older people to be more involved in retirement migration). Two of the three place variables (mortality and negative equity, which in 1991 was quite strongly correlated with house price) seem to reinforce the social compositional effect, though by definition catering for different facets of this. Finally, higher population densities added to the explanation of higher out-migration rates, clearly suggesting that – over and above the effect of the other factors – there was a centrifugal push involved, especially from inner London which had the highest densities of all 68 areas. The analysis does not, however, reveal exactly what driver(s) the population density variable represents, as it can be expected to be quite highly correlated with such push factors as land values, congestion, crime and deprivation.

The paper by Champion (2000) was developed on the back of the study for CPRE. It distilled the evidence presented there under three main headings: was the 'urban exodus' primarily a matter of 'flight', 'quest' or overflow'?

Flight? If this is taken to mean headlong flight or a stampede, then definitely not, based mainly on the recognition that city migration is by no means a one-way process. There were large numbers of people moving into cities from the rest of the country, just not quite as many as moving out. On the other hand, if 'flight' is used to cover the push effect of the less attractive features of city life, then it did have a role, though less important and less direct than the pull factors of the 'quest'.

Quest? Yes, pretty clear evidence in support of this explanation, based mainly on the fact that it was the residents of the leafier suburbs that were shown to constitute the bulk of the migration flow from cities to non-metropolitan areas. Of course, it could be that these people are ultra-sensitive to the negative aspects of the urban environment, having the highest aspirations, but this is difficult to measure separately from the power of the 'lure of the countryside', with all the perceived advantages of the attractive physical environment and social activities/status of life in villages and the deep countryside, as captured by the concept of 'rural idyll'.

Overflow? A more mixed picture and more qualified answer, but generally yes. This conclusion was reached on the basis of the development pressures found in many cities that cannot be as readily and economically accommodated within the urban-area limits imposed by green belts etc as in smaller settlements beyond the green belt. The whole basis of the 1940s planning settlement, as first laid out in Abercrombie's plans for London and Glasgow and then reinforced by the 'urban containment' approach of the 1947 Town & Country Planning Act, was to limit the lateral growth of larger urban centres and prevent nearby centres from growing into one another. The New and Expanded Towns (NET) were created to receive the surplus development pressures in an attempt to lower the overall population densities of the cities. In fact, the majority of this overflow – even while these schemes were still running through to the 1970s – was accommodated in towns and villages that were not part of the NET programme. Furthermore, the simple demographic of falling average household size, which accelerated after the 1960s, served to reduce the population capacity of the now rather strictly-defined urban areas of the large cities. The overflow explanation can be most readily applied to London's urban area (especially with the capital's population resurgence since the 1980s) and other rapidly-growing cities in the southern half of the country. In only slightly modified form, however, it can be applied to northern cities: their legacy of industrially-based growth, together with the dearth of new building there in the interwar period, has not left them with enough neighbourhood space suitable for the

postwar explosion of the professional and managerial occupational groups, while smaller towns and surrounding countryside are more accessible in both physical and financial terms than those around London.

Ford and Champion (2001, see also Champion and Fisher, 2004) undertook a case study for Newcastle City Council's 'Going for Growth' strategy team, as part of an ESRC Cities Programme project. It was principally targeted at areas of new owner-occupied housing, because the City Council recognised this as the single most important factor in Newcastle's recent migration losses to the rest of the region. The City had seen its annual average net loss to the rest of the UK treble from 650 to just over 2,000 between 1990-94 and 1994-98. This deterioration was found to be partly due to losses to regions outside the North East, but around half resulted from increased losses to neighbouring districts. Because the former was considered to be readily explainable in terms of the North/South divide in job opportunities, the survey work concentrated on people moving within the North East.

One especially impressive finding was that the vast majority of recent movers seemed to have been looking for very much the same type of housing. The general preference was for newly-built detached housing, situated on a quiet street with adequate car parking and with a feeling of spaciousness helped by local greenery, if not a view over open land. This degree of conformity is perhaps not surprising, given the way in which the survey was targeted towards areas of recent private house building. Even so, it underlined the fact that for many people it is the character of the housing and the estate that is very important, not so much the broader geographical context. Given that the availability of suitable housing was cited frequently as a reason for the particular choice of area, it is likely that if the balance of this type of house building could be shifted more towards Newcastle and away from the surrounding region, more people would choose Newcastle than do so currently.

On the other hand, the survey found that many people had consciously chosen to live outside Newcastle. Much of this was to do with house price. The group largely comprised young families and pre-family couples on the lower-paid rungs of their professional and managerial careers and so sensitive to size of mortgage needed. Indeed, several cited house price as a key consideration in choosing a new home. Not everyone in this group, however, was a reluctant mover: several cited among their main reasons for moving out of the city the desire for a better neighbourhood, access to a good school, and being close to open space and countryside.

Social complexion of migration into and out of British cities

Champion and Fisher (2003) investigated the degree of social selectivity in migration between the largest conurbations and the rest of Britain, with the aim of testing the

idea that this process has been removing disproportionately large numbers of better-qualified people. This work confirmed anecdotal evidence that better-off people are the more likely to be involved in these cities' net migration losses to the rest of the UK. The overall rate of net loss of professional, managerial and technical workers was much higher than the rates for the other non-manual, skilled manual and other manual groups for all but one of the eight places. Indeed, Greater Manchester exhibited a perfect ranking of these six groups by rate of net loss, while the ranking for six other areas also came close to this. The exception was Greater London, where the rate of net loss for professional and technical workers was much lower than for managerial staff and skilled manual workers. Further analyses revealed that this exception was very largely due to Inner London's relatively low net losses of professionals to the rest of London and the South East together with net gains from the rest of Britain.

Champion *et al*, (2007) updated and develop this earlier work in a Rowntree-funded project which took advantage of the fuller outputs provided by the 2001 Census. It studied the within-UK migration exchanges of 27 large cities defined on an 'urban area' basis (using best-fit local authorities). Central to the methodology was the drawing of a distinction between the more localised migration between the urban area and the rest of the city's region and the longer-distance exchanges with the rest of the UK. The study included a more detailed examination of three city regions (London, Birmingham and Bristol), looking at migration flows between each's constituent localities. The main findings of the study are set out below.

- More of the 27 cities lost population as a result of within-UK migration than gained, but their combined net loss of 63,000 people was mainly accounted for by London's large loss.
- 9 of the 27 cities made a net gain of 'moving groups' through their longer-distance migration exchanges, and 10 received more from the rest of their city regions than they lost.
- London saw very many more Higher Managerial and Professional people arriving than leaving, but most cities appear less successful at attracting and/or keeping this key group than they are with migrants in general.
- Most cities making the strongest gains from longer-distance migration had seen local job growth in the past decade and possess a range of features associated with a higher quality of life.
- The least attractive cities for longer-distance flows also tend to suffer the highest losses to other parts of their own city regions – a pattern that can lead to housing market weakness.
- Within the three case study city regions, the Higher Managerial and Professional group is generally more attracted to high-status or upwardly

mobile areas and localities with open space, with such selective migration marginally reinforcing existing social differences between localities.

- Students moving to university boost most of the 27 cities' populations, but the departure of recent graduates weakens many provincial cities' growth potential, though the Census does not permit a precise assessment of this.

The overall conclusion was that, compared with most of the latter part of the twentieth century, the migration balance sheet has improved for Britain's larger cities. Even so, according to the 2001 Census, many of these cities are continuing to lose people – and the more skilled and wealthy in particular – through their migration exchanges with the rest of the UK. This suggests that the existing policies designed to reinforce the economic transformation of cities and improve their attractiveness as places to live need to be pursued even more imaginatively and energetically. At the same time, the research identified a number of ways in which the Census could be made more useful for these sorts of migration analysis. In particular, much more definitive results on migration's impacts on places could be obtained if the census form were to include a question on economic position one year ago, or just on who had been a full-time student then.

The drivers of city flight: summary of findings

Drawing on the 'in-house work' just exemplified as well as the international literature, this section is designed to identify what are seen as the main drivers of city flight. It is divided into two parts, following the approach used in the Rowntree project and reflecting the earlier research that differentiated between the job-related drivers of long-distance migration and the housing- and environment-related drivers of local and intermediate-distance moves.

Cities' longer-distance migration exchanges

Longer-distance migration is the more complex and less researched part of the city flight dichotomy. Analyses of labour migration have traditionally been inter-regional in nature, where 'region' refers to macro economic regions of 'north' and 'south' or to the pre-1996 'standard statistical regions' (SSR) like South East, South West and East Midlands. Most such analyses have therefore not taken a strictly 'city' focus, though some studies have used the South East as a surrogate a functionally-defined version of 'Greater London'. In fact, the SSR replacement – the Government Office Region (GOR) – now identifies the Greater London Authority area separately from the surrounding South East and East of England GORs, but this does not even cover the entire urban area of London, let alone the wider labour market area that is of key importance in analysing its labour migration exchanges with the rest of the UK. Meanwhile, government's recent espousal of the 'city region' concept has not

yet been followed through to provide a geographical basis for the regular reporting of official statistics on migration or anything else.

This is unfortunate, given the great policy and academic attention now being given to the urban dimension in tackling the regional problem and the similarly large body of consensus about the importance for the growth of cities' economic bases of retaining and attracting skilled labour. Human capital has emerged as a central concern in current debates about city development, because of the understanding that modern cities increasingly depend on knowledge based activities (ranging from advanced business services and creative industries to niche consumer services and the public or private delivery of certain public services). Lundvall (1992) and Knight (1995) emphasise that certain cities provide specialist forms of knowledge, much of which is embodied in the people who work there. Hall (1998) paints a much broader canvas, with the most dynamic cities thriving because of the interplay between their various cultural and other assets and the people attracted to live there. At a more pragmatic level, if the high skill element of a city's labour force is growing, then local firms will be more able to find the range of specialised skills in the large numbers seen as critical for them to compete most effectively (Porter, 1998).

Along with the conventional perspective which sees skilled labour as a key 'factor of production' for firms in cities, there has been a growing emphasis on the more proactive role of people in urban economies. In particular, Florida (1995, 2002) has stressed the influence of the 'creative classes' who may not have conventional jobs with major employers but whose presence in a city in large numbers is associated with economic growth. Very clearly, this particular perspective on urban regeneration leads to great interest in the relative success of a city holding on to, and recruiting additions to, its pool of creative people whose skills can range from an artist or advertising 'creative' to a yoga or Zen sensei. The important contribution of specific skills to economic development has also been stressed by a study of the higher education sector's boosting of the human capital of London (GLA Economics, 2004). More generally, the findings of Rodríguez-Pose and Vilalta-Bufí (2005) confirmed the association between the economic performance of European regions and the differences between them in human capital endowment and particularly stressed the matching of educational supply with local labour needs, and selective migration. A better understanding of migration dynamics is therefore essential to the assessment of a 'renaissance' in Britain's cities.

Indeed, a major value of the JRF 2001 Census Programme project (Champion *et al*, 2007) is that it is the only recent study to separately analyse the 'beyond-city-region' migration performance by social/skill group for British cities. The most positive aspect of the British urban scene in this regard is the situation of London, confirming

previous results on its pivotal role in the national migration system and extending them by showing London's greater attractiveness for people with higher managerial and professional (HMP) skills than other groups, both in relation to other parts of the UK in general and especially in relation to the majority of the other 26 cities studied. The only cities to achieve a near balance with London in exchanges of the HMP group are the urban cores of its neighbouring city regions, Brighton and Reading. Nottingham was found to be among the three worst performers on this criterion, along with Stoke and Hull.

The general picture for all cities besides London, Reading and Brighton (which were dubbed the 'gateway cities') was one in which fewer occupationally-classified people were arriving in these cities from beyond their city-region boundaries than were leaving them for these more distant destinations. It was also one where the balance of HMP exchanges was less positive than for the other skill levels combined. The only fairly consistently positive feature for these cities was that most of them were gainers from the moves of full-time students who were heads of 'moving groups' at the Census: only Bradford, Derby, Northampton, Norwich and Reading lost out from this measure of the going-to-university process.

This latter finding, however, needs to be set against what appears to be a pretty general difficulty that most of the cities face in retaining the graduates of their universities. While this is not something that is directly measurable from the Census (because it does not allow the identification of those who were students one year ago), the loss of people who graduated during the pre-census year and were enumerated as being in (high-skill) work by the time of the 2001 Census would help to account for the strong positive balance in HMP migrants recorded by London and the generally weak performance of the other cities.

At the same time, it needs to be stressed that all these results were for the migration exchanges of the urban areas of these cities. They do not take account of the longer-distance migration exchanges of the rest of the cities' city regions. If we are primarily concerned with the economic base of the city and the labour pool available to it, then the analysis should be at the level of the whole city region (as also recognised by Marvin *et al.*, 2006, and Simmie *et al.*, 2004). This is because, through commuting, a city can draw on the labour resources of the region surrounding it. People moving out of a city to a nearby area can be considered to remain part of the human capital available to it and, similarly, people moving into the city's surrounding region from further afield are adding to the human capital potentially available to the city.

This consideration has been addressed in a separate piece of work which looks at the migration exchanges into and out of the city regions of the 27 cities (Champion and Coombes, 2007). Having said that, however, the findings were little different from those just described. London city region dominates the aggregate picture, not only receiving a larger number of the occupationally classified than it lost, but also displaying a positive relationship between its in/out ratio and skill level. The overall picture remains rather depressing for the largest provincial cities: Bristol and Edinburgh are the only two cities to appear consistently in a positive light in these findings. Meanwhile, the smaller of the cities in our study provide a diverse set of results. Many cities in the north had consistently negative results, whereas other similarly sized cities had net migration inflows which suggested they were mostly gaining from the largest cities. In the round, therefore, the results were interpreted as giving only weak support for claims of a British 'urban renaissance'.

Local decentralisation from cities

By contrast with the urban dimension of long-distance dimension of city migration exchanges, there is a huge and growing literature on the more localised dimension of city flight, the main findings of which are generally confirmed by the part of the JRF 2001 Census Programme study that dealt with city's migration exchanges with the rest of their city regions (Champion *et al*, 2007). This allows us to go much further in discussing the drivers.

The international literature commonly differentiates between 'permissive factors' and 'active drivers'. As regards the former, particularly when taking a long-term perspective, much attention is given to the blurring of urban-rural differences in way of life and in the changes in living conditions that underpin this tendency. Perhaps the most obvious single aspect is the way in which key aspects of city life have been brought to traditionally rural areas. Basic 'urban' amenities like piped water supply, mains sewerage and electric power are almost universally available to houses in the more developed world. Even if they are not supplied from a wider grid, technology allows these amenities to be provided for the smallest settlement or even for the individual residence through pumps, septic tanks and generators. Given that very few of the newcomers to more rural locations appear to be seeking a complete return to traditional 'rurality' and to a pre-industrial lifestyle, the availability of these facilities in small settlements is an essential precondition for the urban exodus towards these places. It is also reflected in the way in which quite complete urban environments now have to be provided to retain or attract the more skilled labour that is now often required for mining, forestry and even farming activities in more remote areas.

Allied to this is the improvement in transport and communications. Modern life requires access to a much wider range of services than was previously the case. Although some of these have been internalised within the home (through, for instance, washing machines replacing the need for laundry services and in-house entertainment substituting for visits to theatre and cinema), only limited use has so far been made of telecommunications to gain access remotely to a whole set of vital services such as schooling and health care. Even 'teleworking' has not penetrated substantially into areas from which residents are not able to make fairly regular visits to larger centres. Good transport linkages with such centres have therefore been vital in the opening up of more peripheral areas for new urban development and associated city-derived population growth. At the same time, the great flexibility allowed by the private car, combined with vast road building programmes over recent decades, has provided the other primary facilitator of local and indeed not-so-local decentralisation, especially into 'inter-metropolitan peripheries'.

On the other hand, the existence of such permissive factors would hold no significance for the location of population growth if there was no desire to live in these types of areas, so now we need to turn our attention to the factors which appear to be actively driving the urban exodus. In migration analysis, it is conventional to distinguish between push and pull factors, but in this particular context most of the drivers constitute relativities in people's residential choices that identify living in one type of environment as being preferable to life in another. On this basis, people move from the core of a city to the suburbs or from the suburbs to further afield because this will help them both escape the more negative features of city life and at the same time benefit from the more agreeable aspects of life in a more rural setting. Perhaps the only way of assessing the relative importance of rural attraction and urban repulsion is in terms of the types of people moving and the distances moved.

The literature on urban sprawl generally supports the importance of the negative features of urban life. In nineteenth century Britain, for instance, the main drivers were the threats posed to people's wellbeing by disease, smoke and squalor, with the new housing being built only as far away as was necessary to avoid these and with the wealthier opting for the windward side of the sources of pollution. Economic considerations also played an important role then and still so, owing to the generally higher price commanded by land and housing in locations closer to the core of the classic monocentric city, as reflected in the land-rent gradient. Around Paris, for instance, it is the less wealthy ('employees and workers') that have had to move the furthest from the city core in their quest for more spacious and comfortable accommodation, whereas the 'executives and intermediary professions fare better in procuring a residence close to places of work' (Guérois and Pumain, 2002, p. 69). In

his seminal work on people who had moved deep into the English countryside and become *urbs in rure*, Pahl (1966) identified the reluctant Londonward commuter as one of the principal categories of people interviewed. Similarly, in their analysis of the new exurban populations in the USA, Berube *et al.* (2006) found the search for modestly priced and sized homes to be a key factor, with 'affordable exurbs' as the most common type of exurban neighbourhood, while the 'favoured-quarter exurbs' that featured more upscale homes were in the minority overall and were especially thin on the ground in the faster-growth and more pressurised metropolitan regions.

In general, however, the majority of people moving from urban cores to the suburbs and beyond are drawn from the wealthier segments of society, with the least well-off being trapped in older, cheaper parts of the core or in subsidised housing schemes. This tendency has manifested itself in greater social spatial polarisation and the growth of low-income and often low-demand neighbourhoods, particularly in the USA but also in other New World countries and Britain, and more recently also in Continental Europe and the developing world. In India, for instance, Dupont (2004) shows how on the outskirts of Delhi, often well beyond the perimeter of its urban agglomeration, private developers created large-scale housing schemes targeted at well-to-do residents looking for a better quality of life than the city can provide.

Indeed, it would appear to be in Britain that this tendency is most highly developed, and especially in England, where the 'lure of the countryside' is seen as a major driving force behind the exodus from urban areas. Studies of the reasons for urban-rural migration here consistently quote the importance of both the physical and the social qualities of life in the countryside (for example, Halfacree, 1994; Champion *et al.*, 1998a). According to Murdoch (1997), country life holds two main attractions for these people, allowing them to live in something resembling a natural setting and holding the potential for participating in real communities – possibly a rarely attained 'idyll' but one that is much sought-after nonetheless, with successive surveys since the 1930s revealing that up to 72 per cent of the population would prefer to live in the countryside.

Besides the evidence provided by studies of residential preferences and migrants' motivations, there are at least three further sets of factors that have promoted centrifugal shifts of population: changes in the distribution of jobs, changes in demographic regimes and changes in urban capacity. There has been both the dispersion of jobs across evolving polycentric urban regions and the longer-distance 'urban-rural shift' in the distribution of employment within and between larger regions (see, for instance, Turok and Edge, 1999, on the UK situation). This partial redrawing of national space economies has gone hand in hand with population deconcentration down the urban hierarchy, with the one building on the other in

cumulative fashion. New growth industries, often with a large complement of more skilled staff, have attracted to them the types of people who have formed the majority segment of the counterurbanites – in the words of Perry *et al.* (1986), the ‘middle-aged, middle-class and middle-brow’ plus their growing-up children – while, in their turn, these new arrivals have increased the demand for services and enriched the labour pool, both helping to generate new opportunities for business.

As regards the changing demographic regime, longer life expectancy and markedly lower fertility has led to a rising proportion of the elderly in the population, these being pioneers of the counterurbanisation process owing to not needing to live close to metropolitan jobs and indeed preferring to seek out areas combining cheaper housing and a more attractive environment. The shift in people’s lifestyles from more altruistic attitudes towards more individualistic and self-gratifying behaviour, combined with the growth of self-employment and telecommunications, has prompted many people of working age to follow their parents’ generation, often trading in higher salaries and relative job security for a superior quality of life. This shift in attitudes is also associated with the growth in the proportion of one-person households, fuelled by rising levels of relationship breakdown as well as a desire to live alone. Separately, the strong growth in two-earner, and especially two-career, households has led some people to select ‘intermediate’ locations for their homes, so as to be able to access a wider range of jobs across the increasingly polycentric labour markets. Higher levels of international immigration and the resultant growth of ethnic minority populations have made the metropolitan ‘gateway’ cities less attractive to the indigenous population through greater competition for housing and jobs, if not more directly leading to ‘white flight’.

These developments are also associated with a fall in the residential capacity of urban areas beyond that associated with employment decline and neighbourhood abandonment. The smaller families resulting from lower fertility have combined with the growth in numbers of one-person households to produce a substantial lowering of average household size, meaning that people have become spread more thinly across the existing housing stock (Champion, 2001). Rising wealth and aspirations have placed a premium on larger houses with more space within their curtilage, while the rise in car ownership has meant that larger areas have had to be set aside for parking, not just in housing areas but at all the main destinations of journey-making, including trips to work, shop and play. Government-led slum clearance and urban renewal over the decades has generally involved rebuilding at lower densities and efforts at ‘greening’ the city, so as to reduce congestion and pollution and to provide ‘rural lungs’ and recreational space.

Government policies have also played a part – albeit usually less direct – in promoting population decentralisation, as can be identified from among the 17 explanations for counterurbanisation listed by Champion (1989, p. 236) from a review of nine national case studies. Besides the already-mentioned improvements in highways, communications technology and public-sector service provision in the countryside, these included the availability of subsidies for rural activities and services, which helped to offset the cost penalties of living in less accessible locations; the growth of employment in the public sector, which was generally less urban-*focussed* than private sector services; and the growth of state pensions and other portable welfare benefits, which helped to encourage the retired and unemployed to move to lower-cost smaller towns and rural areas. In addition, the nationwide promotion of home ownership through subsidies like tax relief on mortgage interest payments encouraged the outward push of development at the edge of the city.

At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that none of these broad groups of drivers is merely a one-way process: each also has centripetal elements that would seem to have been growing stronger. The economic restructuring in which de-industrialization featured so strongly also involved the growth of the ‘quaternary’ sector (Gottmann, 1970), including finance and business services and now better known as the knowledge-based and creative industries, for which the larger cities – and especially the so-called ‘world cities’ – are especially advantaged owing to their large skilled populations and extensive networking functions. The demographic trends towards delayed marriage and independent living by young adults, helped by increasing participation in higher education and the strong labour demand for young professionals, has swelled the movement of school leavers to the larger cities and their more central areas. Thirdly, both private and public sectors have identified these trends as opportunities for countering the falling population capacity of the existing housing stock by building smaller units and converting existing housing into apartments and starter homes. Finally, governments have been reducing the subsidies that helped to stimulate urban expansion, partly through the general ‘rolling back’ of the welfare state since the 1980s but also because of switching to policies of urban regeneration.

Challenges for policy makers

These two sets of migration patterns clearly pose two main sets of challenges for the majority of cities, and for the formulation and implementation of policy for them. In relation to the longer-distance component of cities’ migration exchanges, the key issue revolves around economic regeneration, as it is unrealistic to expect human capital to be retained by a city or drawn to it if the jobs and career prospects are

inadequate. In this context, however, if the cities are centres of wider labour market areas, then it is not necessarily important whether this jobs growth takes place within the main urban area or in the surrounding 'city region'. The only labour-market issue that would arise is whether all types of people could achieve the necessary access to the various types of jobs located in different parts of the city region as opposed to there being a 'skills mismatch' across the region. Additionally, of course, there might well be a knock-on effect on the population and socio-economic profile of the city's main built-up area, given that people taking up jobs in the more peripheral parts of the city region would now be able to live even further away from the regional core.

Turning secondly to the more localised component of city flight, which is the one that is perhaps more amenable to local policy interventions, two principal issues can be identified. Firstly, to the extent that these centrifugal shifts are seen as undesirable – not 'smart' in current US parlance – and need to be checked or at least made more orderly, there is the need for policy interventions designed to achieve this. Secondly, there needs to be a clear understanding both of what constitutes the most appropriate form of settlement that constitutes the ultimate goal of such intervention and also, given that normally planning policies are territorially based, a resolution of the conceptual and definitional issues related to this. Which areas to be targeted for particular policy measures, and what is the most suitable geographical framework for devising and administering the measures?

Looking at the challenge of stemming the centrifugal tide, the policy options can perhaps be most neatly classified into two groups; first, ways of intensifying the use of land that has already been converted from rural activities (nowadays commonly termed 'brownfield land') and, second, the best approach to be taken towards accommodating urban expansion across still rural territory (or 'greenfield land').

The planned intensification of already urbanized space is the more recently implemented of the two options. In fact, it is virtually the opposite of what the earliest government interventions into city growth were designed to achieve, these having been introduced to improve public health standards in the nineteenth-century industrial city by limiting building densities and providing parks as well as water supply and sanitation infrastructure. That approach was reinforced by the 'garden city' movement that had such a strong influence on suburban development in the first half of the twentieth century and formed the underlying rationale for the replanning of British cities after the Second World War, with Britain's New Town idea being aimed at reducing population densities in cities like London and Glasgow. With the subsequent hollowing-out of city populations by a combination of decentralization and de-industrialization, however, the emphasis has switched

completely around: the watch words are now 'reurbanisation', 'urban renaissance' and 'urban consolidation'.

The strategies being adopted to achieve urban intensification are able to harness and attempt to reinforce the growth of city-loving elements mentioned at the end of the previous section, though they face substantial obstacles in achieving a broader-based urban revival. There is a particular focus on the promotion of city-centre living among the increasing number of university-educated young adults who are in great demand from the growing business-services and information-economy sectors and appear to want to postpone family rearing while still enjoying pseudo-student lifestyles. More difficult, however, is the challenge of holding onto these people when they decide to have children, as these continue to be the main drivers of the residential decentralization process. This large group have traditionally tended to shun the areas of housing abandonment and the so-called 'problem neighbourhoods', not least because the latter do not represent good bets in terms of capital appreciation in housing values but also because of the often poor quality of the surrounding environments in terms of schools, safety and physical appearance. Many of these negative characteristics of the wider locality are not overcome merely by the building of individual 'gated communities', while there is considerable suspicion about the redevelopment of larger vacant and derelict sites in the form of 'mixed communities'. Until now, the most successful approach to retaining and attracting better-off families has been through increasing the housing stock of the older suburbs by building apartment blocks and higher-density housing on the sites of demolished mansions and by infilling on spare green sites and back gardens. Yet this 'urbanization of the suburbs' can provoke strong reactions from existing residents, while what is now labeled 'town cramming' in the UK threatens to remove some of the features – like a sense of spaciousness and relative quiet on the local roads – that have formed the conventional appeal of these areas.

As regards the best approach to be taken towards the development pressures that cannot be accommodated within the existing 'urban frame', a variety of models offer alternatives to unrestrained urban sprawl, all emphasizing higher densities but differing in the location and scale of the individual sites. The principal decision is between building out from the edge of the existing agglomeration and allowing new development to take place only on the far side of a protected 'green belt' or, perhaps more accurately, it is about the balance to be struck between these two. The 'green belt' approach has formed the mainstay of over half a century of planning for urban growth in the UK, though there have been many notable examples of green-belt 'nibbling' and – more recently under the dual pressure of countryside protection interests and environmental sustainability issues – a partial endorsement of the 'compact city' notion of attaching new development to the existing infrastructure at

the edge of cities that has so far seen its fullest application in the Netherlands. As regards choosing the pattern of development beyond the green belt, the main options can be grouped under three headings: completely new settlements, key village extensions and multiple village extensions. Fuller descriptions of these options can be found in Breheny *et al.* (1993), who go on to assess how they rate in economic, social and environmental terms both between each other and by comparison with the urban-infill and urban-extension alternatives.

At the same time, it is now widely recognized that decisions about the most appropriate form which this physical development should take need to be informed by notions of how the wider settlement system is, or should be, evolving. This was not always the case; for instance, in the 1940s planning for Greater London, it was assumed – indeed, it was the planning philosophy – that the New Towns should be self-contained, with people living and working within them and with all the services needed by their residents being provided locally. Yet, even within 30 years, it was recognised that these were merely a few urban nodes among the many making up the embryonic English Megalopolis, supplying commuters to central London and in their turn drawing in workers from surrounding villages (Hall *et al.*, 1973; Champion *et al.*, 1978). Planning interventions relating to just one part of such a wider region will have repercussions for many of its other parts, so policy decisions need to be made on this basis.

The question, therefore, turns to what best constitutes this wider geographical framework for planning decisions. As suggested above by the use of terms like ‘metropolitan area’ and Megalopolis, the literature is replete with examples of attempts to come to terms with the new forms of urbanization. The most fundamental step is to move away from defining cities in purely physical terms such as denoted by the term ‘urban agglomeration’: this is problematic even in the situation of free-market sprawl, where the challenge of the ‘edgeless city’ is hardly addressed by identifying some form of ‘urban-rural fringe’, but it is totally indefensible in a situation where development restrictions have pushed the city’s suburbs to leapfrog to the far side of a protected zone. To understand the dynamics of the city, it is necessary that its definition should embrace the same whole functioning entity that was the city of old within its defensive walls. The most common approach to this task is on the basis of identifying the extent of a city’s primary commuting field and treating this as a ‘labour market area’, though there is a case that other forms of interaction besides journeys to work should be used to depict possibly more extensive ‘daily urban systems’, ‘functional urban regions’ and ‘city regions’ that cover the city’s main recreational zone as well as the outlying areas that depend on the main core for higher-level services. Many countries around the world have gone down this route, as is evident from the chapters in this book as

well as the case studies to be found in multinational compilations like Geyer (2002) and Champion and Hugo (2004). Even the UK, where for so long governments rejected the notion of functionally-defined planning areas and left such regionalization exercises to the academic community (Champion, 2002), the 'city region' has now been recognised as a suitable vehicle for policy development (ODPM, 2003).

Finally, even within these wider frameworks, there remains the issue of whether any useful purpose is served by continuing to try to distinguish between the urban and the rural. On the one hand, many of the planning interventions designed to counter urban sprawl seem to be premised on the notion that it is best for the two to be kept as separate as possible, at least in physical terms. In the UK urban containment and rural protection have gone hand in hand during well over half a century of 'town and country planning', with the aim of reducing the length of the so-called 'urban fence' that separates them and minimizing the degree to which they would interpenetrate. Within the last few years, this dichotomous approach has been reinforced by the promulgation of separate urban and rural policy frameworks, with the official dividing line being built-up areas containing 10,000 residents. Even the UK's adoption of the 'city region' notion is designed primarily to ensure that, within such a functional region, as much as possible of all the new building should be channelled into the core urban area and the rural landscape be kept as free as possible from both residential and business development (ODPM, 2003).

By contrast, policy development at the European Union level, taking place within the primary lens of polycentric development, has increasingly been emphasising the positive aspects of the urban/rural interface, such that growth tendencies emanating from the city can be harnessed to aid the process of rural regeneration (ESPD, 1999; see also Hoggart, 2005). Also important at this broader level is the recognition that neither urban areas nor rural areas are the same across the whole of national or supranational territory, but vary according to the wider context. A good example of this diversity is provided by the six-fold classification of European 'settlement types' described by Pumain (2004, pp. 242-245), these comprising: regions dominated by a large metropolis; polycentric regions with high urban and rural densities; polycentric regions with high urban densities and low rural ones; rural areas under metropolitan influence; rural areas with small and medium-sized cities; and remote rural areas. Such a classification takes into account not only the remaining key dimensions that once distinguished urban from rural in a conformable way, namely settlement size, density and accessibility to services, but also considers additional information about the type of trajectory of the individual settlement relative to its context in the wider settlement system.

Annex 3 Thematic summary of stakeholder interviews

The aim of the interviews was to help scope the city flight research project from the perspective of key stakeholders and policy makers. More specifically, the interrelated objectives were to

- identify perceptions of the nature and significance of city flight;
- provide additional information on existing and proposed policies as well as data sources; and
- inform the later stages of the research project especially the analysis of datasets and policy recommendations.

This section of this report begins by outlining the methodology that has been utilised. This is followed by separate sub-sections on the three major elements of this part of the research:

- nature and significance of city flight,
- information and evidence base,
- policy issues and opportunities.

Approach

Our tender brief identified three broad overlapping categories of major stakeholders. These were the sub-regional housing market assessment co-ordinators, key agents in the housing policy and development process (such as housebuilders and RSLs) and regeneration agencies (i.e. urban regeneration companies). We also highlighted the importance of a snowballing approach whereby the initial interview sample is identified and added to as the interviews progress. As an interview is completed, the individual or group is invited to recommend others to be surveyed. Box A reports the list of interviews now completed.

An initial set of brief telephone discussions were held with key stakeholders identified by EMDA in late November 2006. This resulted in changes to the original approach as it became apparent that a wider range of interviews would be needed to obtain a satisfactory overview of the city flight issue in the East Midlands. In particular, the following types of additional organisations were identified:

-
- key regional policy makers e.g. the Housing Corporation;
- Universities with their growing focus on working in partnership with local organisations to boost the regional / sub-regional economy; and
- suburban and rural district councils and county councils.

The face-to-face interviews have been based on a semi-structured checklist comprising three core themes, with a number of sub-themes among them.

Perception of nature and significance of city flight:

definition / clarification of city flight;
geographical dimensions of city flight;
socio-economic group / ethnicity / household type & size etc;
positive / negative / neutral consequences;
implications for organisations; and
relative importance of city flight re other policy issues.

Information & evidence base on city flight:

sources of information including primary and secondary data / analytical reports / policy statements; and
other relevant sources that organisations & individuals were aware of / have made use of in analysis and policy making.

Policy issues and opportunities:

housing; planning and spatial strategy;
economic development;
transport;
education etc; and
the policy making process, including partnership working and collaboration.

These interviews have either been on an individual basis or with a group of staff. The majority of interviews lasted between one and two hours. The more specific follow-up telephone interviews with, for example, suburban and rural district councils, officers involved with previous housing needs studies and education department planning staff focussed on particular detailed issues. As of 20 February 2007 all but one of the proposed face-to-face interviews has been completed: the only outstanding meeting is with Derby City Council re Derby core housing market assessment, although discussions have been held with the relevant consultants and other stakeholders.

It should be noted that the majority of interviews highlighted that organisations had a range of interests associated with city flight. For example, RSLs were concerned with regeneration and new development opportunities (including intermediate market products and private sector housing), the impact of socio-economic change on neighbourhood profiles (re housing management), and potential community and social enterprise issues. Similarly the universities were interested in both local economic development and the impact of the growth of the number of students on neighbourhood housing markets. That said, some interviewees did take a more narrow perspective, focussing on their own business interests (e.g. housebuilders)

or concerns (e.g. suburban and rural districts and impact of out-migration from cities on local housing needs).

Finally, a reoccurring theme throughout the vast majority of interviews was an interest in the issue of city flight. It was generally felt to be a significant but under-researched topic. Policies had been developed and implemented that did not fully take account of this specific topic or more generally, migration issues. It was generally felt that the issues of city flight had been under-played until the recent move to sub-regional policy making. Previous housing needs studies did not focus on city flight or migration in general.

Nature and Significance of City Flight

There was considerable debate during the interviews on the definition of city flight. There was a view that it (and the associated concept of 'white flight') was a misleading term and implied a net outward migration from cities. The reality is one of socio-economic change (including ethnicity) with a perception that it is wealthy economically active middle-income households with children moving out of the major urban areas.

The appropriate spatial scale of analysis was also a focus of attention. A number of points were highlighted including:

- existing administrative boundaries may not be an appropriate basis for analysis (the built-up areas of, for example, Leicester and Nottingham do not coincide with the city council boundaries);
- Derby and Leicester City Council are particularly interested in socio-economic change and movement at a neighbourhood level (with the former having undertaken considerable analysis using GIS⁷);
- both the Derby and Nottingham HMA sub-regions are not necessarily appropriate areas for analysis, as there is evidence of significant migration to and from districts in adjoining sub-regions; and
- some of the policy debate tends to concentrate on city centre living / inner cities and neighbourhood change at the expense of other parts of the urban areas.

Discussions with commissioners of HMA studies and consultants indicated an awareness that understanding city flight required an appreciation of many factors including:

- choice and constraints affecting the behaviour of households;

⁷ There was a recognition that city flight was only one of many factors contributing to neighbourhood change, and segregation.

- interrelationship between housing and labour markets;
- changing nature of the local economy;
- quality of secondary schools; and
- transport infrastructure.

There was recognition that the scale and nature of city flight is likely to be different in the three areas because of variations in the local economies, socio-economic profiles (with, for instance, a much larger black and minority ethnic population in Leicester) and the presence of two high profile universities in both Leicester and Nottingham.

The interlinked reasons for city flight becoming an even more significant policy issue for stakeholders included both negative and positive factors with the emphasis on the former. The negative considerations primarily consisted of:

- potential loss for core cities of household expenditure to suburban retail, leisure facilities etc;
- impact on transport infrastructure if households commute back to core cities for employment purposes;
- potentially greater degrees of socio-economic segregation and polarisation between core cities and rural and suburban local authority areas⁸;
- unintended consequences of tackling city flight through, for example, promoting city centre living that has resulted in over-supply of small apartments in Leicester and Nottingham;
- cost of delivery of services to and regenerating declining neighbourhoods that have increasing levels of vulnerable and poor households;
- contribution to a negative image of cities; and
- impact on suburban and rural districts including pressure for higher levels of residential land allocations, increasing house prices, and the difficulty of meeting the needs and aspirations of local people.

There was some discussion on the impact of local economies but there was no consensus or agreement. A common perception was that if city flight was defined as movement to suburban and rural areas within the sub-region then the direct impact would be limited as households are likely to remain in the same labour market area.

The positive aspects of city flight included:

⁸ Both Derby City Council and Leicester City Council regard segregation and polarisation between neighbourhoods within their areas as of equal if not greater significance.

- opportunity for (some types of) households to meet their aspirations in terms of housing and other requirements e.g. better secondary education for children;
- ability to regenerate inner city areas and develop new communities on brownfield sites as neighbourhoods change; and
- meeting housing demand because of the lack of large sites for new housebuilding in the built-up areas of each of the three cities; and

There was a view that city flight was a long-standing positive process that would not be able to or should be changed or modified by policy intervention. Stakeholders should operate to ameliorate the worst excesses of the impact of city flight.

Information & Evidence Base

The most useful interviews on this topic were with HMA consultants and organisations that had commissioned research that in part focussed on city flight. There was a general acknowledgement that data, information and analysis on city flight had been limited. The focus in previous housing needs studies and current HMAs has been / is on scale of in and out migration between local authority areas. Data and resource limitations had prevented more sophisticated analysis on socio-economic movement patterns and neighbourhood level analysis.

There was a general consensus that the focus should not be on 'net' flows as there was a recognition that the loss of population and households from UK cities in the 1970s and 1980s had either stopped or was being reversed. Interest among stakeholders in all three core cities is in the changing socio-economic population at a city and neighbourhood level. For example, a figure that was frequently quoted in relation to Leicester was that between 1991 and 2001, there was a loss of 19,000 white population and a gain of 19,000 black and minority ethnic population i.e. a zero net gain but important in relation to issues of segregation and polarisation.

Socio-economic change within the core cities was felt to be significant with a need to focus on a range of dimensions including:-

- ethnicity;
- socio-economic status;
- age e.g. children of secondary school age;
- household composition e.g. single person households of working age, family households with children and pensioner households; and
- household types e.g. students.

As well as socio-economic change, there was a recognition of the importance of better understanding of the 'distance' component of in and out migration (linked to

socio-economic profiles of movers). In discussions on Derby and Nottingham (and of equal relevance for Leicester), there was a view that it was important to distinguish between:

- short distance moves between adjacent neighbourhoods within the built up urban areas that are cross-boundary;
- medium distance moves between the core city and surrounding districts that are part of the HMA / travel to work area; and
- longer distance moves.

Discussions primarily with consultants focussed on data sources and methods of analysis. The key emerging points are:

- there has been a considerable reliance in the past on census data for analysing cross-boundary moves, but it is acknowledged that there are major limitations (in Derby & Nottingham there have been concerns with census data undercounting of the population);
- the major source of information that is now being used by HMA consultants is national health service data on patient records;
- use of council tax database to track moves – B.Line Housing Information has developed a method using this source that has been used in a number of housing studies;
- there is interest in all three cities in using the pupil level annual school census (PLASC) system. But it does not appear to have been used and Education Planning Departments have not been asked to undertake any analysis;
- possibility of using commercial geo-demographic profiles such as CACI ACORN classification systems to map neighbourhood change; and
- potential of using commercial data sources on household moves (e.g. Experian 'mover data').

In relation to potential useful additional reports, these primarily focussed on HMAs.

Leicestershire HMA: unfortunately little progress has been made but there was a meeting due to take place in early to scope the project;

Derby Core HMA : this is scheduled to be completed in spring 2007; and

Nottingham Core HMA : the final report is due to be launched at the beginning of February 2007.

Both the Derby and Nottingham HMAs have explicitly asked for this issue of city flight to be considered. The Leicestershire HMA is likely to require analysis at a neighbourhood level. Discussions with the Nottingham HMA consultants indicate that there are complex sets of movements in and out of the Nottingham City Council area including districts outside of the sub-regional boundaries identified by DTZ Pidea in 2004.(e.g. Ashfield and Newark & Sherwood).

In addition, Knight Frank has carried out a city centre housing market study funded by the Council, English Partnerships and Nottingham Regeneration Ltd. A draft final has been submitted but is not yet available.

Interviewees had relatively fewer suggestions or ideas on broader research directly or indirectly related to city flight:

- mention was made in the Leicester interviews of a major study that the Institute of Community Cohesion (ICoCo) is undertaking on community cohesion in British cities that includes a focus on segregation⁹;
- ESRC research using Merseyside as a case study on residential mobility and immobility; and
- ongoing research by Savills on the supply of land in city centre for major residential schemes¹⁰.

Policy Issues & Opportunities

There were very lengthy and detailed debates on direct and indirect policy issues and challenges relating to city flight. A key theme that has already been highlighted is that a better understanding of city flight and migration issues ought to lead to more robust policies. For the purposes of analysis, the policy opportunities and issues have been sub-divided into three themes:

- meeting the needs of communities and customers,
- substantive policy areas (such as housing, planning, urban regeneration and education) and
- the policy-making process.

As was highlighted above, there are both positive and negative implications of city flight. A major issue is, therefore, developing strategies that alleviate the worst effects of city flight without detrimentally impacting on the positive aspects. In addition, there is recognition that the nature and scale of city flight is different within the three core cities housing market areas. Therefore policies need to be developed that reflect local requirements.

A reoccurring area of debate was the implications of city flight for different communities and customers. There was a recognition of the challenge of balancing the interests of different groups, as illustrated below.

⁹ Please note that this research is still at the early planning stage and involves a study of a number of English cities including Leicester. The author of this paper is involved in this project.

¹⁰ This study is referred to briefly in Regeneration & Renewal (5th January 2007, p 11)

- Aspirations of households that want low density detached owner-occupied houses with gardens in the suburbs and rural fringe locations together with high quality secondary education provision (that is not necessarily available in the core cities).
- Meeting the realistic expectations of low income households in the core cities that want to enter on and / or move up the rungs of the owner-occupied sector of the housing market.
- Meeting the requirements of young mobile economically active households for city centre living.
- Avoiding the urbanisation of rural areas and the loss of local village / market town character.
- Tackling the issues of neighbourhood decline and change faced by residents in the core cities (though it was, of course, appreciated that there were many other factors as well as city flight that contributed to this issue).

In relation to substantive policy areas, several issues and opportunities were raised.

- There is a difficulty of developing low / moderate density market housing with gardens in the core cities because of lack of sites, planning restrictions and financial viability – sites would have to be large enough to create their own environment and generate their own service provision (e.g. schools).
- RSLs favour mixed tenure scheme (especially in regenerating former council housing estates). Shared ownership and low cost owner occupied properties can successfully be aimed at households who are able to get on the bottom rung of the owner occupied market
- There are potential opportunities and challenging issues (especially in Leicester) over the future of large areas of older private rented / owner occupied housing that were improved through GIAs / HAAs in 1970s. These might become clearance and redevelopment areas.
- City centre living was raised as a significant issue in that policies in each of the three cities has focussed on attracting young mobile households. In Leicester and Nottingham, this has resulted in over-supply leading to relatively high level of vacancies for some types of apartments. There was a consensus that more spacious and better quality apartments were needed. There was a unanimous view that family housing in city centres would be unattractive to potential customers and not likely to be financially viable.

- The importance of improving the perception of the quality of education provision in the three cities especially at secondary school level was emphasised . This was considered to be a major driver of city flight for more affluent households with children. Education Departments highlighted that in all three cities there is current over-capacity but that long term plans ought to lead to improvements in the quality of provision.
- In the case of Leicester and Nottingham, there was some debate on the impact of the growth of the student population. Both cities attract undergraduate and postgraduate students from the UK and elsewhere that leave once they have completed their courses. There is a view that retention of graduates might help the economy. However, there are concerns over the impact of the growth of student neighbourhoods on local communities.
- There is a need for co-ordinated investment approaches at a neighbourhood level by key agencies so that, for example, the regeneration of social housing areas into mixed communities is linked to training and job opportunities and improved education facilities.

From a policy making perspective, there was a general recognition that there was now an opportunity to rethink strategies. In the case of Derby and Nottingham sub-regions, it is anticipated that the HMA studies will provide the basis for more robust policies. At the same time, there are a number of policy making developments that provide an opportunity during 2007 / 2008 to rethink policies including:

- co-ordinated regional and sub regional policy making;
- emergence of local development frameworks; and
- investment and resource allocation decisions by the Housing Corporation and other agencies following on from the Government's comprehensive spending review process .

There was some limited discussion on whether new organisational approaches would be helpful such as city regions and city development corporations. The emerging view was that if these new initiatives improved co-ordination then they might be useful vehicles.

Box A Completed Face-to-Face and Telephone Interviews

Face-to-Face Interviews

Consultants

- BLine Housing Information (re Nottingham and Derby Core HMA Studies, previous research on the Three Cities and Housing Needs Studies for various Local Authorities)
- Three Dragons Consultancy (re Nottingham HMA, Housing Regeneration Projects in Leicester, and Midlands United Report)
- Sky High Market Research re Derby Core HMA Study

RSLs

- Metropolitan Housing Trust, including Rushcliffe Homes (re Regeneration Schemes in the Three Cities)
- Places for People (re Potential Regeneration Schemes in the East Midlands)
- LHA-ASRA re Regeneration Schemes in Leicester and Nottingham (and part of Quantum Consortium that comprise Derwent Living, East Midlands Housing etc and operate in Derby)
- Riverside Housing (re Regeneration Schemes in the East Midlands)

Local Authorities

- Derby City Council
- Leicester City Council
- Nottingham City Council

Urban Regeneration Companies

- Derby Cityscape
- Leicester Regeneration Company
- Nottingham Urban Regeneration Company

Housebuilders

- Bloor Homes
- Crest Nicholson
- Strata Homes

Other Key Stakeholders

- University Forum re Nottingham University / Leicester University / De Montfort University Policy on Regeneration
- Housing Corporation Regional Office

Telephone Follow Up Interviews

- Leicester City Council Housing Department (re Housing Needs Studies)
- Leicester City Council Educational Planning Department
- Nottingham City Council Education Department
- Derby City Council Planning Department
- Longhurst Housing Group
- Derbyshire County Council
- Blaby District Council
- Harborough District Council
- Leicestershire County Council