

Equality issues in Wales: a research review

Victoria Winckler (editor)

The Bevan Foundation

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report sets out the findings of a review of literature on research and statistics on equality in Wales, defined by various Acts of Parliament as:

- Race
- Gender
- Disability
- Age
- Sexual orientation
- Religion.

The review was commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in December 2007 and covers literature which related specifically to Wales only. It included academic, government and third sector research published between 2000 and October 2008 and focused mainly on all-Wales rather than local studies.¹

Demography of Wales

Wales is increasingly diverse. Approximately 2 per cent of the population is from an ethnic minority group (62,000 people), amongst whom 29 per cent is of mixed origin. There are very roughly 10,000 refugees and 2,500 asylum seekers in Wales, 55,000 non-UK born workers, and between 1,400 and 2,000 Gypsy Travellers.

Women marginally outnumber men overall – 1,521,100 females to 1,444,900 males – but substantially do so amongst older age groups. By 2026, 29 per cent of the population is expected to be over 60 years old. Disability and limiting long-term ill health affect approximately 27 per cent of the adult population and 5 per cent of the child population.

One in five of the population has no religious faith. Amongst believers, Christians are by far the largest group (2.087 million people), followed by Muslims (less than 22,000 people). There are no data on sexual orientation. Almost 30 per cent of the population have some knowledge of the Welsh language (18 per cent can read, speak and write Welsh).

¹ A few earlier sources than 2000 have also been covered.

Governance of Wales

The key bodies in Wales are the Welsh Assembly Government, which has devolved powers on education, health, economic development, transport and the environment and other matters; 22 unitary local authorities; 22 local health boards and 7 NHS trusts (to be merged into 7 integrated bodies in 2009); 23 colleges of further education and 12 higher education establishments, as well as many other Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies.

Devolution and equality

Responsibility for equality in Wales is complex. Although equality is not formally devolved, the Government of Wales Act 1998 requires the Welsh Assembly Government to have due regard to equality of opportunity for all people. This requirement has been enhanced by subsequent legislation on public bodies' race, gender and disability duties. Although there has been a great deal of activity, there is evidence that equality has yet to be mainstreamed into all the Assembly Government's business, whilst other public bodies' compliance with their equality responsibilities appears to be low.

Poverty and Social Exclusion

The evidence on poverty and social exclusion is fragmented, and suffers from methodological problems e.g. high refusal rates and inconsistent definitions. Nevertheless, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people, children and young people and older people experience poverty and social exclusion to a greater extent than other groups. However, there is almost no evidence on religion and sexual orientation.

Household income and poverty

Evidence on income and poverty is very uneven. By far the greatest information concerns child and pensioner poverty, which shows about 26 per cent of children and 18 per cent of pensioners live in income-poor households, with a smaller but still substantial proportion of both groups also lacking 'necessities'. In contrast there is little or no information on poverty and race, gender or disability, nor on religion and sexual orientation.

Benefits and pensions

The few studies of benefits and pensions are fragmented and outdated, making it impossible to draw conclusions.

Savings, credit and debt and financial exclusion

Older people, households with dependent children and some female age groups are most likely to have no savings, whilst younger people and men are more likely to have access to credit and to make use of credit. However, debt is also greater amongst younger people. Lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people report high levels of dissatisfaction with financial services. There is no evidence on race, disability or religion.

Water and fuel poverty

Fuel poverty is concentrated amongst vulnerable groups which include households with an older person, child or disabled person. We found no evidence on race, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

Digital inclusion

Evidence shows that older people are much less likely than other age groups to have access to digital technologies or to use the internet. We found no evidence on digital inclusion by other equality strands.

Culture, leisure and sport

The evidence is very fragmented. Disabled people face particular difficulties accessing services whilst the issues for young people are time and transport. There is little research on any of the other equality strands.

Access to advice, support and justice

A number of studies show a lack of access to advice, support and justice for ethnic minority groups, disabled and young people. However there is no evidence on gender, older people, sexual orientation or religion.

Transport

Ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people, older people and children and young people are all less likely to have access to a private car than other people, and consequently rely on public transport. Yet women with children, older people and disabled people can find buses hard to use. No relevant evidence on religion or sexual orientation was identified.

Economy and Labour Market

The evidence on equality in the economy and labour market is relatively extensive, albeit with some gaps. Certain ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people, and older people experience marked inequality in the economy and labour market, across a range of different measures. There is

much less evidence about religion and sexual orientation, but what does exist highlights the discrimination and disadvantage experienced by Muslims and LGB people.

Economic activity

Certain ethnic minority groups (in particular Pakistani and Asian people, and refugees), women (especially mothers of young children), disabled people, older people and Muslim women are much less likely to be economically active than other people.

Unemployment

The evidence on unemployment is ambiguous and no firm conclusions can be drawn.

Self-employment

Certain ethnic minority groups, disabled people, older people and Muslims are more likely than other people to be self-employed, with a variety of reasons explaining this. Women are less likely than men to set up their own businesses.

Pay

There is a significant gap between the earnings of migrant workers, women, disabled people and older people and other groups. Whilst there is a relatively large research literature on the gender pay gap, there is much less further research on the gap in other groups. There is no evidence on race, sexual orientation and religion.

Occupational segregation

Marked occupational segregation is found across all equality strands, with different groups of people being concentrated into usually stereotypical jobs. However there is diversity within ethnic minority groups. Similarly, there is evidence of 'vertical' segregation of women, ethnic minority groups and disabled people into lower skill jobs.

Flexible working

Ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people and older people are more likely to work part-time than other groups (with the exception of migrant workers and Muslim women). Take-up of other forms of flexible working by women is relatively low.

Fair treatment at work

The evidence on fair treatment at work is more limited but none the less powerful. Overall, workers in Wales report lower levels of unfair treatment than elsewhere in Britain, but substantial proportions of ethnic minority workers, women (especially pregnant women), LGB people and some religious groups have experienced discrimination. Research suggests that employers in Wales are not fully aware of their responsibilities in respect of race, gender (including maternity provision), disability or age discrimination.

Trades union membership

Other than evidence on age and gender, which shows the growing number of female trades union members and the predominance of middle-aged members, there is no evidence on union membership and equality strands.

Health and Social Care

Although there is a substantial literature on health and social care in Wales, much of it relates to health inequalities in general rather than to equality strands. The evidence that exists shows that ethnic minority groups, disabled people, vulnerable children and older people tend to have poorer health at the same time as poorer access to care. The evidence on religion and sexual orientation, and on gender, is even more limited.

Health status

Limited evidence shows that the health status of ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people, vulnerable children and older people is poorer than the population as a whole. There is no information about sexual orientation or religion, and virtually no evidence on different groups within the ethnic minority population.

Access to care

Access to health care also seems to be poorer for ethnic minority groups and for disabled people. Access to care, particularly mental health care, for vulnerable children, is also inadequate. The evidence on access for women, older people, LGB people and religious groups is limited or non-existent.

Lifestyle

Evidence suggests that men have less healthy lifestyles than women, except for physical activity. There is more evidence on young people's lifestyles, which shows the prevalence of smoking and alcohol and substance misuse, poor nutrition, low levels of physical activity and high rates of overweight and

obesity. Older people also have relatively unhealthy lifestyles in terms of obesity and physical activity, although alcohol use and smoking are less prevalent. Little is known about the lifestyles of ethnic minority groups, disabled people, LGB people and religious groups.

Social care

The available evidence points to marked shortcomings in access to social care for ethnic minority groups, disabled people and children. However there is surprisingly little evidence on gender, older people, sexual orientation and religion and the provision of social care.

Education

Inequalities are all too evident in education. Ethnic minority groups, boys and disabled children have lower achievements than other children and are less likely to participate in post-16 learning than other people. Evidence suggests that schools and colleges could be more responsive to the needs of ethnic minority, disabled and women learners. However, there is little evidence on equality in early years' education or on sexual orientation or religion.

Early years

There is almost no evidence on early years' provision for all the equality strands.

Primary and secondary school education

Most ethnic minority groups have lower achievement than White children. There is some evidence that schools are not addressing the needs of ethnic minority pupils well, both in general and on issues such as physical education, and are often not tackling racism. Gypsy Traveller children face particular difficulties in education; for refugee children the issue is racism. In terms of gender, girls outperform boys but subject choices remain stereotyped. There is clear evidence of lack of engagement and lack of opportunity for disabled children, whose achievements are lower than non-disabled children. Bullying is an issue for ethnic minority, disabled and LGB children or those with LGB parents or carers. Muslim children have lower achievement than other children, and the religious needs of different faiths are often not met. Achievement by children taught in Welsh language schools is higher than in other schools.

16–19 school education

Fewer ethnic minority children and boys continue in education into year 12, and their achievement levels are also lower. There is little evidence on disabled children (other than they have similar A level achievements to other children), sexual orientation or religion.

Further and higher education

Ethnic minority groups are over-represented in higher education establishments, largely because of international students studying in Wales. The resident ethnic minority population is more likely to have degree level qualifications than the White population. A higher proportion of women than men are in full-time education, and older people make up a growing proportion of learners. Disabled people are much less likely to have a degree than other people. There was no evidence on sexual orientation or religion.

Adult education and training

Ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people and older people are all less likely to engage in adult education and training than other groups, and (with the exception of ethnic minority groups) are more likely to hold no or low level qualifications. Welsh language speakers are, in contrast, more qualified; however provision of learning in the medium of Welsh is limited.

Housing

Evidence on housing and equality is relatively limited. Ethnic minority groups, older people and disabled people have, overall, poorer housing and experience shortcomings in service provision. There is even less information about women and men, younger people, religious groups or LGB people.

Housing need

Ethnic minority groups live disproportionately in poor quality housing, although needs vary in different ethnic groups. The housing needs of Gypsy Travellers are a particular issue. Local housing strategies/plans have been found not to comply with the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act. Older age is associated with owner occupation, poor house condition and lack of amenities. The evidence on the housing needs of women and men, disabled people, young people, LGB people and religious groups is limited.

Housing provision/experiences

The evidence on provision and experience of housing by equality strand is scant. Ethnic minority groups (except refugees) and older people are

generally satisfied with housing services, although there is geographical variation. Disabled people, young people and people whose first language is Welsh experience substantial shortcomings in services, although the evidence is relatively limited. There is no evidence on gender or religion, and little on sexual orientation.

Public and Political Life

Elected representatives

Ethnic minority groups are substantially under-represented amongst elected representatives in all spheres of government, as are women (except amongst Assembly members). There is no information on disability and age except amongst local councillors, and none at all on religion or sexual orientation. In terms of voting, disabled people still face difficulty accessing a large proportion of polling stations.

Public appointments

Strenuous efforts to increase the diversity of public appointments have resulted in some increases in the proportion of public appointees who are from ethnic minority groups, are women or are disabled, although they remain under-represented. No evidence on age, sexual orientation or religion was identified.

Citizen engagement

The limited evidence on citizen engagement focuses on representative groups rather than individuals. The vast majority of young people are seen to be disinterested in mainstream politics and there are concerns about the adverse impact on grass roots organisations of extensive engagement with the Welsh Assembly Government.

Community cohesion

There is a striking lack of evidence on crime, attitudes or other aspects of community cohesion. The exception is refugees, where research suggests that attitudes in Wales are less hostile than elsewhere; nevertheless, racism, abuse and Islamophobia are common experiences.

Conclusions

There is evidence of substantial inequality in Wales. Ethnic minority groups, women, disabled people and older people consistently experience disadvantage and discrimination in almost all areas of life. The more limited

evidence on sexual orientation and religion suggests that there is significant discrimination and disadvantage here too.

However, the evidence identified does not amount to a coherent body of knowledge and this has potentially damaging consequences. There are major gaps in evidence across all issues on disability, sexual orientation and religion, and gaps in evidence on all equality strands on poverty and social exclusion, health and social care, housing, and public and political life.

A strong strategic lead is needed to address these deficits by the Welsh Assembly Government and a range of other key organisations in Wales, including the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

1. INTRODUCTION

Victoria Winckler

1.1 This Report

In December 2007, the Equality and Human Rights Commission commissioned the Bevan Foundation to undertake a review of recent research evidence on equality issues in Wales. This study forms one of a series of research reviews set up to inform the Commission's research and policy agenda for 2008–9 and beyond.

Some boundaries were set in undertaking the review. First, the research findings were to be specific to Wales, i.e. either the area of study was confined to Wales or a separate analysis of Welsh issues was presented in a wider study. This proved to be less straightforward than anticipated, as some studies, which initially appeared to present evidence for Wales, nevertheless drew on wider (e.g. England and Wales) findings, whilst others, which included a separate sample from Wales, nevertheless did not present separate results for Wales. In addition, only Wales-wide or significant local studies were included.

Second, a broad definition of research has been adopted, to include academic and non-academic studies, small-scale as well as large-scale research, qualitative and quantitative methods, analyses and summaries of official data, and evaluations and literature reviews. However, the following have not been classed as research and have therefore not been included: conference reports and speeches, campaigning literature where statements that cannot be verified are made, web pages where statements cannot be verified, and research cited in statutory documents such as local health and well-being strategies.

In undertaking the review, we identified literature through a combination of searches of websites of key statutory and voluntary bodies (e.g. Welsh Assembly Government, the former equality commissions, Save the Children Cymru), searches of publishers' websites (e.g. Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Welsh Equality and Diversity in Health and Social Care Research and Support Services, Welsh Economy and Labour Market Evaluation and Research Centre), searches of academic authors' websites, searches of journals and

publications, general internet searches, as well as personal contact with some key individuals.

This exercise generated a great deal more literature than had initially been expected. Nevertheless, it cannot be guaranteed that every piece of relevant research has been identified although the most significant reports and articles should be included. It must also be pointed out that it proved impossible to access a small number of research reports, e.g. because they were not in the public domain (such as a consultancy report for a client), because they were published in an academic journal to which access was prohibitively expensive, or because the publisher did not respond to requests for a copy (e.g. because the organisation no longer existed). In these circumstances, the research has been cited and the lack of access noted. The exercise for the most part considered only research published since 2000 (although a small number of relevant earlier reports are cited where they are of particular importance). It also systematically only covered material published in or before October 2008, although a few more recently published articles have been included.

The rest of this report sets out the results of this exercise. This chapter continues by looking at the current position of equality in Wales, in terms of its demography and governance. Chapter 2 considers the question of poverty and social exclusion in Wales, looking at income poverty but also at a wide variety of aspects of social exclusion including fuel poverty, transport and access to justice. Chapter 3 summarises the research literature on employment and the labour market, on which a very substantial literature has been identified. Chapter 4 looks at health and social care, where there is also a large literature, whilst Chapter 5 considers education and learning. Chapter 6 addresses research in housing, whilst the final chapter considers the question of participation in public and political life.

In presenting the findings, each chapter begins by briefly summarising the policy context in Wales and then looks separately at the literature on race, gender, disability, age (where appropriate sub-divided into age groups), sexual orientation and religion, in the various areas covered by the chapter.

1.2 Demography of Wales

The total population in Wales in 2006 is estimated to be just under 3 million people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a), a modest increase on the 1997 figure. Over the next 25 years the population is forecast to grow to 3.3

million, partly through increased life expectancy and partly from increased national and international migration.

Race

Measured by the percentage of individuals born outside Wales, Wales has by far the most diverse population of the four UK countries – around a quarter of the Welsh population were born outside Wales, compared with only 13 per cent of the English and Scottish populations (Drinkwater and Blackaby, 2004). Over 80 per cent of the Welsh population born outside the country were born in England, with people born outside of the European Union (EU) contributing the next highest proportion of in-migrants to Wales.

In 2001, only 2 per cent of the population of Wales were from an ethnic minority group – 62,000 people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a), a smaller proportion than in England. However, ethnic minorities constitute a larger proportion of younger age groups than older groups – 3.3 per cent of 0-24-year-olds compared with 0.5 per cent of over 75-year-olds (Sullivan et al, 2005).

Asians (including Asian British) were the largest ethnic minority group in 2001, accounting for 41 per cent of the total ethnic minority population. The next largest group was 'Mixed', which accounted for 29 per cent of the ethnic minority population, a far higher proportion than the UK as a whole (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a). The 'Mixed' population included White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian and 'Mixed Other'.

The ethnic minority population is highly concentrated geographically. Just over half live in Cardiff and Newport (25,700 and 6,600 respectively), where they account for a much higher proportion of the population at 8.4 per cent and 4.8 per cent of the population respectively. In contrast, ethnic minority groups account for less than 1 per cent of the population in rural areas, such as the Isle of Anglesey, Pembrokeshire and Powys, and in the Heads of the Valleys (Merthyr Tydfil and Blaenau Gwent). However it has been suggested that the number of ethnic minority groups is under-counted in rural areas (Best Partnership, 2004).

The Welsh Assembly Government report (2004a) also explores the different age and gender structures of ethnic minority populations, with mixed groups having the youngest age structure and Black Caribbeans having the oldest.

Reflecting the lengthy time over which ethnic minority groups have settled in Wales, three-quarters of the White British, Mixed White/Black Caribbean group were born in Wales, as was the majority of people of Other Mixed and Other Black ethnic background. C. Williams et al (2003) point out that this long history of ethnic minority settlement and the diverse nature of the histories, settlement patterns, residential status and occupational profiles of ethnic minority groups means that Wales is markedly different to the rest of the UK.

Gypsy Travellers

The number of Gypsy Travellers in Wales is unknown. The National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee (2003) undertook a survey of local authorities (half of whom replied) and estimated that there were 1,412 Gypsy Travellers, but this is considered a significant underestimate. Niner (2006a) gives a slightly higher estimate of at least 2,000 people. Estimates of the number of Gypsy Traveller children range from 578 to 1,809 (cited by Niner, 2006a). The latest survey of Gypsy Traveller caravans in January 2008 found that there were 788 caravans (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008b).

Gypsy Travellers in Wales are ethnically diverse and include Welsh and English gypsies, Scottish and Irish travellers and 'new travellers'. They are concentrated along the main routes across north and south Wales, although new travellers are more likely to be in parts of Pembrokeshire, Powys and rural north Wales (Niner, 2006a).

Migrants

An 'international migrant' is defined as: 'Someone who has or intends to change his or her country of usual residence for a period of at least a year' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a: 31). International migration to and from Wales is nothing new. There has been emigration from Wales to the Americas, Patagonia and Canada since the 17th century. In-migration to work in Wales's booming industries was not unusual from the middle of the 19th century. In the 1880s, Somali seamen were drawn to Cardiff to work in the docks and the city is now host to the largest British-born Somali population in the UK (Crawley, n.d.), whilst people from Italy and Spain settled in the south Wales valleys in the same era.

International inflows of people have varied significantly during the period 1975–2005, ranging from approximately 2,500 a year in the late 1980s to 15,000 a year in 2006. Since 1994, the number of in-migrants to Wales has exceeded

the number of out-migrants. Within Wales, Cardiff and Swansea had the largest net inflows of international migrants between 2002 and 2006, whilst 14 other local authority areas had a net outflow of international migrants (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a).

A different perspective is provided by the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey which include data on country of birth. The most recent estimate by the Welsh Assembly Government (Shipley, 2008: Table 7) is that there were 129,500 non-UK born people in Wales in 2007. Amongst those born outside the UK, the EU was the most important country of origin, accounting for 53,400 people (of which 37,300 were from non-accession EU countries). The next most important country of birth was Africa which accounted for a further 21,800 people.

Migrant workers are defined as anyone who comes from outside the UK to work in Wales, either with appropriate permission or without (called illegal or undocumented migrant workers). A recent study of migrant workers in Wales (Winckler, 2007a) concluded that it is impossible to estimate the numbers of workers who have come to Wales to work from overseas, although a study commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 (which was unpublished at the time of writing) aimed to provide an estimate using local data sources. There are three sources of data currently available, described below, which give different results.

Data from the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS) show that 22,300 people from the European Union's Accession countries registered to work in Wales between May 2004 and March 2008 (Shipley, 2008: Table 2). However, it is not known how many of those workers have since left Wales or how many have come without registering (either because they did not need to, e.g. because they were self-employed, or because they were not aware of the need to register).

National Insurance Number data suggest that between May 2004 and March 2008, 23,800 people came to Wales from EU Accession countries (Shipley, 2008: Table 4). Data from the Annual Population Survey indicate that 67,400 non-UK born people were in employment in Wales in 2007 (Shipley, 2008: Table 6). 38,300 were from outside the EU, with 12,000 estimated to be from EU accession countries. However, the number from accession countries has increased twelve-fold since 2004, whilst the number from other EU countries

has remained broadly static and the number from the rest of the world has risen only slowly.

Within Wales, WRS data show that four local authorities – Carmarthenshire, Newport, Wrexham and Cardiff – account for over half of migrant workers (Shiple, 2008). A study of migrant workers in rural Wales (Wales Rural Observatory, 2006) concluded that nearly 5,000 workers had registered under the WRS to work in rural Wales between May 2004 and March 2006.

Cam (2007) combines data from a decade of Annual Population Surveys and concludes that there are 37,200 migrant workers in Wales. A much larger proportion of these migrant workers are from EU countries in Wales (35 per cent) than in England. Cam also finds that there are slightly more male migrants to Wales than females, and that migrant workers have a younger age profile than the rest of the workforce.

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Government policy in 2000 introduced the dispersal of asylum seekers to areas away from southeast England, including to four cluster areas within Wales (Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham). At any one time there are approximately 2,500 asylum seekers in Wales. Approximately 70 per cent of asylum seekers are families with children, most of them headed by a female (Newport City Council, n.d.). Hewett et al (2005) estimate that in 2004 more than a third of asylum seekers were dependent children, and that there were a further 70 unaccompanied children. Dunkerley et al (2006 – not accessed) appears to be based on the same survey data.

Accurate statistics are not available on the number of refugees in Wales, but the Welsh Refugee Council estimates the figure to be approximately 10,000 (Welsh Refugee Council, n.d.).

Gender

There are slightly more females than males in Wales (1,444,800 males and 1,521,100 females). This means there were 1,053 females per 1,000 males (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007a). There are more boys than girls aged 0–16. The numbers are then roughly equal for ages 20–70, after which there are more women than men. For ages 71–80, there are 13 women for every 10 men; for ages 81–90, there are 19 women for every 10 men; and for age 90 and over, there are 36 women for every 10 men (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007a).

According to Yeandle et al (2007a), the 2001 Census showed Wales had 340,000 carers providing support for their friends and relatives who needed help. The care provided is estimated to cost £5.69 billion a year to deliver using paid support. In 2001, 3 per cent of carers (almost 10,300 carers) belonged to ethnic minority groups, a little below their share of the total population in Wales. Two per cent of carers were under 16, and 18 per cent were aged 65+, but most were people of working age. Within Wales, caring is particularly concentrated in areas of socio-economic deprivation.

Disability

The most comprehensive analysis of disability in Wales is provided by the Welsh Assembly Government (2003a), which draws together data from the 2001 Census of Population, the Welsh House Condition Survey and the Welsh Health Survey, to provide details of illness and disability across a range of different subjects. Although much of the data in the report has been superseded by more recent surveys, there is no other similar overview.

The estimates of the prevalence of ill-health and disability amongst the population vary from approximately one in six in the Welsh House Condition Survey, to one in four in the 2001 Census of Population, to one in three from the Welsh Health Survey. This reflects the different definitions of disability used. All surveys show large variations in the levels of illness, disability and infirmity within Wales, with the south Wales valleys having substantially higher levels of disability and long-term illness than the rest of Wales.

The latest Welsh Health Survey results show that 16 per cent of adults reported that their health in general was excellent, 34 per cent very good, 29 per cent good, 16 per cent fair, and 6 per cent poor. Health status scores indicated worse health and well-being among women than men, and worse health among older people (except for mental health).

In terms of the type of illness and disability, 20 per cent reported currently being treated for high blood pressure, 14 per cent for a respiratory illness, 13 per cent for arthritis, and 12 per cent for back pain. Nine per cent reported being treated for a mental health condition. No data on sensory or learning disabilities are included in this survey report.

The Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005a) provides a different source of information and highlights that long-term illness and disability increases sharply with age so that by the age of 65 and over, nearly

40 per cent of respondents to the Living in Wales survey had a limiting long-term illness or disability.

Age

Wales has an ageing population, with one in four people being over the age of 60 – a higher proportion than in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008c). There are slightly more people of pensionable age (60 for women and 65 for men) than children aged 0–15 years – in 2006 there were estimated to be 614,800 people over pensionable age compared with 561,200 children (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a). The population of working age (i.e. 16–60/64 years) accounts for 60 per cent of the total (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a).

The number of older people has increased markedly over recent decades, rising by 30 per cent between 1971 and 2006 (Welsh Assembly Government 2008a). The increase is particularly marked amongst the oldest age groups – there are now three times as many men and four times as many women over the age of 80 than 50 years ago, and seven times as many men and 10 times as many women over the age of 90 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008c).

The distribution of age groups within Wales is broadly similar, although children are a slightly lower proportion of the population in Ceredigion than the all Wales figure (16 per cent compared with 21 per cent) and there is a slightly higher proportion of the population of retirement age and over in Conwy and Powys (27 and 25 per cent respectively). Cardiff is distinctive because of its high proportion of people of working age (65 per cent) and low proportion of retired people (16 per cent).

Over the next twenty years, the population of Wales will gradually become older with the median age of the population rising from 40.2 in 2004 to 43.6 by 2024. By 2026, about 29 per cent of people in Wales will be aged over 60 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a).

Sexual Orientation

According to Lee (2006a), 'Very little creditable data has been collected on sexual orientation'. This article reports that Stonewall estimates lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people to be approximately 10 per cent of the population, but says that (unspecified) other studies estimate a lower proportion of 2–3 per cent. Davies et al (n.d.) cite research that puts the figure at 175,000 people in Wales (6 per cent of the total population).

A study of same sex couples, who are only a proportion of all LGB people, found that they comprise less than 0.3 per cent of the population in almost all of Wales. Only in Cardiff, Newport and Conwy did same sex couples account for a higher proportion – 0.3–0.99 per cent (Stewart and Vaitilingam, 2004). Same sex couples have been able to register a civil partnership since December 2005 and in the first year of operation, 627 civil partnerships were contracted in Wales (National Statistics, 2007). In Wales, almost equal numbers of women and men contracted partnerships (more males did so in England), with the average age of those contracting partnerships being 45. Twenty-one per cent of those contracting a partnership in Wales had previously been married, a much higher proportion than England, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Religion

Almost one in five people (18.5 per cent) in Wales in 2001 reported that they had no religious belief (Lee, 2007). Amongst those with a religious belief, Christianity is by far the dominant religion, accounting for 97.9 per cent of believers. Muslims are the next largest group, but only account for 1 per cent of the total population – less than 22,000 people. Buddhism and Hinduism each have 5,400 adherents, whilst Judaism and Sikhism each have just over 2,000 (Lee, 2007).

In terms of attendance at religious services, a survey of more than 1,000 congregations of seven different faiths (Bahá'í, Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and Sikh) (Gweini, 2008) estimated that every week 7.2 per cent of the population attend a religious service, and that more than 15 per cent of the population do so at least once a year.

There is an interesting relationship between religion and ethnic origin. Lee (2007) reported that two-thirds of the Muslim population was Asian in 2001 (a lower proportion than in England), nearly one in eight Muslims was White and almost half of Wales's Muslims were UK born. Wales's Muslims are less likely to identify themselves as British or Welsh than the Christian population: 59 per cent of Muslims identified themselves as British, and 15 per cent as Welsh, compared with 98 per cent of Christians who identified themselves as British and 69 per cent as Welsh.

Half the Muslim population lives in Cardiff, and Muslims are also highly concentrated within the city (Lee, 2007). More than one in five of the population is Muslim in six 'Lower Layer Super Output Areas' (the categories

used in the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation) in Cardiff, with two such areas recording this density in Newport.

Welsh Language

According to the 2001 Census of Population, nearly 30 per cent of the population of Wales had some knowledge of the Welsh language (National Statistics, 2004). Of these, 16 per cent could speak, read and write the language, whilst about 5 per cent could only speak it. More recent data have been collected by the Welsh Language Board which commissioned a series of three surveys over 2004–06, although only the results of the 2004 survey have been published (Welsh Language Board, 2006). The survey, of about 7,500 households, found that 22 per cent of all those aged 3 and over in Wales could speak Welsh in 2004. Of those who could speak Welsh, 57 per cent considered themselves fluent, with 58 per cent having had their most recent conversation through the medium of Welsh. The survey also found that fluency in Welsh increased with age. Of those who stated that they could speak Welsh, 62 per cent spoke Welsh daily. However, 18 per cent spoke Welsh less than weekly and 4 per cent never spoke Welsh.

The Welsh Language Act 1993 established that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the English and Welsh languages should be treated on a basis of equality. This requirement is reinforced in section 78 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 which states that Welsh Ministers must adopt a strategy setting out how they propose to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. The Welsh Language Board was established in 1993 to oversee implementation of the Act.

It has been argued that the requirements of the 1993 Act effectively treat Welsh as an equality 'strand' and this thinking is certainly evident in various government statements. The Welsh Assembly Government's strategy documents, *A Bilingual Future* (2002a) and *Iaith Pawb* (2003b), include a commitment to:

... 'mainstream' the Welsh language into the policy-making processes of all Assembly Ministerial portfolios, in much the same way as has been done already with equality of opportunity... The Welsh language will be a permanent cross-cutting policy.

The Welsh Language Board has a standing invitation to the National Assembly's Equality of Opportunity Committee. Similarly, and taking the same

approach, the Welsh language is included as an equality strand within the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)'s 2002 generic Equality Standard, which states that:

The Equality Standard recognises the importance of fair and equal treatment in local government services and employment and has been developed as a tool to enable authorities to mainstream race, the Welsh language, gender and disability into council policy and practice at all levels.

WLGA (undated): 1

The recent Equality Improvement Framework for Wales (WLGA, 2008) similarly includes the Welsh language with race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion and age, as well as 'other dimensions of structural inequality' (WLGA, 2008: 8).

Williams and Morris (2000) refer to the limitations of the Welsh Language Act. Their main criticisms were that: public bodies' Welsh language schemes had to be vetted by the (then) Secretary of State for Wales and that the WLB had limited powers of enforcement; the private sector was excluded and that although Welsh and English were granted parity, public bodies only had to comply when appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practical; there was no right for people to use Welsh or English as they wished, nor to have court cases heard by a Welsh-speaking jury; and there was no right to Welsh medium education. In a subsequent study, C.H. Williams (2005) traces the implications of a strong commitment by national government to mainstreaming the Welsh language within Assembly administered areas, such as education and the public sector. Weaknesses in *Iaith Pawb* were acknowledged within government circles, with the achievement of language equality being recognised to be a long-term process.

Partly in recognition of the shortcomings of the 1993 Act, the *One Wales* programme of government (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b) includes a commitment to extend the scope of the Welsh Language Act with a view to confirm official status for both Welsh and English, to provide linguistic rights in the provision of services, and for the establishment of the post of Language Commissioner.

Scourfield et al (n.d.) sound a note of caution about Welsh language policy. They point out that the act of balancing the rights of the Welsh, English, and

other language speakers in Wales is a delicate one, and suggest that Welsh language provision is sometimes associated with segregation, e.g. in schooling, and that the question of rights to schooling are particularly problematic.

1.3 Governance of Wales

The governance of Wales is increasingly distinctive:

Welsh Assembly Government

After decades of gradual administrative devolution, the National Assembly for Wales was formed in 1999 by the Government of Wales Act 1998, effectively taking over the Secretary of State for Wales's powers. Three years later, the Richards Commission reviewed the adequacy of the Assembly's powers (and other matters) which resulted in a second Government of Wales Act in 2006. This Act allows the Assembly to seek powers to legislate, and also separates the legislature (the Assembly) from the executive (the Welsh Assembly Government), establishes an Assembly Commission (to employ staff and hold contracts etc on the Assembly's behalf), changes the arrangements for appointing Ministers, and provides for a referendum to be held in future on full legislative powers.

The National Assembly for Wales consists of 60 elected members (40 elected on a first past the post system to represent constituencies and 20 elected on the additional member system to represent one of five regional constituencies). The Assembly scrutinises the work of the government through committees (there are currently 14 including one on equality of opportunity) and plenary sessions.

The Welsh Assembly Government consists of the First Minister, 12 other Ministers and Deputies, plus a counsel general. Following the elections in 2007, it is run by a Labour–Plaid Cymru coalition whose programme of government is set out in *One Wales: A Progressive Agenda for the Government of Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b).

A number of aspects of government are delivered by Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASPBs) or 'quangos'. Recently, three of the largest bodies – Welsh Development Agency, Wales Tourist Board and Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) have been absorbed into the Assembly. However others remain, principally the Countryside Council for Wales, Sports Council for Wales, Arts Council of Wales, Care Council for Wales, Higher Education

Funding Council for Wales and the National Museum and Galleries of Wales. In addition, there are a further 14 advisory bodies covering subjects such as agricultural dwellings, medicines and ancient monuments. The Welsh Assembly Government appoints members to all these bodies.

Local Government

There are 22 all purpose local authorities in Wales, which were created in 1996. They range in size from the largest, Cardiff with 314,000 people, to the smallest, Merthyr Tydfil with 55,000 people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008a). Some are highly urban, principally Cardiff, Swansea and Newport, whilst others are very rural, notably Powys and Gwynedd. Local authorities in Wales are represented by the WLGA.

In addition, there are seven 'single purpose' local government bodies – three national park authorities and four fire authorities.

Other Bodies

In addition to national and local government, there are currently 22 local health boards (LHBs) which commission health care from seven NHS trusts and from GPs, and a specialist commissioner Health Commission Wales. All these bodies have recently been reviewed, and the LHBs and Trusts are to be merged into seven integrated bodies in 2009. In education, there are 23 further education colleges and 12 universities or colleges of higher education (11 are part of the University of Wales).

The Wales Audit Office provides a comprehensive audit and inspection service across a wide range of public services. The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales investigates complaints made by the public about a wide range of public services.

1.4 Devolution and Equality

Equality sits uneasily in the devolution settlement. At first sight, equality is not a devolved issue, with the UK Government continuing to be responsible for equalities legislation, its monitoring and promotion (not least through the Equality and Human Rights Commission itself). However, the National Assembly for Wales and Welsh Assembly Government do have some competence on equality issues, which has contributed to the development of a considerable and increasingly distinctive equalities agenda in Wales.

Chaney and Fevre (2000) have pointed out that the ‘cult of inclusivity’ was a powerful driver of equalities issues in the run up to devolution, with women and ethnic minority groups having a close working relationship with the then Secretary of State for Wales. Chaney has explored the impact of women and women’s organisations further on the shape of the devolution settlement in a number of subsequent studies (Chaney and Fevre, 2002a, 2002b; Chaney 2002a, 2002b, 2003a), not least because the women’s movement played a key role in the drafting of the 1998 Government of Wales Act.

The Government of Wales Act 1998 (Section 120) that established the National Assembly for Wales provides that the Assembly has a legal duty to:

...make appropriate arrangements with a view to securing that its functions are exercised with due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people.

It has been argued that this clause of the Government of Wales Act is distinctive because it imposes on the Assembly an ‘absolute duty’ to promote equality, without any derogation (Chaney and Fevre, 2002a). The duty is also distinctive because it applies to all citizens in Wales, not just those in specified groups of the population, and it applies to all Assembly functions, not just specified areas such as employment. Chaney (2005) has argued that it is hard to over-estimate the importance of this clause, not simply because of its content, but because it marked a significant shift from a government department which was unresponsive to the equalities agenda to one that was required to put such issues at the very heart of its business.

Subsequent legislation has placed additional equality duties upon all public bodies in Wales, including the Assembly and Welsh Assembly Government. These involve a duty to promote equality on race (Race Relations Amendment Act 2000), on disability (Disability Discrimination Act 2005) and gender (Equality Act 2006). These equality duties are arguably both more specific than Section 120 of the 1998 Government of Wales Act and also cover some public bodies that are not within the scope of that Act. When these duties are fully fulfilled, they ought to go a considerable way towards providing more information about equality in many aspects of public services. As shall be shown later in this report, the information about equality in very many public services is at present non-existent. Recently, the Welsh Assembly Government has sought to respond to the equality duties by

producing a 'single equality scheme', in a process which has been supported in work by Parken and Young (2008).

As an interesting aside, James et al (2003) reviewed the potential to adopt an equality 'kitemark' in Wales to denote organisations' adoption of good equality practice.

The National Assembly for Wales and Welsh Assembly Government have pursued their equalities duties with some vigour, particularly on those issues within the remit of the equality Minister. The annual reports of the Welsh Assembly Government on its compliance with Section 120 of the 1998 Act set out a wide range of activities undertaken during a particular year, which include, for example, supporting networks of under-represented groups, promoting equality in the Assembly's own staffing, encouraging diversity in public appointments, increasing awareness and training, etc. Crucially, equality was placed as a top priority in the Assembly's business (Chaney, 2005).

The Welsh Assembly Government has generated a number of equality policies and strategies which cut across different policy areas. These include:

- A refugee inclusion strategy (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006a and 2008d).
- Various policies for older people including a strategy for older people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008e) (see Phillips and Burholt, 2007 for an overview).
- Various strategies for children and young people (see Williamson, 2007 for an overview of youth policy and Thomas and Crowley, 2007 for a review of children's rights).

Chaney and Fevre's (2002a) review of progress in the Assembly's first term was mainly positive. However subsequent accounts have been rather more critical with the National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee's (2004) report on mainstreaming equality noting that whilst equality issues had a higher profile in the Assembly than in other equivalent institutions, they felt that there was a lack of strategy and inconsistencies across portfolios. Chaney (2005) was even more robust in his comments and it is worth quoting an extract from his conclusions:

...[the] political commitment to mainstreaming has not been accompanied by the necessary level of resources, institutional capacity and expertise. As a result, there is a litany of shortcomings and failings that apply to the Assembly Government's attempt to operationalise mainstreaming. Specifically, there has been: a dearth of equality impact assessments; few measurable equality targets; almost nil usage of gender budgeting techniques; very limited and unsystematic intersectionality in policymaking (or policy that addresses inequality associated with 'multiple identities'); opaque lines of accountability in respect of the success or failure of equality policies; limited use of policy evaluations; evidence of institutional resistance to reform; little co-ordination in the promotion of equality between departments in the Assembly Government bureaucracy; and poor co-ordination between the Assembly Government and Westminster in the promotion of equality in areas of shared competency. As a result, there is scant evidence to suggest that mainstreaming equality has become 'normalised' in the work of the Welsh Assembly Government. (Chaney, 2005:25)

The Equality of Opportunity Committee has continued to press for progress to mainstream equality, and commissioned an independent 'audit' of progress which reported in 2007 (National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee, 2007a). The report found some progress, particularly a top-level commitment to promoting equality and a changing culture and climate. However, it also concluded that there were significant variations in style and the degree to which promoting equality and diversity was recognised across Assembly Government policies, and that the language of equality and diversity was not always explicit. It also found variations in the data and information used to support equality objectives and a lack of clarity about equality and diversity outcomes and how success would be measured.

Other bodies' fulfilment of their various equality duties has received rather less attention. Sullivan et al (2004) note that a degree of complacency has entered local authority approaches, and found that progress in local government was variable, driven by legislation and fear of sanctions. A report by C. Williams and Hold (2007) on progress towards race equality in local authorities and local health boards paints a damning picture. Commenting on progress with race equality schemes, the authors state that:

...by any yardstick, we would have to conclude that implementing race equality strategies within the NHS and Local Authorities in Wales has been a slow process.

(C. Williams and Hold, 2007: 5)

An investigation by the Commission for Racial Equality (2007a) found that progress implementing equality strategies was equally slow in local government.

The study by Best Partnership (2004) of ethnic minority groups in north Wales points out that 'standard' approaches to addressing community needs, notably through Communities First, miss out the great majority of ethnic minorities in the area, just 12 per cent of whom live in Community First areas.

1.5 Conclusion

There can be no doubt that Wales in 2008 is now very diverse, with much more variation in the ethnicity, age, health and disability, sexual orientation and religion of its population than even half a century ago. Moreover, all the forecasts of future trends suggest that that diversity will increase further over coming decades.

The governance of Wales is increasingly different to that of other parts of the UK, and as part of this, Wales is also developing a distinctive equalities agenda of its own as well as being covered by UK equality legislation. Whilst Wales's institutions have had a headline commitment to equality, mainstreaming that commitment has, however, proved to be much more difficult and on many key indicators progress towards equality leaves much to be desired.

2. POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

This chapter reviews relevant research on poverty and social exclusion in Wales. It considers household income, household resources such as savings, credit and debt, fuel poverty, digital exclusion, access to arts and leisure facilities, access to miscellaneous facilities and then concludes with a review of the evidence on transport, because of its fundamental importance to accessing services.

There are other aspects of social exclusion that some researchers have identified (e.g. isolation amongst older people (Windle and Burholt 2001) and amongst ethnic minority groups (Best Partnership, 2004), but these are not included here.

2.1 Policy Context

Although incomes, benefits and taxation are not devolved issues, the Welsh Assembly Government has made strong commitments to reduce poverty over a number of years. Most recently, the *One Wales* programme of government states that '[o]ur ambition is a Wales where... everyone can live free from poverty' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b: 26), although it only includes specific commitments on child poverty.

A key tool used by the Welsh Assembly Government is the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, a major project which analyses and presents data on deprivation for small areas. There are a total of 14 separate reports analysing the findings,² including a summary report (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008f). The 2008 Index includes eight different domains of deprivation:

- Income
- Employment
- Health
- Education
- Housing
- Environment
- Access to Services
- Community Safety.

² These are available at:
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/wimd08sum/?lang=en>

The Assembly Government's over-arching anti-poverty programme is Communities First, which is aimed at regenerating Wales's most disadvantaged communities principally through the development and building of capacity in those communities (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007c). Consultation on the next phase, Communities Next, closed in April 2008 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008g), but at the time of writing no decision had been made.

Other Assembly Government policies and programmes are described under the relevant headings.

2.2 Household Income and Poverty

For the most part, the Welsh Assembly Government does not have policies aimed explicitly at tackling income poverty, in part because responsibility for earnings and for most aspects of taxation and benefits are not devolved. Its various anti-poverty strategies are essentially aimed at tackling poverty in communities (e.g. via the Communities First programme) rather than amongst households or individuals, or at particular aspects of poverty, e.g. fuel poverty.

The exception is child poverty where the Welsh Assembly Government shares the UK government target of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020. The Welsh Assembly Government (2005b) produced a child poverty strategy in 2005, which built on a set of core values in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It included key action in policy areas where the Assembly Government has devolved responsibility, or else can contribute to the achievement of non-devolved functions. The subjects covered included encouraging access to employment, financial inclusion, tax and benefits, grants for further and higher education, leisure and social activity, anti-discrimination and bullying, listening to young voices, tackling service poverty, and the school curriculum.

A subsequent implementation plan (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006b) included targets and milestones to measure progress in housing, health, education and childcare as well as in employment and household income. It also included additional proposals to mainstream action, and to work more closely with local government. As part of this, a pilot scheme involving Save the Children Cymru, the Welsh Local Government Association, the Welsh

Assembly Government and other members of the End Child Poverty Network Cymru launched a website offering practical solutions in September 2008.³

The recent *One Wales* programme of government reaffirms the goal of halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b). It includes some new proposed actions including a Children's Bond for all children entering school, a duty on public agencies to demonstrate their contribution to ending child poverty, and provisions for children to access credit unions. The Welsh Assembly Government is pursuing a Legislative Competence Order (LCO) under the new Government of Wales Act, which could require local authorities to do more to tackle child poverty. An expert group has been established to provide evidence and advice on progress towards meeting targets and an index of children's well-being is being developed.

Other relevant policies are Cymorth – the Children and Youth Support Fund – which combines the funding previously provided through Sure Start, Childcare Partnerships and the Children and Youth Partnership Fund, to support children's and young people's plans that are produced by local Children's and Young People's Partnerships. The Welsh Assembly Government's Free School Breakfast Scheme was launched in November 2004 and now includes all maintained primary schools that wish to participate. Cardiff Institute of Society, Health and Ethics (CISHE), Cardiff University, has been commissioned to evaluate the pilot.

For older people, the latest *Strategy for Older People 2008-13* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008e) carries forward the government's commitment to tackle poverty amongst older people, through additional help with council tax, efforts to improve take-up of council tax benefit, and increased advice on maximising incomes.

There is no doubt that household incomes in Wales are low and that there are relatively high rates of poverty, although Wales's position relative to the UK has improved in recent years. The 2004 Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005c) provides an estimate of household income. It does not cite an average figure, but analyses the distribution of incomes by broad bands. This shows that 43 per cent of those interviewed in households (Household Reference Persons – HRPs) had an income of less than £10,399

³ See <http://childpovertysolutions.org.uk>

per year, whilst just one in 10 had an income of over £31,200. Data from a different source (CACI) is used by Milbourne and Hughes (2005) to produce an estimated average household income for Wales of £25,103 – the figure is lower in rural Wales (£24,065) but lower still in the south Wales valleys (£23,061).

A household is defined as being in income poverty if its income is less than 60 per cent of the UK median household income. The actual value of the poverty threshold depends on how many adults and children live in the household, and is measured after deduction of income tax, council tax and housing costs (including rents, mortgage interest, buildings insurance and water charges) and therefore represents what the household has available to spend on everything else it needs, from food and heating to travel and entertainment. In the most recent year, 2005/06, it was worth £108 per week for a single adult and £300 per week for a couple with two children (Kenway et al, 2005).

Using the definition of poverty as 60 per cent of the UK median, data from the 2003/04 Family Resources Survey indicate that a slightly higher proportion of Wales's population lived in households in relative income poverty than in Great Britain as a whole – 22 per cent compared with 21 per cent (Department for Work and Pensions/National Statistics, 2007).

A slightly different approach to defining poverty is taken by the Family Budget Unit and University of Swansea which have developed a 'low cost but acceptable' budget for a household with two children in Swansea (Parker, 2002). According to this approach, a two earner couple (one working full-time and one working part-time) or a lone parent (working full-time) with two children would need £310 a week net to match this standard, whilst a one earner couple would need £252 a week net.

Milbourne and Hughes (2005) use data from Wales Rural Observatory surveys and a definition of 'low income' of £10,000 per household, irrespective of its composition, to conclude that almost 25 per cent of households in rural Wales live in poverty. They supplement this analysis with data on basic necessities and conclude that just half of low income households in rural Wales have been able to afford an annual holiday in the last 12 months. Their report goes on to present data on the experience of poverty and argues that poverty and disadvantage is as prevalent in rural Wales as in urban and valleys Wales.

Race

No relevant literature was identified. Platt (2007) confirms that almost all research has focused on England and Wales, Britain or the UK whilst the accompanying analysis of poverty and ethnic origin also focuses on England and Wales (Kenway and Palmer, 2007a).

Asylum seekers and refugees

The Save the Children Fund report on children seeking asylum in Wales (Hewett et al, 2005) highlights the very low incomes that families and separated children seeking asylum in Wales live on – just 70 per cent of Income Support levels. The lengthy wait for an asylum decision can mean that families live on very low incomes for many months. Their situation was made worse by lack of family support, delays to payments and lack of knowledge of Welsh culture and practices, e.g. where to buy cheap food. The impact on unaccompanied child asylum seekers was particularly severe.

Gender

Surprisingly little analysis of incomes, poverty and gender in Wales has been identified. What is available shows a marked gap in incomes between women and men, and that women's income has different sources to men's.

Welsh Office (1998) found that on average in 1995/96, a lower proportion of women's income is derived from private incomes and salaries, compared with men's, and a higher proportion from social security benefits. The Bevan Foundation (2006) found a similar picture for 2003/04, and quotes evidence that women's median gross income was only 56 per cent of men's income at £145 per week compared with £259 for men. A different survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005c) also found that males had higher incomes than females, except for those aged over 65, whilst females were almost twice as likely to have had incomes of less than £10,400 than males (56 per cent of females, 31 per cent of males). From a UK perspective, Bradshaw and Mayhew (2005) found that living in Wales increased the chances of mothers and babies being in poverty.

One of the few pieces of research on gender and poverty is a pioneering project in Merthyr Tydfil where a gender analysis of 'need' – which included income but also other needs – was undertaken. This highlighted the fact that although the issues faced by women and men were similar, they had very different perspectives on them, in large part shaped by the gender division of labour (Oxfam UK Poverty Programme, 2003).

Disability

There is also little research on disability and poverty. The number of adults in poverty in 'disabled households' increased between 1998/99 and 2005/06 by around 20,000 (Kenway and Palmer, 2007b). This reflects a noticeable rise in the proportion of disabled working-age adults who are in poverty, from 30 per cent in the mid 1990s to around 33 per cent. However, Kenway's (2008) more detailed analysis of poverty and disability uses UK data, in part because of the small sample size in Wales. Guide Dogs for the Blind et al (2007) state that 78 per cent of older blind and partially sighted people live in poverty, with a household income of less than £195 a week.

Age

Poverty is found at both ends of the age spectrum. Twenty-eight per cent of people living in poverty in Wales in 2003/04–2005/06 were children and 18 per cent were pensioners (Kenway et al, 2005).

Child poverty

Davies and Dunkerley (2006) argue that, in some ways, life for children and young people in Wales is different from those in other parts of the UK, mainly because of higher levels of poverty and social disadvantage. The proportion of children living in poverty has declined sharply since the 1990s to 27 per cent in 2003/04 (Kenway et al, 2005), so that Wales is now 'average' in Britain. Most of the reduction has been amongst the very poorest children – those living in households with incomes below 50 per cent of the median (Kenway and Palmer, 2007b). However since 2003/04 there has been no progress in the reduction of child poverty in Wales, with the rate remaining at 26 per cent (180,000 children). We identified one report that compared child poverty in Wales with the rest of the UK but were unable to access it (Bradshaw and Mayhew, 2005). The data for 2005/06 were published after the compilation of this report.

Kenway et al (2005) point out that household composition makes a significant difference to the risk of income poverty: more than half of all children in lone parent households are poor compared with a fifth of children in couple households. As a result, more than half of the children in Wales now living in poor households are in lone parent households. Save the Children and the Bevan Foundation (2007) also highlight the importance of work to the risk of a child living in poverty (which is also the explanation for the high risks of poverty associated with living in a lone parent household), and of the high risks of poverty associated with having a disabled parent. In terms of housing

status, whilst much of the literature on poverty in general focuses on the relationship with social housing, Burrows and Wilcox (2004) point out that 41 per cent of all children in the lowest income quintile live in home owner households.

Croke and Crowley (2007) review progress towards eliminating child poverty in the context of children's rights, and conclude that more needs to be done to deliver the Welsh Assembly Government's target of eliminating child poverty by 2020. Save the Children Cymru and the Bevan Foundation (2008) studied severe child poverty – defined as households with income below 50 per cent of the median (rather than the standard 60 per cent) and where the adult and the child went without two or more goods or services because the family could not afford them. It is estimated that approximately 13 per cent of children in Wales live in severe poverty (around 90,000 children). The most common things for children to go without were not physical items, such as sports equipment, but occasions, such as school trips, holidays or inviting friends round for tea. The study found that a slightly higher percentage, 19 per cent (approximately 130,000 children), lived in households whose income was below the 50 per cent median for a household of that type but did not report lacking any material goods or services. However the study was unable to analyse the characteristics of households with children in severe poverty because of the small sample size.

Child poverty occurs throughout Wales but in terms of the rate of child poverty – that is, the proportion of children in a particular area who are living in income poverty – the six local authorities in the south Wales valleys stand out with a proportion in excess of 30 per cent. At the opposite end of the spectrum, in the East and the North East of Wales the proportion is around 20 per cent. (Kenway et al, 2005). A small-scale study by Children in Wales (2008) argued that child poverty is also prevalent in rural areas where it is compounded by lack of rural services and public transport. An NCH/Barnardo's Cymru report (Sharpe et al, 2003) found a similar picture as did Barnardo's Cymru (2007) research on fathers in Blaenau Ffestiniog. Contact a Family Wales (2006) highlights the particular needs of disabled children, although much of the evidence cited is not specific to Wales.

Save the Children Fund's study (Crowley and Vulliamy, n.d.) summarises the experiences of 100 children aged 5–16 who live in poverty across Wales. It asked them what they felt was essential for a 'good life', their perceptions of being treated differently and being left out, their sadness and shame at being

poor and the impact on their relationships with their parents, and their hopes and dreams. It found that children without much money were bullied and victimised and missed out on many childhood activities, and had a strong sense of sadness, exclusion and shame.

In terms of child poverty and education, 16.1 per cent of pupils on school rolls were eligible for free school meals in 2007 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007d) with there being a positive correlation between the proportion of pupils entitled to a Free School Meal and levels of absenteeism (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007e, 2008h).

The links between child poverty and low educational achievement in Wales have been clearly demonstrated (Kenway et al, 2005 and Kenway and Palmer, 2007b). Kenway et al note the ways in which poverty can continue to cascade down generations and point to the high proportion of young people who fail to get any GCSEs, the low level of take-up of vocational qualifications and the fact that 10 per cent of 16–18-year-olds are not in education, training or employment.

Save the Children Cymru and the Bevan Foundation (2008) identified an urgent need to research in depth the factors which prevent children from low-income families achieving in education. They also recommended that other vulnerable children, such as looked after and Gypsy Traveller children, should have their educational needs addressed. Moreover, they identified a set of families facing multiple disadvantage who seem to fall through a net of support aimed at only part of their needs (e.g. families with parents who have a disability or a long-term illness, families from particular ethnic minority groups; families with parents who have no educational qualifications). Emma Renold and Sally Holland of Cardiff University are conducting research with looked after children from which publications are expected in 2009.

Egan (2007) summarises literature on child poverty and education in Wales and discusses a number of programmes aimed at tackling the disadvantages of poverty for children and young people. Although there has not yet been an opportunity to evaluate these programmes, Egan predicts continuing problems with policy synergy and integration.

An internal Save the Children Cymru report (2007) identifies a web of factors impacting on success in education. These include personal academic skills, plus social and emotional skills; the quality of services available (schools,

curriculum); social and sporting amenities; health, housing and social services; and the support of not only parents, but also peers and professional Youth, Education Welfare and Social Workers. The End Child Poverty Network Cymru (2006) highlights the hidden costs of schooling: uniforms, books, school trips and out of school activities. However, not all the data used in the report specifically relate to Wales.

Rees (2002) summarises the work of an Independent Investigation Group she chaired on student hardship, which concluded that there was a fundamental mismatch between a poverty of learning experience for these students and the Welsh Assembly Government's vision. In 2005, Rees chaired a further review on fair and flexible funding in Higher Education. The review describes the complexity of this task, "hemmed in" as it was by constraints inherent in the UK system of higher education (Rees, 2005a).

Pensioner poverty

There are a number of studies which have sought to establish information about the incomes of older people in Wales from surveys; however, all of these suffer from problems with response rates.

Burholt and Windle (2001) cite data from the Welsh House Condition Survey 1998 that showed that the median gross annual income for single pensioner households was less than half the gross annual income of all groups, at just £4,500, although the data are now very out of date. A more recent study by Age Concern and Help the Aged (2004) was based on a main sample of 895 respondents, plus a booster sample of 97 respondents from ethnic minorities, but did not ask for a figure on household income. Instead, respondents were asked how well off they felt and how easy it was to make ends meet. The study found that 13 per cent of respondents regarded themselves as relatively poor and 22 per cent as very poor. In terms of their current ability to manage, almost a third were just about making ends meet and one in 20 said they found it difficult to make ends meet. A study of pensioners in Gwynedd by Burholt et al (2007) did ask respondents to provide their income and had a very high rate of refusal – the estimated median household income of £142 per week is based on just 31 responses.

Looking at data from the Family Resources Survey, Kenway et al (2005) say that the proportion of pensioners in income poverty has fallen since the mid 1990s and in 2003/04 stood at 18 per cent. An update of the analysis (Kenway and Palmer, 2007b) found that pensioner poverty stood at around 18

per cent in 2005/06 (110,000 people), and that pensioners are now **less** likely to live in poverty than people of working age.

The Age Concern and Help the Aged (2004) study looked at whether pensioner households had basic necessities. They found that 28 per cent of their sample lacked two or more basic necessities. Pensioner households most commonly lacked the ability to afford savings of £10 or more a month (37 per cent) and the ability to replace worn out furniture (25 per cent). The ethnic minority sample had a similar pattern. Burholt and Windle (2006a) also analysed the material resources (i.e. income plus necessities) of older people in Wales as part of a Great Britain-wide study. They found that in Wales, a low income was associated with not having worked, but that this association was not evident in England. There was no association between health status and income, but they did find an association between good health status and more material resources – a wider measure. The study then looked at ‘life satisfaction’ which the authors found to be strongly associated with older people’s social resources, which in turn were determined by age and marital status.

In rural Wales, Milbourne and Hughes (2005) showed that low income households were more likely to be headed by an older person in rural Wales than elsewhere in Wales. Burholt et al’s (2007) analysis of basic necessities found that material resources in older age are associated with activities during the life course especially engagement with the labour market, and that males have higher levels of material resources in older age. They found that two-thirds of their sample (62 people) experienced multiple disadvantage, and were more likely to be older, female, widowed, living alone, in poor health and less satisfied with their lives. Burrows and Wilcox (2004) point out that pensioners who own their own homes are a particularly large group – they comprise more than two-thirds of pensioners in the poorest fifth of households. Milbourne and Hughes’ analysis (2005) reached a similar conclusion.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.3 Benefits and Pensions

Most benefits and all pensions issues are not devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government. However the Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for housing benefit and council tax benefit, and can also encourage take-up of UK benefits. In February 2008, the Minister for Social Justice announced the allocation of £1 million a year for three years to encourage take-up of benefits.

In 2001, 38 per cent of all people in Wales claimed some sort of state benefit (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a), the most commonly claimed being child benefit (claimed by more than half the population) followed by sickness or disability benefit (claimed by nearly a third of the population). Housing and/or council tax benefits were claimed by 22 per cent of the population. The Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005c) indicates a higher rate of benefit claiming – 57 per cent of those interviewed received one or more benefits. Here the most commonly received benefit was also Child Benefit, although the proportion who received it (21 per cent of HRPs and 25 per cent of their spouses/partners) was lower. In the Living in Wales survey, the next most common benefit received was the National Insurance retirement benefit/pension, with 18 per cent of HRPs receiving it.

As Kenway et al (2005) point out, the relationship between poverty and benefit receipt is not straightforward. People who receive either tax credits or means-tested social security benefits, such as Income Support (IS), Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) or the Guarantee Credit element of Pension Credit, are not automatically in poverty. Those receiving either Incapacity Benefit (IB) or Severe Disablement Allowance (SDA) may do so even though their income is not low. On the other hand, a substantial minority of those with poverty incomes get none of these benefits.

Kenway et al (2005) define a high level of dependence on benefits as 25 per cent or more of the population receiving Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance or any of the main means-tested benefits, namely IS, JSA or the Pension Credit Guarantee. Half of the wards in Wales with high dependence on benefits are in the south Wales Valleys. Two-thirds of Merthyr Tydfil's wards, more than half of Blaenau Gwent's wards and more than a third of wards in Rhondda Cynon Taf have this level of dependence. There are also smaller pockets of benefit dependence in Llanelli, Cardiff, Newport, Swansea and Wrexham. Milbourne and Hughes (2005) found that a quarter of low income households in rural Wales were in receipt of benefits.

Kenway et al (2005) found very little relationship between the geographical incidence of low pay and the distribution of tax credit claims. The mismatch is greatest in the rural counties of Ceredigion, Gwynedd and Pembrokeshire. However, Milbourne and Hughes (2005) comment that the proportion of the population receiving Working Families Tax Credits is higher in rural areas than urban areas.

McLennan et al (2003) look at changes in patterns of claims for Income Support, Job Seekers' Allowance and Incapacity Benefit between 1995 and 2000. During this period, the number of claimants in Wales fell from 319,500 to 265,500, with more than 90 per cent of the fall being attributable to the decline in unemployed claimants.

Race

No relevant literature was identified on benefits and race generally, although the Age Concern and Help the Aged (2004) study included a sample of ethnic minority pensioners, the findings of which are summarised in the section on age.

Gender

In 1995/96, almost one in three women received a state retirement pension compared with only one in five men (Welsh Office, 1998). However, we have not identified a more recent analysis of the gender breakdown in pensions received although statistics are available. Burholt et al's (2007) study of pensioners in Gwynedd found that males were slightly more likely than females to receive a private pension or to have an income from rent or interest.

According to the Welsh Office (1998), five out of 10 women working full-time are members of pension schemes run by their employers, compared with just under three in five men. Less than one in five women working full-time are in private pension schemes, compared with over one in four men. However, these data are now more than 10 years old.

The literature on receipt of child benefits is also old – Welsh Office (1998) found that in 1995/96 women were much more likely than men to receive child benefit (one in three women compared with virtually no men).

The question of maternity benefits has been considered in research commissioned by the former Equal Opportunities Commission (2004a). This

found that over four out of 10 employers said that they did not pay any maternity benefits in addition to statutory requirements in their work place. Similarly, Dex and Ward (2007) found that almost half the women they surveyed (45 per cent) did not receive any employers' enhancements to statutory maternity pay. In a telephone survey of fathers of babies in Great Britain, Thompson et al (2005) found that almost all supported the idea of increasing maternity pay to a flat rate of £150 per week for six months; this included all fathers surveyed in Wales.

Disability

As with race and gender, there is surprisingly little literature on pension and benefit claims by disabled people. McLennan et al (2003) have pointed out that the number of people claiming IB increased between 1995 and 2000 and according to Welsh Assembly Government (2003a), more than two-thirds of disabled people were claiming a state benefit in 1998–2001. Nearly three-quarters claimed a sickness or disability benefit, of whom more than two-thirds claimed Incapacity Benefit and 42 per cent claimed Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Age Concern and Help the Aged (2004) found that more than a quarter of older people interviewed received DLA.

Age

There has also been relatively little analysis of benefits data by age. McLennan et al (2003) found that amongst people who were claiming IS in 1995, young people were much more likely than those aged 40–9 to have stopped claiming by 2000. The older age group's 'exit rate' was more than 20 percentage points lower than the younger group's.

McLennan et al (2003) also found that in 1995, 164,400 children lived in families dependent on IS, JSA or IB, approximately 27 per cent of all children. By 2000, the number had fallen to 132,900 children, approximately 22 per cent of all children. In 2004/05, End Child Poverty found that more than 30 per cent of children in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Neath Port Talbot and Rhondda Cynon Taf lived in households which were dependent on 'workless' benefits.⁴

In terms of older people, the state pension is by far the most commonly claimed benefit – received by 97 per cent of respondents in the Age Concern

⁴ Published at: <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/why-end-child-poverty/poverty-in-your-area#wales>

and Help the Aged study (2004). A slightly lower proportion (78 per cent) of the ethnic minority sample received a state pension. Just over half (58 per cent) of the main sample also received an occupational pension, but only 13 per cent of the ethnic minority sample did so.

Other benefits show more variation with age. Older people are very much less likely to claim JSA than younger people – about one in 80 of the over 50s claimed JSA compared with one in 40 of the under 50s. However the proportion of people aged 55–64 claiming unemployment related benefits is much higher than for people aged 55–64 in Britain (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008c). The Age Concern and Help the Aged study (2004) found that 26 per cent of respondents received council tax benefit and 20 per cent received housing benefit. A higher proportion of the ethnic minority sample received these benefits – 57 received housing benefit.

Burrows and Wilcox (2004) have pointed out the concentration of pensioner and child poverty in home owner households in Wales, and that tax credits are an important form of support for low-income home owner households – many of whom are pensioners. In May 2002, 80,000 families in Wales received Working Families Tax Credits (WFTC) at an average rate of £82 per week. However, only about a half of all eligible home owner households claimed WFTC, compared with three-quarters of eligible tenant households

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.4 Savings, Credit and Debt, and Financial Exclusion

Policy Context

The Welsh Assembly Government's latest strategy for financial inclusion is included in its financial inclusion framework strategy which has recently completed a period of consultation (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007f). It was preceded by the Deputy Social Justice Minister's review of over-indebtedness in Wales, which assesses the impact of debt on the individual, the household, communities, the wider economy and Assembly Government policies and strategies (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005d).

Credit unions have been a key tool in action to date with 33 active credit unions covering most of Wales with membership of approximately 34,000 people.⁵

A number of studies report higher levels of financial exclusion in Wales than England (Financial Services Authority, 2000). This exclusion takes a number of forms, from lacking a bank account (9 per cent of Wales's population is estimated to lack access to a bank account and 11 per cent of those who do have an account have a 'basic' one) and difficulties accessing cash (almost a third of people used a fee-charging ATM more than twice a week).

Access to financial services and post offices are a particular issue in rural areas. According to White et al (2007), more than half of respondents to a 2006 survey visit a post office at least once a week. A lower proportion visited banks weekly – 40 per cent – with a quarter visiting a bank less than once a month. Burholt et al (2007) found that a sizeable minority of older people in Gwynedd never used their local post office or bank (15 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). The Welsh Assembly Government launched the Post Office Development Fund which operated from 2002–6 in the 125 most deprived and 125 most disadvantaged areas of Wales. It included provision to improve access for disabled people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006c).

There is also some evidence of low levels of savings – the 2004 Living in Wales survey found that of those responded, 69 per cent said they had no savings (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005c) and high levels of debt (Kearton, 2005).

Race

No relevant literature was identified. The Welsh Consumer Council's study of migrant workers (Thomas, 2007) identified that migrants faced difficulties accessing public services, but focused on good practice in improving access and did not include original research.

Gender

A number of research studies suggest that men's greater incomes are reflected in their financial well-being, both in terms of higher levels of savings and greater access to and use of credit facilities. The Living in Wales survey

⁵ See <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/regeneration/debt/creditunions/support/?lang=en>

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2005c) shows that having savings is closely related to both gender and age. Although it found that overall males were slightly more likely to have no savings than females (66 per cent of males compared with 60 per cent of females), if the figures are analysed by age then 30–44-year-old females were the most likely to have no savings. In contrast households with male interviewees were more than twice as likely to have £20,000 or more in savings than females. Older males were much more likely to have this level of savings than younger males – 17 per cent of males over 65 had more than £20,000 savings compared with 1 per cent of 16–28-year-old men.

A survey of credit use (Whyley, 2003) found that two in five households headed by men held at least three credit facilities, while more than half of those headed by women had access to just one or two sources. Male-headed households tended to make more extensive use of credit than those headed by women, and men tended to use bank loans and overdrafts or credit cards whereas women used mail order credit more. Women were also found to be at greater risk of running into financial difficulties or arrears. The proportion of women with a first mortgage in their own name increased from one in 10 in 1986 to one in six in 1996, narrowing the gap with men (Welsh Office, 1998).

A survey of financial awareness (Kearton, 2005) found that women were less confident about financial matters than men and were slightly less likely to understand the term APR.

Disability

No relevant literature was identified.

Age

Children and young people

The Living in Wales survey shows that households with dependent children have a higher rate of no savings than those without dependent children, regardless of their employment status (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005c). Kearton (2005) found that young people were less confident about financial matters than older people.

White et al (2007) found that younger rural respondents (aged under 45) are less likely to visit post offices regularly than older people: 48 per cent go at least once a week, compared to 59 per cent of those aged between 45 and 64.

Pensioners

As already mentioned, there is an association between age and financial exclusion. A substantial proportion of older people appear to have very limited financial resources, and also to have less access to credit.

About a quarter of older people (24 per cent) reported in the Age Concern and Help the Aged survey (2004) that they had no savings or assets, and a further 34 per cent had savings of less than £6,000. A much higher proportion of the ethnic minority sample (77 per cent) had no savings and a further 12 per cent had savings of less than £6,000. Burholt and Windle (2006a) constructed a measure of 'financial satisfaction' of older people, which includes 'reserves' of material resources in reserve (i.e. perceived ability to afford emergencies, bills, luxuries and future needs), current perceived material resources, and security afforded by the home. They found that work status did not have an effect on financial satisfaction, but that having an occupational pension or a private source of income did do so in Wales.

A survey of credit use (Whyley, 2003) found that households headed by older people (aged over 60) were far more likely to have no credit facilities than households headed by younger people (four out of 10 had no credit compared with only one out of 10 younger households). They were also very much less likely to make use of multiple credit sources – just 1 per cent used three or more sources compared with 26 per cent of households aged 19–39. Older households were much less likely to have large debts – only 5 per cent had credit of more than £3,000 compared with 29 per cent of 16–39-year-olds – and they were found to be at much less risk of financial difficulties than younger households. Bank loans and overdrafts were the least popular form of credit for older households with mail order being the most popular – households headed by people aged 60 or above were three times as likely to have mail order or HP agreements as they were to have a bank loan or overdraft.

Sexual Orientation

Williams and Robinson (2007) carried out a survey of 403 lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people for Stonewall Cymru in 2006. They found that 20 per cent of respondents who reported a view felt dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the financial services they had received in the last 12 months. Just over a third (36 per cent) reported being dissatisfied/very dissatisfied with the insurance service they received. The most common form of mistreatment amongst financial services was feeling discriminated against by a life

insurance provider (6 per cent). Lower levels of dissatisfaction were recorded for banks, mortgage providers and on taxation matters.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.5 Water and Fuel Poverty

Tackling fuel poverty is a partially devolved issue. The Welsh Assembly Government (2003c) aims to end fuel poverty for vulnerable households by 2010, with a target of eliminating fuel poverty completely by 2018. Much of the Government's efforts to combat fuel poverty have centred on making homes more energy efficient. The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (HEES) is aimed at low income households with children under 16 (including lone parents), and those who are aged 60 and over, disabled or chronically sick, and in receipt of benefits, and all those aged 80 and over, regardless of their income status.

A household is said to be in fuel poverty 'if, in order to maintain a satisfactory heating regime it would be required to spend more than 10 per cent of its income' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005e). The official estimate of the number of households living in fuel poverty is about 130,000 – 11 per cent of all households. However, latest estimates (Kearton, 2006) put the figure at around 311,000 households (27 per cent of the total).

Dŵr Cymru Welsh Water is the dominant supplier of water and sewerage services in Wales with more than 1.2 million household customers.

Their charges are amongst the highest in England and Wales (Kearton, 2006), despite the payment of a dividend to households. Regulation of water supply and water poverty is not a devolved issue.

Race

No relevant literature on race and water or fuel poverty was identified – the Welsh Assembly Government's analysis (2005e) of statistics on fuel poverty found that the sample size was too small to enable a breakdown of households by ethnicity.

Gender

No relevant literature specifically on gender and fuel poverty was identified. However, Kearton (2006) finds that people who are widowed, separated or divorced are more likely to experience difficulty paying utility bills, and such households may be disproportionately headed by women.

Disability

The Welsh Consumer Council found that 9 per cent of households which included someone with a long-term illness, health problem or disability experienced difficulty paying their gas and electricity bills, compared with 6 per cent of all households (Kearton, 2006). The same study found that 14 per cent of disabled households had difficulty understanding their utility bills compared with 12 per cent of all households. Disabled households were also one of the vulnerable groups which comprise the vast majority of fuel poor households (see below).

Age

The Welsh Assembly Government's survey (2005e) stated that 86 per cent of fuel poor households are 'vulnerable households' (i.e. those households with a member aged 60 or over, with any dependent children aged under 16 or with any long-term sick or disabled member). The largest proportion of these fuel poor vulnerable households contain someone aged 60 or over. Twenty per cent of over 75-year-olds were fuel poor, and 12 per cent were in severe fuel poverty (Age Concern Cymru, 2007a).

The Welsh Consumer Council found that 7 per cent of households that included children had difficulty paying their gas and electricity bills compared with 6 per cent of all households (Kearton, 2006). Although switching fuel suppliers has been identified as a means of reducing energy costs, 34 per cent of those aged 55 and over had not switched, compared with 28 per cent of all households.

The Welsh Consumer Council also found that 9 per cent of households that included children had difficulty paying their water bills compared with 5 per cent of all households (Kearton, 2006). Kearton (2006) quotes figures from Ofwat that pensioners in Wales in 2006 spent around 5 per cent of their income on water and by 2009/10 this is expected to increase to nearer 6 per cent, compared with an average of 1.5 per cent.

Burholt and Windle's (2006b – not accessed) study of 421 older people (aged 70+) living in rural North Wales considered whether people in 'fuel poor' homes are low-income households, living in older houses or lacking home energy efficiency measures, and whether not all people facing difficulties heating their home are identified as 'fuel poor'. It also looked at the relationships between taking extra measures to keep warm and factors associated with low income, older houses and lack of home energy efficiency.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.6 Digital Inclusion**Policy Context**

The Welsh Assembly Government promotes a number of initiatives to improve ICT infrastructure and to encourage take-up of broadband by small- and medium-sized enterprises (as described in, for example, Welsh Assembly Government (2005f) and by disadvantaged groups e.g. Communities@One). However, we have not identified any overarching strategy for this issue.

Access to digital technology is increasing rapidly, but not all groups of people are able to benefit from it. A survey of overall use of ICT (Richards, 2007a) found that only 5 per cent of people did not have any form of digital communications technology (mobile phone, digital TV, internet access, broadband). Other surveys, e.g. Tuck, 2002; Kearton, 2004; Richards, 2005, have highlighted the rapid spread of internet access although some groups remain excluded.

Milbourne and Hughes (2005) found that 59 per cent of people in rural Wales had an internet connection, although only 34 per cent of low income households did so. Tuck (2002), Kearton (2004) and Richards (2005a, 2007b) have also found a relationship between low income and lack of access to the internet throughout Wales – Richards (2007b) found that 64 per cent of households in social groups ABC1 were connected to the internet, almost double the proportion of C2DE households (33 per cent).

Race

The only literature identified is a review of the needs of ethnic minority communities in North Wales (Best Partnership, 2004) which concluded that none of the current surveys undertaken in Wales systematically address the ICT needs of ethnic minorities, and that a need for research on the subject remained.

Gender

No relevant literature was identified.

Disability

Richards (2007b) found that people with a long-term illness, health problems or disability were significantly less likely to have a home internet connection (31 per cent had a connection as opposed to 53 of people without a long-term illness or disability).

Age

One of the main focuses of research on digital exclusion has been older people. Richards (2006) looked specifically at older people's use of the internet and concluded that older people – aged 65 and above – use the internet relatively little in comparison with other age groups (14 per cent of people aged over 65 compared with 57 per cent of people aged 16 to 34). Although a personal choice for some, many older people do not use the internet because of issues related to cost, complexity of technology and lack of relevance to individual lifestyles. Burholt et al (2007) reached a similar conclusion, as did Ofcom's Consumer Panel (2005) which found that older people were less likely than others to keep up-to-date with developments in communications technologies. Richards (2007a) also found that the people lacking various individual digital technologies e.g. mobile phones, satellite television, were more likely to be older people. In Burholt et al's (2007) study, 49 per cent had a mobile phone, 54 per cent had satellite television, and 16 per cent had internet access at home.

The 2004 Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006d) found that non-lone parent households with dependent children had higher levels of internet access than other types of household.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.7 Culture, Leisure and Sport

The Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for culture, including the arts, museums and libraries, leisure and sport. The Arts Council of Wales, Sports Council Wales and National Museums and Galleries of Wales are Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies. The key policy documents are its cultural strategy 'Creative Future: Cymru Greadigol' (Welsh Assembly Government 2002b), and the sport and physical activity strategy document, 'Climbing

Higher' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005g). Notable initiatives are the provision of free swimming for under 16-year-olds in the school holidays and for over 60-year-olds at other times.

There is a basic literature covering the attendance at and participation in arts, cultural and sporting activities by some equalities strands. Audience analyses are also undertaken for specific events and events programmes, but are often not publicly available.

There is a little more research on leisure and sports facilities, particularly in rural areas. White et al (2007) found that almost two-thirds of respondents in rural Wales never used a library, whilst 29 per cent visited a library at least once a month. A similar proportion never use a leisure centre or swimming pool, although 12 per cent go at least monthly. Details about participation in sport itself are provided in Chapter 4.

Race

No all-Wales research on participation in or attendance at arts and cultural events by ethnic minority groups was identified, although a small number of studies on specific, local arts and cultural proposals was located e.g. for a multicultural centre in Swansea (Sylfaen Cynefin, 2006). Research on attendance at the National Eisteddfod showed that 91 per cent were of White British Origin (Audience Wales, n.d.) whilst Hewett et al (2005) highlighted the constraints on young asylum seekers' leisure activities.

Gender

There is a similar paucity of research on participation in arts, cultural and sporting activities by gender. The 'art form' survey carried out by the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) is based on a large sample across Wales (6,700 people). The results are summarised for each art form (literature, music, theatre, visual arts and crafts, language and dance) in ACW, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e, 2005f. In each report, the findings are analysed by gender. In research on attendance at the National Eisteddfod in Audience Wales (n.d.), 58 per cent of the sample was female.

The 2006 Citizen Survey, which formed part of the Living in Wales Survey, (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g: Part 10) looked at people's satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities and found that there was a strong association between being dissatisfied with the convenience of the service and being female.

Disability

An opinion poll commissioned by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) (Chowdhury and Worley, 2003) found that 76 per cent of disabled people in Wales reported difficulty in accessing goods and services (which include arts, cultural and leisure services as well as many others). This was a slightly higher proportion than in England. However, disabled people in Wales were much less likely than those elsewhere to complain about, avoid or tell friends to avoid services which were not accessible.

We have identified only one research study which has considered disability and the arts, despite the ACW's strategy for the arts and disability and the work of Disability Arts Wales. Research on attendance at the National Eisteddfod found that 9 per cent described themselves as disabled (Audience Wales, n.d.). The Wales Council for the Blind (2002) found that visually impaired people prefer different art forms to the general population (musicals were the most commonly attended compared with cinema for the general population), although cinema was the activity that visually impaired people would most like to attend. The barriers to attendance were a mixture of proximity and transport, and companions. Few providers had a clear approach to ensuring visually impaired people were able to access activities, despite good intentions.

In terms of sport, the Welsh Assembly Government's free swimming initiative expects local authorities to make some provision for disabled people to swim. Bolton et al (2007a) found that all local authorities made some provision, but that it was very variable and focused on young disabled people. The importance of this provision is stressed by Turner (2003) who found that the majority of disabled children and young people in a sample of 100 felt most comfortable attending leisure services exclusively for disabled children and young people, and that many needed the support of parents or siblings to attend. The Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g) found that there was a strong association between being dissatisfied with the convenience of sport and leisure services and being out of work and having a limiting long-term illness. Twenty per cent of people with a limiting long-term illness wanted to complain about the service.

The Children's Commissioner's study of disabled children's access to play facilities (2008) found that few local authority play strategies included any commitment to making facilities accessible, few involved disabled children in the development of play strategies, few addressed the need for all year-round

play provision and little attention was given to offering choice to disabled children. The Commissioner will monitor progress and report further.

Age

The various reports produced by the ACW (2005a, b, c, d, e) also analyse the findings by age. A more detailed survey of the participation and attendance of young people in the arts was undertaken in 2002 (Beaufort Research, 2002). It involved 16 focus groups held at eight schools across Wales. In addition, 2,794 questionnaires were completed by pupils in 24 schools across Wales. The types of arts activities young people participate in most frequently are visual arts or crafts, creative writing and music. Least frequent is attendance at operas and classical concerts. On average, young people spent a total of 2.3 hours a week on arts activities, although 17 per cent said that they did not spend any time participating in arts activities in a typical week. The research also looked at where young people participate in arts, influences on and barriers to their participation, the impact of image and stereotypes, and gender differences.

Children in Wales (2008) found that young people in rural areas relied on their parents to drive them to activities, but that it can be difficult for parents with younger children to collect again in the evening. Some young people get around the problem by staying the night with friends, but this can cause anxiety for parents. The Welsh Assembly Government's free swimming initiative may be inaccessible to families living in rural areas who don't have access to a car or can't afford the petrol costs. Families with a disabled child reported that these difficulties were particularly severe.

The only reference to older people and arts, culture and sport identified is the small-scale study by Burholt et al (2007) who found that just 13 per cent of older people in Gwynedd had visited a leisure centre in the year.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified other than research on attendance at the National Eisteddfod (Audience Wales, n.d.) in which 71 per cent said that they were Christians, roughly similar to the population as a whole. An ACW study (2005f) looks at the participation of Welsh speakers in Welsh language cultural events.

2.8 Access to Advice, Support and Justice

Race

A number of studies have been identified which, together, highlight the lack of information and advice available to ethnic minority groups in Wales.

C. Williams et al (2003) produced a key report on the pattern and level of advice, information and representation available to people seeking redress under the equalities provisions (race, sex and disability) of employment legislation. It was prompted by the relatively low registrations of claims for sex, race and disability discrimination in 'Region 6', of which Wales forms the largest part. The research found that public awareness of rights in respect of discrimination in employment was low and that there was an 'advice desert' in which the quality of general advice was variable and specialist advice virtually non-existent. The study also found limited and patchy training of advisers and weak co-ordination between different organisations. Lastly, the process of making a claim was daunting with a lack of access for disabled people and a lack of diversity amongst panel members as well as lack of provision for Welsh language speakers. This combined with the limits on legal aid mean that the emotional 'costs' often outweighed the benefits of proceeding with a case.

Another study (Withers and Sokiri-Munn, 2005) similarly found that there was a particular shortage of advice available for ethnic minority communities in mid and north Wales, and also highlighted the lack of advice services for migrant workers. The Minority Ethnic Women's Network Wales (2005) also found that many members of ethnic minority communities experienced significant problems in accessing and receiving advice on the wide range of legal and other advice areas. Most respondents found governmental and other structures and systems in Wales complex and difficult to negotiate. The major problems encountered by ethnic minorities typically concerned linguistic and cultural barriers, but these were only part of a complex story of unmet need. Many of the respondents spoke of negative attitudes towards them that compounded their practical problems in accessing advice and some respondents compared advice and support in Wales unfavourably with other parts of the UK. Service providers themselves expressed concerns over their ability to respond adequately to ethnic minorities.

The Best Partnership (2004) study of ethnic minority groups in north Wales found that isolation from networks of support is a key factor in understanding the pressures on, and expectations of, such groups in the area. The report

found that although several organisations operated in north Wales, they varied in organisation, functions and the strength of their membership, with most lacking the capacity to meet the demands for advice-giving, consultation and support placed upon them. On top of this, the established BME community is only loosely linked to BME associations, and membership relative to the total BME population is low. A survey of participants in the Welsh Assembly Government's Minority Ethnic Youth Forum (Minority Ethnic Youth Forum, n.d.) similarly found a lack of advice and support outside the main cities, in north Wales and also in the south Wales valleys.

The Curiad Calon Cymru project also looked at the experiences of ethnic minority groups in north Wales but the report is not publicly available (All Wales Ethnic Minority Association (AWEMA), n.d.a.).

Gender

The conclusions of C. Williams et al (2003) apply to gender discrimination. No other research was identified.

Disability

The conclusions of C. Williams et al (2003) apply here too, but no other research was identified.

Age

A modest literature on advocacy services for children has been identified. A survey of 100 children in Wales, 75 of whom who had used advocacy services, and interviews with advocacy service providers are summarised in Cardiff University School of Social Sciences et al (2005) and the spin-off publications include Parry et al (2008 – not accessed), Pithouse and Parry (2005 – not accessed) and Pithouse and Crowley (2007 – not accessed). These studies have concluded that advocacy services are essentially based on care provision, and that complaints officers have a key role in mediating children's complaints which they are not always best placed to do.

Age Concern Cymru (2007b) identified similar issues in the provision of advocacy services for older people, with limited provision of services, many of which were under threat from lack of funding.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.9 Transport

The Welsh Assembly Government is responsible for policy on the road network in Wales, cycling and walking, and for the aspects of bus and rail travel. Powers over matters such as vehicle licensing, road safety, air, freight and the UK rail network remain with the UK government. The Transport (Wales) Act 2006 gives the Welsh Assembly Government powers to 'secure the provision of any public passenger transport service' which would not otherwise be met and specifically states that the Assembly is required to 'have regard to... the transport needs of the elderly or disabled' (Section 7).

The key Welsh Assembly Government policy statement is the Wales Transport Strategy, a draft of which was published for consultation in 2006 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006e) with the final version being published in April 2008 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008i). It is worth noting that although the draft Wales Transport Strategy included many worthy statements about meeting the transport needs of disabled people, it did not include disability or race equality impact assessments (Disability Rights Commission, 2006a). However, the final strategy does make more reference to disability.

In addition there are individual strategies for road safety, cycling and walking, and other transport issues, which are summarised in *Smarter Choices: Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007h). A flagship policy has been the concessionary fares scheme, which provides free bus travel, throughout Wales, at any time, for men and women aged over 60 and for people with certain disabilities. There is a plethora of different transport funding and programmes, including safe routes to schools, community transport and the local transport grant.

Local authorities are key organisations in the delivery of transport in Wales as they have statutory responsibilities in respect of roads, public transport, cycling and walking, as well as road safety, traffic management and other functions. They work together in four regional consortia to produce regional transport plans, the preparation of which involves undertaking research on local transport needs.

Background

There is surprisingly little research or evaluation literature specifically on transport and equality issues in Wales despite a relatively extensive UK/GB literature. A recent 'engagement exercise', which involved six workshops with people from groups covered by the six 'equality strands', found that public transport was one of the top five issues raised (Tribal, 2008a). There was a lack of confidence in the public transport system which was a subject that attendees discussed at length during several of the engagement events. This applied to transport in both rural and urban areas. In particular, there is a perceived need for consistent accessibility, improved availability and affordability. Blackaby et al (2006a) found that access to private transport appears to be an important factor in willingness to commute, a feature which they comment presumably reflects the increased flexibility afforded by a motor vehicle relative to public transport.

In all the research, the question of access to public transport emerges as a key feature, not least because of low levels of car ownership or access to a car amongst certain groups in society. Public transport is a particular issue in rural areas. In a survey undertaken in 2004 (White et al, 2007), 11 per cent of households in rural Wales did not own or have the use of a motor vehicle. Such households tend to have a lower income than average. White et al (2007) also found that despite high levels of car ownership within rural households, not all adults have regular access to private transport. The same study found that 13 per cent of respondents use a bus for a local journey at least once a week, although almost three-quarters never travelled by bus. Rural residents with a car were more likely to have a negative view of bus services than those without a car – 80 per cent of carless respondents said they were very or fairly satisfied.

Race

According to the Welsh Assembly Government (Lee, 2006b), there are few data available on transport and ethnic origin. These show that car and van availability is lowest amongst Black households where the HRP is from the Black ethnic group and highest amongst Asian households. Asian households were more likely to have access to two or more vans or cars (32 per cent of households) and Black households least likely to have such access (17 per cent). Within the Asian group, 40 per cent of Indian households had access to two or more cars, compared with just 15 per cent of Bangladeshi households (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a). Although data are available on travel to work by ethnic origin, no analysis has been identified. Evidence on

transport and ethnicity cited in Welsh Consumer Council (2004) is in fact UK-wide.

Gender

There is a larger literature on transport and gender. Data suggest that in 2005/06, women were less likely to hold a full car driving licence than men (64 per cent compared with 82 per cent of men) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008j). Partly for this reason, men are much more likely than women to be involved in a road accident, for all severity types of injuries (Lee, 2006b). Although the numbers of injuries have fallen for both genders over the last decade, the ratio of males to females who are injured has remained about the same (Lee, 2006b). The larger number of male driving licence holders also contributes to the fact that the vast majority (85 per cent) of motoring offences that are dealt with by Magistrates' Courts are committed by men although the types of offence committed by men and women are the same (Lee, 2006b).

There are marked differences in women and men's travel behaviour. Hamilton et al (2005) comment that the most common reason for men to travel is business or commuting whereas for women it is shopping. Men also have longer journeys to work than women.

In terms of access to private transport, women – particularly older women – have less access to a car than men: nearly eight out of 10 men compared with nearly six out of 10 women drove and had daily access to a car in 2004 (Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005). This partly reflects the fact that, as noted above, more men than women hold full driving licences. Men make a much higher proportion of their journeys as car or van drivers than women, whilst women make a much higher proportion of journeys as a car passenger than men (Hamilton et al, 2005). Women are more likely than men to say they have no choice but to travel the way they do, not least because more than half of women do not have someone on whom they can rely for lifts (Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005).

Hamilton et al (2005), using 2002–03 data, point out that men are more likely than women to drive a car for journeys to work. More recent data from the Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008k) confirms this pattern, with 83 per cent of male respondents using a car or van to travel to work compared with only 76 per cent of female respondents. Moles (2007) has found similar patterns of travel in rural Wales. Part of the reason for the

difference between men and women's travel to work behaviour may lie in different working hours; thus Welsh Assembly Government (2008k) notes that part-timers of both genders are much less likely to drive to work than full-timers and that the proportion of women and men full-timers using a car to travel to work is very similar.

In terms of travel by bus, the Welsh Assembly Government (2008k) notes that in every age group, more female respondents have used the bus in the last seven days than males (25 per cent, compared with 18 per cent). The largest difference can be seen in the 60 and over group, where the proportion of females (36 per cent) travelling by bus exceeded the proportion of males (24 per cent) by 12 percentage points. These findings are echoed in an analysis of a series of transport surveys undertaken since 1990 (Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005). This study found a similar pattern of bus use by women and men, with 56 per cent of women being frequent or occasional users of buses, compared with just 39 per cent of men. The gender pattern was broadly the same over the decade, but significant shifts are taking place in terms of age, with fewer young men and particularly young women using buses than in 1990. However, the use of buses by older men is increasing as is that by older women – who are already a significant group of bus users.

As Hamilton et al (2005) point out, most research on transport and gender focuses on men and women's travel behaviour, and not on their views, experiences or needs. The Welsh Consumer Council and EOC (2005) study does consider whether the bus service met respondents' needs, their preferred mode of travel, and questions of service quality (including safety). Women bus users are more likely than male bus users to say they would prefer to travel by car. This was particularly the case for younger female bus users. Women are more likely than men to report feeling unsafe about using the bus at night, and their satisfaction with the quality of bus services has decreased more markedly than men's. The Citizen Survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g: Part 5) also found an association between being female and feeling dissatisfied with the bus service.

An analysis of the Living in Wales survey highlights gender differences in walking and cycling. A higher proportion of male respondents (70 per cent) than female respondents (62 per cent) walked more than 1km in the last seven days, and the gender gap increases with age (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008l). Women are twice as likely as men to walk to work, partly

because part-timers are more likely to walk than full-timers and many more women work part-time. Men are more likely than women to have cycled in the last seven days and are more likely than women to cycle to work.

Moles (2007) concludes that in rural Wales, the problem of getting to work impedes women more than men (10 per cent of women reported this, compared with 6 per cent of men), with women in hamlets or open countryside finding transport more of a problem than those residing in towns or villages. Blackaby et al (2006a) also found that women were slightly more likely to report public transport difficulties as a barrier to employment.

Disability

Disabled people or people with a long-term illness are less likely than other people to have the use of a car – six out of 10 do so, compared with eight out of 10 other people – and they are less than half as likely to have the use of more than one car (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a). Employed disabled people are nearly twice as likely not to have the use of a car as other people. The gap between disabled and non-disabled access to a car is greater in Wales than in other parts of the UK (Jolly et al, 2006). Notwithstanding this, disabled people in Wales are much more likely to travel to work by car as both a driver and a passenger than in other parts of the UK.

More than 60 per cent of disabled people in Wales reported difficulties in getting on and off the bus in 2002–4, and more than 30 per cent of disabled people reported difficulties getting to and from their seat. Both these figures were amongst the highest in the UK. Yet there was no sign of improvement over the preceding years in the difficulty reported getting to and from a bus seat, unlike in other parts of the UK. Eleven per cent of respondents in the Living in Wales survey said that they did not use public transport because of health reasons (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008k). Similarly, the report by the Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission (2005) found that 10 per cent of men aged 45 and over and 14 per cent of women aged 45 and over said they had a physical problem or disability that made using the bus difficult. Living in Wales survey data also showed a strong association between having a limiting long-term illness and difficulty getting to and from the nearest bus stop (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g). Windle and Burholt (2001) cite evidence that within Gwynedd, bus use increased by 22 per cent in two years as a result of introducing a low floor bus service.

Jolly et al (2005) reviewed accessibility at the five stations in Wales controlled by Arriva Trains Wales and found it to be relatively good (although of course it should be noted that the great majority of stations in Wales were not included in the study). The same survey also found high levels of dissatisfaction in Wales with information about public transport.

In terms of walking, having a disability or limiting long-term illness greatly reduces the likelihood of having walked more than one kilometre in the last seven days. Just 42 per cent of males and 29 per cent of females with a disability or limiting long-term illness had walked this distance compared with 78 per cent of non-disabled males and 72 per cent of non-disabled females (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008l).

Age

There is a reasonable amount of literature on age and transport. The review of literature on transport and older people by Windle and Burholt (2001) draws primarily on GB-wide evidence, with Wales-specific content being mainly about Welsh Assembly Government policies, most of which have been superseded.

According to the 2001 Census of Population, a much higher proportion of pensioner households do not have access to a car than all households – almost half of pensioner households (48 per cent) do not have a car compared with 26 per cent of all households (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003d). Older people in rural areas are also found to lack access to a car – respondents to a survey in 2004 aged 65 or over were twice as likely as younger people to have no access to a car (White et al, 2007). Perhaps because fewer older people drive, they are less likely to be a casualty in a road accident than younger people – 11 per cent of casualties were aged over 60 (Lee, 2006b).

People aged over 60 are much more likely to have used the bus in the last seven days than other age groups (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008m). Twenty-four per cent of men and 36 per cent of women had done so. Older people on low incomes (less than £11,440 a year) were especially reliant on buses with 41 per cent using them in the last 7 days compared with just 27 per cent of those earning £11,440– £39,999 a year and 17 per cent of those earning more than £40,000 a year. The report by the Welsh Consumer Council and the EOC (2005) notes that older men (traditionally the least likely to be bus passengers) are becoming slightly more likely to use the bus and

there is also evidence of a recent increase in bus use by older women, a group that were already substantial users of local bus services. The growth in usage may be attributable to the Welsh Assembly Government's concessionary fares scheme. White et al (2007) found that in rural areas, older people were also more likely to use the bus than younger people. Community transport is often promoted as an alternative to commercial bus services in rural areas, but Burholt et al (2007) found in their survey in Gwynedd that only one in 10 of respondents had ever used it.

Overall, older people are more likely to be satisfied with their bus service than younger people; 82 per cent were satisfied (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008m). People of pensionable age were less likely to want to complain about bus services than younger people; only 11 per cent wanted to do so compared with 18 per cent of younger people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g). Older people (aged 45 or over) were found to be more satisfied than younger people with bus services for going shopping and getting to hospital, but were less satisfied with provision for evening and weekend travel; less than 9 per cent said that services met their needs (Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005).

Nevertheless, Burholt et al's (2007) study of older people in Gwynedd demonstrated the difficulties in using public transport that they experience, e.g. in getting on or off the bus, the bus moving off before they had taken their seats, the lack of facilities at bus stops and the poor location of bus stops.

There is very little literature about travel and younger people. The 2001 Census shows that 17 per cent of households with dependent children had no access to a car or van, and 48 per cent of lone parent households had no access to a car or van (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003d). Welsh Assembly Government (2008l, 2008n) provide information about the travel of children to school. Save the Children Fund (Crowley and Vulliamy, 2007) listened to the views of 100 children in Wales and found that the high cost of public transport restricts what poor children and young people can take part in and can leave children and young people at risk when walking through 'dangerous' areas.

Younger people aged under 30 are more likely to use the bus than people aged 30–59. Twenty-two per cent of males and 28 per cent of females were found to have done so in the last seven days in Welsh Assembly Government (2008m). Young people on low incomes (less than £11,440 a year) were

especially reliant on buses with 42 per cent using them in the last seven days compared with just 18 per cent of those earning £11,441– £39,999 a year and 6 per cent of those earning more than £40,000 a year. Bus usage amongst younger people, however, appears to be decreasing (Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005).

Younger people were slightly more satisfied with the bus service than older non-pensioners, although more than a quarter of under 30s in rural areas were dissatisfied compared with 11 per cent in urban areas (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008m). Similarly, younger people are slightly more satisfied with bus services for evening and weekend travel but young women in particular have concerns about safety travelling at night (Welsh Consumer Council/Equal Opportunities Commission, 2005). The same study found that young women had high levels of dissatisfaction about access to buses e.g. for pushchairs. Younger people were much more likely to have used the train than other age groups (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008k).

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

2.10 Conclusions and Research Gaps

There are significant gaps in research across the whole subject of poverty and social exclusion, which is surprising given the likely close association between poverty and inequality.

Part of the reason is that poverty is defined by households' rather than individuals' income, so that analysis tends to focus on household rather than individual characteristics. Similarly, particular aspects of social exclusion such as fuel poverty are also seen as a household phenomenon with little further analysis. The other reason for the lack of evidence appears to be the lack of data. The key source of data is the Family Resources Survey, but its sample size in Wales is too small to allow anything more than the most basic breakdown – it does not even permit an analysis by gender, ethnicity or type of disability. The other surveys we have identified which have collected data on income have also been relatively small scale, have had high refusal rates and do not collect data in a way which allows poverty to be measured. The consequence of the lack of data is that very little is known about incomes

across all different social groups, even though it is such a key determinant of quality of life.

The evidence base on social exclusion is more mixed. Some subjects, such as digital exclusion, are surprisingly well covered, as are some aspects of social exclusion experienced by older people. However, nothing is known about social exclusion and sexual orientation or religion, and very little about gender and disability. This is a major gap in evidence that needs to be addressed.

3. EMPLOYMENT AND THE LABOUR MARKET

This chapter of the report reviews research literature on employment and the labour market in Wales. It includes research on economic activity and inactivity, unemployment, self-employment, pay, industrial and occupational segregation, flexible working, fair treatment at work, and trades union activity.

3.1 Policy Context

Responsibility for employment and the labour market in Wales is divided between the Welsh Assembly Government and the UK Government. The UK government has responsibility for macro-economic matters and taxation, for all aspects of employment legislation and for welfare benefits and return to work programmes. The Welsh Assembly Government has powers to promote the development of the economy in Wales, through supporting business growth e.g. through advice and grant aid, procurement, and marketing, and through providing advice and encouraging good practice in employment. These responsibilities are now exercised directly by the Welsh Assembly Government following the absorption of three Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (ASBs) – the Welsh Development Agency (WDA), the Wales Tourist Board (WTB) and the National Council for Education and Training for Wales (ELWa) – into the body of the Welsh Assembly Government. Local authorities and local enterprise agencies may also promote the economy and employment in their areas. ACAS and the Health and Safety Executive have offices in Wales with some autonomy over their affairs. However, Employment Tribunals are an England and Wales-wide service.

The principal policy documents covering the economy and employment in Wales are *Wales: A Vibrant Economy* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005f) and *Skills that Work for Wales*, the latest version of which was issued for consultation in 2008 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008o). The WDA had previously delivered an Entrepreneurship Action Plan which included several measures to promote entrepreneurship amongst disadvantaged groups (via the Potentia element of the Plan). In addition, West Wales and the Valleys have been covered by an EU Objective 1 programme for 2000–06 and by a convergence programme for 2007–13.

3.2 Economic Activity and Inactivity

Policy Context

The question of economic activity and inactivity in Wales has attracted a great deal of attention in recent years, primarily because the rates of economic activity in Wales are well below those of the rest of Britain and are a key factor in Wales's below average Gross Value Added. However, most analysis and debate has focused on the overall rates of inactivity and have not considered the experiences of different groups within the labour market.

Responsibility for economic inactivity is shared between the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Welsh Assembly Government. The policy of the latter is set out in two documents (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005f, 2008o). In addition, the Government has supplemented the DWP's various welfare to work programmes with its own Want2Work programme and Job Match programme which operate in particular parts of Wales. A new £70m programme, Genesis Cymru Wales 2, was launched in late 2008. This aims to help 20,000 people into jobs, particularly through help for parents.

Race

A number of studies analyse 2001 Census of Population data on economic activity and find that the overall economic activity rate for almost all ethnic minority groups in Wales is lower than for White groups (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a; Sullivan et al, 2005). Analysis by the Welsh Assembly Government (2006f) of data from the 2005 LFS similarly concludes that the inactivity rates for White and ethnic minority groups, both including and excluding students, were higher in Wales than the UK average and that inactivity rates for ethnic minorities were more than 50 per cent higher than for the White population, in both Wales and the UK.

Both the Welsh Assembly Government (2004a) and the Sullivan et al (2005) studies note two key caveats to this overall conclusion. First, they point out that there is marked variation in the economic activity rates of different ethnic minority groups in Wales. For example, people of Bangladeshi origin are least likely to be economically active, with just over half (53 per cent) in employment or unemployed, whilst people of Chinese origin have an activity rate of more than 80 per cent (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a). By way of comparison, the economic activity rate for White groups is 76 per cent.

The second caveat is that economic activity rates vary very substantially by gender. According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2004a), differences between men and women play a large part in accounting for the different activity rates of ethnic minority groups. For example, the economic activity rate for Bangladeshi men (83 per cent) was slightly higher than the average for the male population as a whole (82 per cent) – it is the exceptionally low economic activity rate of Bangladeshi women (just 22 per cent) which accounts for the low overall figure. The difference in the overall economic activity rate of Black Caribbeans and Black Africans (74 per cent and 63 per cent respectively) is also attributable to differences in women's activity rates. However, gender differences only partly explain the lower overall activity rate of the Black or Black British group as a whole, which was noticeably below the figures for the White group. Sullivan et al (2005) reach a similar conclusion.

The Welsh Assembly Government (2004a) report makes clear that there are, in addition, differences in economic activity according to age, with younger Bangladeshi and Pakistani women being much more likely to be in employment than older women of that origin. Sullivan et al (2005) note that the concentration of ethnic minority groups into major towns and cities and higher levels of economic inactivity within those groups mean that, in some parts of Wales, ethnic minorities account for a higher proportion of the workless population – one in 10 economically inactive people in Cardiff is from an ethnic minority. Blackaby et al (2006b) note that ethnic minority groups are more likely to be in employment in the so-called 'Celtic Fringe', which includes Wales, than in the south east of England, whereas the opposite is the case for White groups.

A large part of the difference in economic activity rates between men and women from ethnic minority groups is because women look after the family or home (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a). This is particularly the case for Asian or Asian British (excluding those from the Indian group), Black African and the Other Ethnic groups.

Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Gypsy Travellers

Evidence suggests that people born outside the UK (who are not necessarily migrant workers) are slightly more likely to be economically inactive than UK born people, with an economic inactivity rate of 28.6 compared with 26.8 (Haque, 2002). Dustmann et al (2008) confirm this finding. Other research suggests that the availability of jobs is a key reason for migrants coming to live in an area, with a close relationship between the levels of in and out

migration in an area and its levels of employment and unemployment (Drinkwater and Blackaby, 2004). However, since this study, migration from EU A8 countries has increased markedly, with some areas of low labour demand also recording relatively high levels of in-migration of workers from EU A8 countries. A study commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government (Experian, n.d.) concluded that migrant workers were 'plugging gaps in the market in areas of low labour demand, rather than supplanting local workers', because of problems with local labour supply.

According to a survey of 363 refugees in 2005, 78 per cent of refugees had been in employment in their country of origin but only 36 per cent were employed in Wales (Welsh Refugee Council, 2005). A series of focus group discussions organised by Cardiff University School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies for the Welsh Refugee Council found that only a quarter of participants in the groups were employed, although the numbers were not specified (Threadgold and Clifford, 2005). A similarly low proportion of refugees and asylum seekers were found to be without work in a study undertaken by the Wales Council for Voluntary Action, albeit in a sample of 57 (Dooner, 2005).

The top five barriers to finding work identified (Welsh Refugee Council, 2005) were lack of language skills and computing skills; difficulties in applying for jobs and attending interviews; lack of recognition of overseas qualifications; searching for job vacancies; and lack of references. Unemployment whilst seeking asylum and the consequent gaps on C.V's and lack of references was highlighted in the Threadgold and Clifford (2005) study.

Gypsy Travellers

No relevant literature was identified.

Gender

Economic activity rates for men and women have long reflected the traditional domestic division of labour. Since the 1960s, women in Wales have entered the workforce in increasing numbers whilst the proportion of men in employment has decreased. This trend attracted considerable attention in the 1980s and 1990s (e.g. Rees, 1999) but less so in recent years.

Notwithstanding the increase in economic activity, women's inactivity rates remain higher than men's, although the gap between them has more than halved since 1984. In Spring 2006, the figures were respectively 27.9 per cent

and 21.5 per cent (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006f). There is a gap between women and men in all age groups, but it is at its highest in the 25–29, 30–34 and 35–39 age groups.

The main reason given by men and women for being out of the labour market varies. For women aged 25–49, the prime reason is looking after the family or home, whereas this is the reason for only a tiny proportion of male inactivity. In contrast, the main reason that men over the age of 25 are out of the labour market is long-term sickness. Blackaby et al's (2006a) study of economic inactivity in Wales, based on a survey in economic inactivity 'hotspots', found similar reasons given by respondents for being economically inactive. This study also found that both sexes had been inactive for a long period – 50 per cent of men and 44 per cent of women had not worked for 10 years or more, and 59 per cent of men and 45 per cent of women felt that they would never work again. Twenty-one per cent of women, compared with 9 per cent of men, had never had a paid job.

Blackaby et al (2006a) also included the views of economically inactive men and women about finding work and found that women were generally more optimistic than men about their job prospects, even though they were prepared to travel shorter distances and much less willing to consider moving home. Women were more likely than men to identify transport and childcare arrangements as barriers to returning to work. The study provides considerable further detail on the previous labour market experiences, attitudes and aspirations of men and women who are economically inactive that cannot be covered here.

Parents

Women with dependent children are much less likely to be in employment than men with dependent children (68 per cent compared with 87 per cent). The employment rate is lowest for women with a youngest child aged 0–4, and steadily rises as the age of the youngest child gets older, up to age 16. Nevertheless two-thirds (68 per cent) of all mothers of dependent children and 55 per cent of mothers of under fives are in employment (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2006a).

The EOC's report on parental care (Dex and Ward, 2007) found that mothers in Wales were as likely to work during pregnancy as in England (67 per cent did so) and that they were as likely to take maternity leave (93 per cent did

so). In Wales, 36 per cent of women took less than three months maternity leave and a further 43 per cent took between four and six months.

Kenway et al (2005) found that caring responsibilities for both adults and children are the single biggest barrier to work for women (around 30 per cent cited it). This figure excludes those not working because they want to look after their children. They point out that the proportion of women stating childcare as a barrier to work would probably have been greater if the sample had included only those women with children. Chwarae Teg is undertaking research on the impact of caring for women 'at the top' but at the time of writing, it had not yet been completed.

Childcare is a particular barrier to work among lone parents. Around 40 per cent of lone parents working less than 16 hours per week said that problems of finding or affording childcare were preventing them from working, or working more (Kenway et al, 2005). Seventy per cent of parents in Wales, whether by choice or not, rely on informal arrangements for childcare, especially grandparents (Bevan Foundation, 2005). The number of children per registered childcare place is much higher in the Valleys than in other parts of Wales. For example, there are 19 children for every childcare place in Blaenau Gwent compared with three for every place in Denbighshire. Most authorities in Wales have fewer than six children per place. Even where childcare places are available, costs can be prohibitive – even when a parent receives the maximum amount of Working Tax Credit, he or she is likely to pay around £40 per week for a nursery place (Kenway et al, 2005).

Carers

A study carried out in Anglesey and Swansea shows that men and women with 'heavy' caring responsibilities have lower economic activity rates than non-carers (Yeandle et al, 2007b). Nevertheless, even among men providing 50+ hours of care per week ('heavy-end' carers), well over a third (37 per cent) are combining caring with full-time employment and only a small proportion (4 per cent) work part time. Among female carers, over a third of 'heavy end' carers are also in paid employment; 15 per cent work full time and 18 per cent work part time.

Yeandle et al (2007a) found that working carers were more likely to have lower skilled jobs and hence lower pay than non-carers. Their study, and one by Winckler (2007b) of Neath Port Talbot, documents the considerable

challenges faced by carers in employment. Diane Seddon is currently studying the care needs of working carers, and is due to report in 2010.⁶

Disability

LFS data for 2005 suggest that the economic inactivity rate for disabled people in Wales was around three times as high as for non-disabled people, at 55 per cent compared with 16 per cent (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006f). The gap has widened since 2003, when it was twice as high (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a), and the rate is higher in Wales than the UK average (47 per cent). The Disability Rights Commission (2006b, 2007) quotes similar figures. Looked at another way, the Living in Wales survey found that 91 per cent of respondents whose employment status was recorded as being disabled or long-term sick stated that they had a long-term illness, disability or infirmity, whereas only 5 per cent of people working full-time had a long-term illness, disability or infirmity (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005a).

Poor health is the single most frequently stated barrier to work by both men and women with a half of men and a quarter of women giving this as a reason (Kenway et al, 2005).

Jones et al's (2004) study of gender and disability in Wales, using earlier Labour Force data, also finds that disabled men and disabled women are less likely to be employed than non-disabled men and non-disabled women, and that their employment rate is substantially lower in Wales than Britain as a whole. The study also found that the employment rate was even lower for disabled people with more than one health condition, and for those with mental health conditions. Another study by the same authors using data from the Welsh Health Survey 1998 (which provides a more detailed breakdown of health status) confirms the gap in employment rate between disabled and non-disabled people, and also shows the variation in employment rates for different health conditions (Jones and Latreille, 2007). People with back pain have the highest employment rate (61.6 per cent) followed by those with cancer (55.6 per cent employment rate). People with mental health conditions have the lowest employment rate (41.5 per cent), while those with diabetes fare only slightly better with an employment rate of 42.6 per cent. People with mental health conditions are less likely to have a permanent job than those

⁶ See http://www.awardresearch.org.uk/profiles_dianeseddon.html for details (accessed 2 July 2008).

with other health problems (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a). Blackaby et al's (2006a) study of people who were economically inactive similarly found high levels of ill health and disability amongst the sample, with ill health rising with age. A survey of employers across the UK found that 58 per cent in Wales had employees defined as disabled under the Disability Discrimination Act, the lowest proportion of any GB area (Goldstone with Meager, 2002).

The likelihood of disabled people being in employment varies within Wales. Jones and Latreille (2007) find a broad correspondence between health status and employment rates across authorities, whilst Jones et al (2004) conclude that there is no local authority effect on the employment rate of disabled men although there is for disabled women. The likelihood of employment also varies with qualifications – Jones et al (2004) find that qualifications, especially higher level qualifications, are associated with greater employment participation. Whilst this is true of the population as a whole the effect is especially marked for disabled people.

Disability is usually self-reported in employment data, and it is sometimes suggested that this results in 'justification bias'. Jones and Latreille (2007) compare individuals' scores on measures of physical and mental health with their self-reported health. They found a high level of consistency between the different measurements. However about 5 per cent of people of working age who are not working and report themselves as disabled have health scores similar to non-disabled persons, while the scores of a further 15 per cent suggest their impairments are 'mild'.

Age

According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2008c), two out of three people over the age of 50 were economically active in 2007, compared with more than three out of four of the under 50s. The proportion of the over 50s in Wales who are economically inactive is 7 percentage points higher than in the UK. However, the employment rate for over-50s in Wales has risen substantially over the last 15 years, with the increase being almost twice as great as that for the under-50s.

A study by the Wales Management Council (2007) uses the same data set for earlier years and confirms that older workers (those aged over 50) are very substantially less likely to work than those under 50, with there being a particularly marked drop in employment at the age of 55.

The economic activity rate of younger people is affected by participation in post-16 education. When students are excluded from the data, economic activity rates are fairly uniform across age groups up to the age of 50 with variation of just 2.6 percentage points between the most and least active age groups. The economic activity rates for women are lower than those for men in all age groups except 16–19-year-olds, with the gap being highest in the 25–29, 30–34 and 35–39 age groups (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006f).

Sexual Orientation

Government surveys such as the LFS and the Census of Population currently do not collect information about sexual orientation. The little research that is available on lesbian and gay men in employment in Wales relies on small-scale surveys that are not statistically representative. Stonewall Cymru's 2006 survey of 403 respondents (Williams and Robinson, 2007) found that 78 per cent were in employment, compared with 71 per cent of the Welsh population as a whole in 2005. Of the 22 per cent who were not in employment, the main reasons noted by respondents for not currently looking for work were that they were students (38 per cent), long-term sick or disabled (21 per cent), or waiting for the results of a job application (12 per cent). Stonewall Cymru's 2003 survey (Robinson and Williams, 2003) did not include comparable figures.

Religion

The Welsh Assembly Government's 'social audit' of Wales's Muslim community is the only analysis of employment and religion that we have been able to identify (Lee, 2007). This statistical overview shows that Muslim people in Wales are much less likely to be economically active than the population as a whole – 59 per cent compared with 75 per cent of 16–74-year-olds. The main reason for Muslims' low levels of economic activity is the very low level of participation by Muslim women. Just 33 per cent of Muslim women are economically active – less than half the female population. Muslim men aged 25–74 are as likely to be economically active as all men in Wales, although those aged 16–24 have lower activity rates.

The main reason that Muslim women are not economically active is that they are looking after the home or family; this was cited by 44 per cent of 25–74-year-olds. Just 15 per cent of all females gave this reason. Sickness and disability is less commonly reported as a reason for inactivity by Muslims than the whole population whilst unexplained inactivity is more common, especially for women.

3.3 Unemployment

Unemployment is a complex and not particularly reliable measure of people who want a job but do not have one, and can be measured in many different ways. For example Kenway et al (2005) find that only two-fifths of those who want but lack a job are officially counted as unemployed. Bearing in mind these issues, it is nevertheless a useful measure of labour market activity.

Race

According to the 2001 Census of Population, unemployment amongst ethnic minority groups is twice the rate of White groups (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a). The same data show that female unemployment rates were substantially higher among ethnic minority groups than amongst White groups, with the exception of the Chinese group and those aged 16–24 in the Other Ethnic group. However, female ethnic minority unemployment was generally slightly lower than that of ethnic minority males. Similarly, male unemployment rates were also substantially higher amongst ethnic minority groups than amongst White groups, except for men from Indian, Bangladeshi and Chinese groups aged 25–74. Amongst young people aged 16–24, rates were exceptionally high, reaching 40 per cent for Black African men and standing at over 25 per cent for males from all Mixed groups, Pakistani, Other Asian, Black Caribbean and other groups.

Gender

Unemployment amongst women has received relatively little recent attention – for example, it does not feature in the EOC's various statistical summaries. Whilst not specifically on unemployed women, Charles and James (2003, 2005) interviewed 55 women and 56 men in South Wales. They found gender differences in the experiences and perceptions of job insecurity, with women feeling less insecure than men. They attribute this to the availability of women's jobs in the local labour market and women's flexibility, as well as men's beliefs about being a breadwinner.

Disability

According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2003a), unemployment amongst disabled people was slightly lower than amongst all people in 2001, at 4.0 per cent compared with 4.3 per cent. However, more recent LFS data quoted by the Disability Rights Commission shows unemployment to be higher amongst disabled people in Wales than amongst non-disabled people at 9.8 per cent compared with 5.2 per cent (Disability Rights Commission, 2007).

The Living in Wales survey in 2004, using a slightly different definition, found even higher overall rates of unemployment amongst disabled people. 9.2 per cent of people with a limiting long-term illness, disability or infirmity were registered unemployed and a further 6.8 per cent were looking for work, but were not registered unemployed (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005a). Guide Dogs for the Blind et al (2007) point out that 75 per cent of people with sight problems of working age are unemployed.

Using a slightly different measure again, Kenway et al (2005) state that more than a fifth of disabled people want, but lack, work. By 2005/06, the 'lacking but wanting work rate' for disabled people still exceeded 20 per cent and the more recent, short-term trends are much less favourable with annual rates rising since 2004 (Kenway and Palmer, 2007b).

Age

In Wales, the unemployment rate for people aged over 50 in 2007 was less than half that for the under 50s at 2.6 per cent compared with 6.5 per cent (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008c). Kenway and Palmer (2007b) note that young adult unemployment has decreased, from 14 per cent in the late 1990s to around 10 per cent by 2004/05, close to the UK average, but nevertheless, it was more than twice the 4 per cent rate of adults aged over 25.

Sexual Orientation

One fifth of LGB people in the Stonewall Cymru survey were unemployed (Williams and Robinson, 2007). The definition used in the survey included people who were students or long-term sick or disabled who would, in other surveys, be classed as economically inactive. Twelve per cent said that they were waiting for the results of a job application. The report concluded that LGB status did not seem to be a likely explanation for their unemployment.

Religion

Unemployment rates in Wales in 2001 were generally higher for Muslim men and women than for the overall population (Lee, 2007). Female Muslims had a higher unemployment rate than male Muslims, and unemployment was higher amongst young people than older people.

3.4 Self-employment

There has been a great deal of activity in Wales over recent years to promote self-employment but much of the research literature does not identify various groups within the population in Wales. One exception is the Cyfenter project,

an EU-funded programme led by the Welsh Development Agency and the Welsh Assembly Government. Phase 1 of this project included postal or telephone interviews with nearly 500 people as well as one to one and focus group interviews (including one with refugees). Phase 2 included a survey of 2,678 business owners. The focus of both phases was 'under-represented groups' and so the data are analysed for each of the following groups: women, sole parents, ethnic minority groups (including Irish, European), Welsh speakers, disabled people, younger and older people. The project has generated 39 different reports on different aspects of the results.⁷ A few of the key points from this research and from other studies are summarised here.

Race

The main source of data on ethnic minority groups once again is the 2001 Census of Population. This shows that overall people from ethnic minority groups in Wales are more likely to be self-employed than the White population. Men in most ethnic minority groups in Wales are over twice as likely to be self-employed as their female counterparts (Sullivan et al, 2005).

The Welsh Assembly Government's (2004a) analysis of the same data shows that self-employment amongst ethnic minority groups is noticeably higher in the Asian or Asian British and Chinese groups compared with the population as a whole. The same source also offers an analysis of self-employment by gender and broad age group. There are marked variations in the type of businesses owned by different groups: sales and distribution, hotel and restaurant work accounted for two-thirds of the Chinese, over half of the Indians and two-fifths of the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis who are self-employed (Sullivan et al, 2005).

The only other study of self-employed ethnic minority groups is that undertaken by the Cyfenter Development Partnership (2006a). This highlighted that ethnic minority owned businesses were more likely to be new (40 per cent had businesses which had been trading for under a year, compared with 21 per cent of non-ethnic minority businesses), and based in urban areas. Perhaps surprisingly, ethnic minority business owners seemed to be more aware than other business owners of grants that were available, but a substantially lower proportion had actually secured a grant. Ethnic minority businesses thought they were more likely to employ more staff in the future than non-ethnic minority businesses.

⁷ These are available at: <http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/departments/dein/Entres/?lang=en>

Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Gypsy Travellers

Relatively little is known about self-employment amongst these groups although the following features can be identified:

- Refugees report considerable difficulties accessing bank accounts and obtaining credit, and felt that there was insufficient advice and support available to help people in their circumstances to set up a business. They were also concerned about reclaiming benefits if their business failed (Cyfenter Partnership, 2006b).
- Only 1.4 per cent of migrant workers in Wales are self-employed compared with 13 per cent of the rest of the workforce (Cam, 2007).
- Gypsy Travellers have traditionally relied on self-employment in Wales as elsewhere (Niner, 2006a).

Gender

According to the Annual Population Survey, women are much less likely to be self-employed than men. In 2007, 17.8 per cent of males in Wales aged 16 and over were self-employed compared with 7.1 per cent of females (StatsWales, 2008: Table 003337). Self-employment is especially common amongst males in rural areas – in Ceredigion, Powys and Gwynedd, the male self-employment rates were 34.8, 28.8 and 24.6 per cent respectively. Women's self-employment was also highest in rural areas (15.7 per cent in Ceredigion and 12.5 per cent in Powys), although much lower than men's.

The Global Enterprise Monitor (Jones-Evans et al, 2008) uses a different measure of entrepreneurship, but it too finds that there is a substantial gender gap in terms of participation and success of new businesses. It confirms that men are around twice as likely to be entrepreneurially active as women. Just under a third of all early stage entrepreneurs in Wales are women. Women's early entrepreneurial activity has fallen since 2005, meaning the gap with men is even wider.

Chwarae Teg (2006) has undertaken research as part of the *Women's Enterprise Wales* project which demonstrated that women tended to choose self-employment for personal fulfilment, challenge and ambition, and to balance work and caring responsibilities, whereas men were mostly motivated by money, or because of redundancy. The same study suggested that the

factors that deterred and hindered women from starting their own businesses in Wales included: accessing finance, the attitudes of others, inappropriate and irrelevant training programmes, shortages of suitable business premises, and a lack of confidence.

The Cyfenter project interviewed 717 women in the course of its research (Cyfenter Partnership, 2006c). It found that over a third of women who had started a business had been trading for between two and four years, a slightly higher proportion than for men. Popular business sectors for women include retail, health and social care, and business services. A higher proportion of women (16 per cent) than men (5 per cent) believed that they would need less than £1,000 to start their businesses, whilst 11 per cent of women, compared with 23 per cent of men, thought they would need between £10,000 and £50,000. Men were more confident than women that they would employ staff once in business. Slightly more women than men sought support for their businesses.

Disability

Disabled people are significantly more likely than the non-disabled to be self-employed (Jones and Latreille, 2007). However, statistics quoted by the Welsh Assembly Government (2003a) using the same source suggest that self-employment by people with a long-term illness is slightly lower than amongst the population as a whole. The reason for this different conclusion is not clear. Both studies find that the physical well-being of disabled people who are self-employed is lower than for those who work for an employer. Jones and Latreille (2007) conclude that this is consistent with the notion that self-employment is an important 'accommodating device', at least for those with physical impairments.

The Cyfenter project interviewed 150 disabled people in business (Cyfenter Development Partnership 2006d). It found that more disabled people had been in business for one to two years than non-disabled people (a third compared with a quarter). The project also found that disabled people are more likely to be working from home than any other group. Fewer disabled people about to start their business sought help to fund their business start-up than non-disabled people and more disabled than non-disabled people said the process of making a grant application was difficult.

Age

According to the Wales Management Council (2007), self-employment is more common among older workers than among those under 50. In Spring 2004, 19 per cent of people 50 and over were self-employed, compared with 14 per cent of people aged 25–49. Self-employment was also more common in older men (26 per cent) than older women (11 per cent). A report on older workers (Smeaton and McKay, 2003) indicates that almost three out of 10 of those over state pension age who were working in Wales were self-employed. Both these figures are above the rate for England and Scotland.

Men in their 50s who were self-employed were much more likely than those who were employees to be still working 10 years later (Wales Management Council, 2007).

The Cyfenter Partnership research (2006e, 2006f) found that businesses run by over 50-year-olds were more likely to be well established than those run by under 50s, and that over 50-year-olds were much more likely to have had previous experience of running a business. Financially, people over 50 appear to be more self-reliant when starting up – over half had not sought external finance at pre-start stage compared with only 39 per cent of the under 50s. However older business starters were less confident about their future – only 34 per cent of the over 50s planned to employ more staff in the following year at the post start stage, compared with 53 per cent of under 50s.

Younger business starters had been trading for a shorter period than older people – nearly 40 per cent of young people had been trading in business for under a year compared with 18 per cent of over 30s. They were more likely to apply for financial help to start their business (49 per cent of under 30s had done so compared with 31 per cent of older people).

Sexual Orientation

Stonewall Cymru's survey (Williams and Robinson, 2007) found that 9 per cent of LGB respondents were self-employed – a slightly lower proportion than the population as a whole.

Religion

Self-employment is noticeably higher in Muslim groups in Wales compared with the population as a whole (Lee, 2007). In particular, 30 per cent of 25–74-year-old employed Muslim males were self-employed compared with 20 per cent of all males of this age. A similar pattern was evident amongst

Muslim women, where self-employment accounted for 20 per cent of employment for those aged 25–74 compared with an overall figure of 9 per cent (Lee, 2007).

3.5 Pay

Race

We have not identified any research on pay and earnings by race or ethnic group that is specific to Wales, although some studies, e.g. Sullivan et al (2005), point to the link between the occupations held by people from ethnic minority groups and the pay associated with those occupations.

The study commissioned by EOC Wales as part of its investigation into ethnic minority women found that the vast majority of women taking part in the research were not aware that women are paid less than men, and that ethnic minority employees are paid less than their White colleagues. They also did not believe that this could be the case (ICM Research, 2007).

Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Gypsy Travellers

Haque (2002) shows that foreign born workers in Wales earned more than UK born workers in 2001–4; however, Dustmann et al (2008) find that wages for White and foreign born workers in Wales are now the same, unlike the rest of the UK where White people earn more.

Cam (2007) estimates that migrant workers in Wales earn 17.7 per cent less than the rest of the workforce as measured by weekly earnings, and 21.7 per cent less when measured by hourly earnings. The gap between migrant workers and the rest of the workforce is larger in Wales than elsewhere in Britain. A further analysis suggests that more than 26 per cent of migrant workers earn the National Minimum Wage (NMW) or below, compared with about 14 per cent of the rest of the workforce in Wales. Other studies such as Winckler (2007a), Turunen et al (2005) and Hold et al (2005) have also found anecdotal evidence of migrant workers being paid below the legal minimum. Turunen et al, for example, found that almost half (44 per cent) of the 208 respondents in their sample were receiving the NMW. Less than the NMW was paid to 6 per cent of respondents. Deductions from pay, e.g. for accommodation, accommodation services such as cleaning, transport to and from work, transport to and from the country of origin, and charges made for Home Office registration, were also highlighted as issues. In some sectors, however, nationally determined rates of pay are applied to migrant as well as indigenous workers (Winckler, forthcoming).

Gender

This section looks at the question of low pay amongst women and men and at the gender pay gap.

In terms of low pay (defined as earnings of £6.50 an hour or less), in 2006/7 19 per cent of women working full-time were low paid compared with 13 per cent of men, although roughly the same proportion of women and men working part-time are low paid (Kenway and Palmer, 2007b). These figures are substantially lower than those for 2003/04 cited in Kenway et al (2005), when 25 per cent of women and 15 per cent of men working full-time were found to be low paid. Women then accounted for two-thirds of all low-paid workers. For both genders, the proportion of the workforce in Wales that is low paid is about a quarter higher than in England. Over the past decade, earnings near the bottom of the pay scale for both men and women have risen faster than the earnings of the average male worker.

Low pay is especially prevalent in the West of Wales, where 30 per cent are low paid, and in the North West too (25 per cent) (Kenway and Palmer, 2007b).

In terms of the gap in pay between women and men, data on the pay rates are collected by the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). Previously key data for Wales were published by the Welsh Assembly Government (2006g) and the former Equal Opportunities Commission (2006a), although the data for 2007 do not appear to have been summarised in this way. The latest figures from ASHE show that in 2007, the average (mean) weekly earnings of women and men working full-time in Wales were £417.6 and £510.7 respectively. This meant that women were earning 81.8 per cent of the average weekly earnings of men. Mean hourly earnings of women and men working full-time were £11.25 and £12.54 respectively; thus women were earning 89.7 per cent of the average hourly earnings of men.⁸

For both hourly and weekly earnings, the gender pay gap (which is calculated by determining women's average pay as a percentage of men's and then subtracting this from 100 per cent), was narrower in Wales in 2007 than in the UK as a whole. Thus for hourly earnings, the gender pay gap was 10.3 per cent in Wales and 17.2 per cent in the UK. The gender pay gap has also

⁸ See <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=15050>: Tables 5.1a and 5.6a. Data are for gross weekly earnings and for hourly earnings excluding overtime.

decreased since 1975 by 21 percentage points from 31.2 per cent (EOC, 2006b). Data collected in 2000 showed that over the course of a woman's life, the pay gap will cost her £250,000 and a further £140,000 if she has children (Cytgord Development Partnership, n.d.). Robinson (2003) looked at the initial impact of the NMW on the gender pay gap and concluded that it had not had a large impact in Wales or elsewhere in the UK, nor had it adversely affected women's employment.

The most comprehensive research on the gender pay gap in Wales to date has been undertaken by Blackaby et al (2001). This study examined the composition of the gender pay gap in Wales and compared it with other parts of the UK, using data from the New Earnings Survey, the predecessor of ASHE, (2000) and the LFS (1996–9). The report also suggested that whilst some of the pay gap could be explained by human capital factors, including qualifications and career patterns, a substantial proportion of the gender pay gap (nearly half) could be attributed to discrimination.

The report also identified some other important features of the gender pay gap including that:

- The gender pay gap is narrower when pay is covered by collective agreements.
- The gender pay gap is wider at the top end of the income distribution for both manual and non-manual workers, e.g. because of overtime or because of discriminatory promotion practices.
- The gender pay gap is narrower in the public sector than in the private sector.
- The gender pay gap is evident in all occupations.

Despite the pay differential, Jones and Sloane (2003) report that women in Wales are more satisfied with their pay than men.

Another EOC research report shed further light on the issue of the earnings of women and men. Morrell and Brown (2001) found that there were some marked differences in the approach in Wales towards pay systems, compared with other parts of Britain. Although organisations in Wales were generally confident that their pay systems were not biased, they did not appear to be

taking action. Indeed, employers in Wales were less likely than their counterparts in England to have reviewed pay awards, carried out job evaluations, monitored pay differentials or taken on board the recommendations in the EOC's Code of Practice on equal pay.

A survey of 95 organisations found that although some respondents had conducted informal equal pay audits or were currently undergoing informal audits, the majority of respondents had never conducted a formal equal pay audit (Cytgord Development Partnership, n.d.). The report goes on to analyse the responses by type of organisation, but the conclusions must be treated with some caution in view of the small number of responses in each of these categories, coupled with a lack of clarity about the questions asked and the responses.

Organisations in Wales have been encouraged to review and if necessary change their pay systems by the Close the Gap campaign, a joint initiative by the Welsh Assembly Government, Wales TUC and Equal Opportunities Commission Wales. The campaign aimed to raise awareness of the gender pay gap and give employers the practical tools to ensure their pay systems are fair. The evaluations of Phase 1 (Chaney, 2003b) and Phase 3 (Fitzgerald, 2007) showed the campaign to have been both effective and good value for money in raising the profile of equal pay, pushing it up organisational agendas, and encouraging partnership between different organisations. Although the third phase of the campaign brought together researchers on the business case for equal pay, the evidence presented was not specific to Wales (Winckler, 2006). Phase 4 of the campaign is now underway.

Disability

Jones et al (2004) identify that there is a substantial pay differential between disabled and non-disabled workers in Wales. Their analysis of Labour Force Survey data finds that the pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people is greater for women than for men, and that the pay of disabled women with mental health conditions is significantly lower than that of other disabled women. Almost all the difference in pay between disabled and non-disabled men can be explained by differences in 'human capital', particularly qualifications and experience. However, only half the difference between disabled and non-disabled women can be explained by these factors.

Jones and Sloane (2003) report that people in poor health are significantly less satisfied with their pay than others. However, it is not clear why this is the

case. The authors also find that the pay gap between disabled men and disabled women is larger than the gap between non-disabled men and non-disabled women, and conclude that disabled women in Wales suffer disproportionately to disabled men in terms of earnings.

Age

Official statistics show that older workers have slightly lower earnings than those aged 40–9 (Wales Management Council, 2007 and Welsh Assembly Government 2008c); however, the earnings of both age groups are higher than those of all age groups of workers.

Kenway et al's (2005) analysis of low pay finds that two-thirds of all workers aged 21 and under are low paid. A third of low paid workers are aged under 30 and a quarter are aged 50 or over. Despite this, Jones and Sloane (2003) find that younger and older workers are more satisfied with their pay than people in middle age groups.

Research on attitudes to the lower minimum wage for young people found that 55 per cent supported the differential rate, whilst 35 per cent did not (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2008).

Sexual Orientation

Williams and Robinson (2007) found that the median annual earnings of LGB respondents were £22,000 and the mean was £23,502. These figures are above the figures for Wales as a whole but slightly below those for the UK. Twenty-two per cent of respondents earned less than £15,000 a year and 10 per cent earned more than £35,000 a year. The report goes on to analyse earnings according to occupation, size and type of employer, and qualifications held by the worker. The earlier study for Stonewall Cymru (Robinson and Williams, 2003) did not include any data on earnings.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

3.6 Industrial and Occupational Segregation

Race

The literature shows that there is marked segregation in the labour market by ethnic group.

According to Sullivan et al (2005), the ethnic minority population in Wales as a whole is most likely to be employed within professional occupations (19.6 per cent), in managerial and senior officer occupations (14.6 per cent) and in associate professional and technical occupations (12.8 per cent). Males from ethnic minority groups who are employed are even more likely to be found in professional occupations (23.0 per cent) or as managers and senior officials (16.9 per cent), whilst females from ethnic minority groups are found in associate professional and technical occupations (15.8 per cent), professional occupations (15.8 per cent) and administrative and secretarial occupations (14.3 per cent).

Sullivan et al (2005) go on to provide a detailed account of the representation of ethnic minority groups in various sectors and occupations. There are marked differences between ethnic minority groups, as the following points illustrate:

- A higher proportion of people from all ethnic minority groups work in professional occupations than people from White groups. People of Indian origin are especially likely to work in professional occupations (49 per cent of men and 29 per cent of women).
- Ethnic minority professionals are most strongly represented in the health and social work sector.
- A very slightly higher proportion of women and men from ethnic minorities were managers and senior officials than the White population. Over a fifth of employed Pakistani men were in this occupational group, as were nearly one in six employed Pakistani women.
- The Chinese population in Wales has a high percentage (29.5 per cent) of their population working in skilled trade occupations.
- Ethnic minority populations in Wales are overwhelmingly concentrated in sectors associated with poor terms and conditions and low pay – health and social work (20.4 per cent); hotels and catering (16.9 per cent) and in wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles (16.8 per cent).
- Chinese people and Bangladeshi people are heavily concentrated in the Hotels and Catering sector. Fifty per cent of Chinese women and 58 per cent of Chinese men work in this industry. Fifty-six per cent of

Bangladeshi women and two-thirds of Bangladeshi men who worked were in the hotels and catering sector.

- The biggest single employer of ethnic minority groups in Wales is health and social work (20.4 per cent). Over a third of Indian women and men worked in this sector, as are more than a fifth of the Black African and Black Caribbean populations (28.0 and 20.3 per cent respectively). Half of both Black Caribbean and Black African women are employed in public sector services.

The Equal Opportunities Commission's study of the employment of ethnic minority women in Wales (IFF, 2007) found that even within areas with relatively high ethnic minority populations, the employment of Black and of Asian women is relatively concentrated. Amongst firms surveyed, two-thirds had a lower proportion of Black and Asian women employees than in the local economically active population. In organisations where Black and Asian women are employed, they tended to be concentrated within one specific occupational category within the organisation. The authors concluded that there is evidence of complacency among employers about the position of ethnic minority women in the work place. A substantial minority of employers place the onus for under-performance at interview on ethnic minority women themselves, and instances of action to improve the recruitment and retention of Black and Asian women were relatively uncommon.

A study of Filipinos in Wales reported in AWEMA (n.d., b) says that the majority of the sample with professional qualifications worked in care homes and a further third worked in factories. Most did not work in occupations which related to their professional qualifications.

Segregation by ethnicity is compounded by segregation by gender. Focus groups discussions with 180 ethnic minority women in Wales (ICM Research, 2007) found 'very strong instances' of gender and cultural stereotyping of career choices. Parental influences over their career choices were still strong, especially on decisions at the age of 16 made by women now aged over 35 years. Parents were found both to stress the need for education and, in some cases, to limit career choices. In some groups, especially the group of Pakistani women, there was evidence of some pressure from parents pre-marriage and husbands after marriage to discontinue education or give up work once they had married. Younger Pakistani and Bangladeshi women felt their choices were limited to the local area whilst some women said if they did

work it could only be in jobs that were considered 'acceptable' to their parents and the community – doctors, lawyers, medical sales, pharmacists and property developers rather than models, the police force or a job involving travelling. Some Pakistani and Bangladeshi women felt that attitudes to studying and working were changing, and they were keen to take a different route to their mothers.

ICM Research (2007) also found that the careers advice received by participants was somewhat mixed. Some of the older participants said they had been 'pushed into lowly jobs' but felt that the advice and guidance that their children are now receiving was much better. However, women in the Mixed, Black Caribbean and managers' groups believed that teachers and the careers service could be doing more to advise and guide younger people into a wider range of careers. A number of older Black Caribbean women spoke of 'drifting' into work when they left school.

A survey of employers in Swansea, Cardiff and Newport (IFF Research, 2007) found that where organisations did employ Black and Asian women, they tended to be concentrated within one specific occupational category within the organisation.

One small-scale study (Women Connect First, 2006), based on interviews with young ethnic minority women and girls, suggested that gender stereotyping is decreasing, but has by no means disappeared, and that young women are determined to 'fulfil their dreams' whilst still maintaining their cultural and religious beliefs.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2008) found that a slight majority of people in Wales favoured positive action for Black and ethnic minority people, but a substantial minority were opposed to this.

Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Gypsy Travellers

There is also a marked segregation of migrant workers in the labour market, although this has a different pattern to that of different ethnic groups. Cam (2007) provides a detailed analysis of the occupations and place of work of migrant workers in Wales. First, he finds that migrant workers in Wales have an 'equal foot' in public sector organisations with the rest of the workforce, over 28 per cent working in public bodies. In terms of industries in which migrants are employed, only a tiny proportion work in agriculture and in construction in Wales. Manufacturing accounts for more than a quarter of

migrant workers whilst more than half are found in services such as hotels and restaurants, public administration and defence, education, health and social work, and community and personal services.

An analysis of workers registering under the Worker Registration Scheme (Winckler, 2007a) found a similarly low proportion of migrant workers from EU Accession countries in agriculture and a high proportion in hotels, restaurants and catering.

Gender

Industrial and occupational segregation by gender has long attracted research interest and there is now a substantial literature on this subject. The Equal Opportunities Commission (2006a) highlights the different occupations carried out by women and men. In 2005, women held only 10 per cent of skilled trades occupations and 18 per cent of process plant and machine operative occupations, but comprised 78 per cent of administrative and clerical occupations and 82 per cent of personal service jobs. Women also make up the vast majority of those working in the health and social work sector (79 per cent) and education (72 per cent), whilst men comprise the great majority of those working in transport, storage and communications (81 per cent) and manufacturing (75 per cent). Some sectors have seen considerable change in their gender composition over recent years, with the majority of those employed in public administration and defence being male 30 years ago, but women comprising 54 per cent of those employed in 2005.

According to Sloane et al (2005), occupational segregation for all ages is higher in Wales than in England or Scotland, although no further details are cited. The EOC also points out that women are more concentrated into welfare professions in Wales, where seven out of eight workers are women, and into finance and office managers where two-thirds are women, than in England (EOC, 2006a).

The EOC's formal investigation into occupational segregation in particular occupations (Miller et al, 2004) found that there was very marked occupational segregation in entry to modern apprenticeships in Wales as in England and Scotland, with women accounting for just 1 per cent of foundation and advanced modern apprenticeships in construction and 7 per cent of foundation and 4 per cent of advanced modern apprenticeships in engineering. ICT apprenticeships were much less gendered, with more than 40 per cent of apprenticeships being taken by women, whilst virtually all

childcare care modern apprenticeships were taken by women (97 per cent of foundation places and 98 per cent of advanced places). No data were available for plumbing apprenticeships in Wales. As part of the same investigation, Beck et al (2005) found that employers in Wales held generally very favourable views about reducing occupational segregation, as did the children who were interviewed as part of the study. Blackaby et al (2005) and Henley et al (2005) conducted an investigation into occupational segregation in small and medium sized enterprises in Wales, but it has not been possible to access the reports.

Looking at vertical segregation in the labour market, the EOC (2002a) found that women made up 33 per cent of managers in 2001, a slightly higher figure than in Britain as a whole (30 per cent). This was mainly because they comprised an above average share of managers and proprietors in agriculture and services in Wales. When other managerial roles are considered, women in Wales fare less well than men and less well than women elsewhere. A lower proportion of female managers in Wales (65 per cent) were corporate managers than in Britain as a whole (73 per cent).

The EOC, the WDA and Institute of Welsh Affairs had earlier commissioned a more detailed study of women in senior management (summarised in Equal Opportunities Commission, 2000). Women were found to account for a smaller proportion of senior managers in Wales than in England in the NHS, in primary and secondary education, in the police force, and in higher education. Only in the senior civil service in Wales were women better represented than in England. Women faced the same barriers to progression in Wales as elsewhere, such as expectations of mobility and long hours' cultures and issues about attitudes and behaviour. However, they also had to deal with additional barriers some of which may have been specific to Wales, such as a low turnover of middle management which hinders progress. The study found signs of change in some organisations, which were for example becoming more aware of the domestic responsibilities of male and female managers and also noted that younger women's expectations and aspirations were changing (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2000). The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2008) found that a slight majority of people in Wales favoured positive action for women, but a substantial minority were opposed to this.

Walkley et al (2006) point out that the public sector is a particularly important source of employment for women in rural Wales – it accounts for less than a

fifth of male employment, but over a third of female employment. Within the rural public sector, women are considerably less likely to occupy senior positions: 6 per cent of female employees consider their work to be 'higher' and 31 per cent 'intermediate' (Walkley et al, 2006).

Disability

We identified only a limited research literature specifically on the occupational or industrial segregation of disabled people. Jones et al (2004) refer to the disproportionate concentration of disabled people in low skilled jobs, which Welsh Assembly Government (2005h) confirms with data to show that there are slightly fewer disabled people than non-disabled people in professional occupations and a higher proportion in unskilled jobs.

The Welsh Health Survey (2005/06) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i) shows the extent of limiting long-term illness reported by people in the main occupational groups. Whilst this is not the same as occupational segregation, it does show that a higher proportion of people in routine and manual jobs reported a limiting long-term illness (31 per cent) than people in professional and managerial occupations (22 per cent). For comparison, 27 per cent of all people aged over 16 said they had a limiting long-term illness.

The background study to the DRC's Formal Investigation into Fitness Standards in Social Work, Nursing and Teaching Professions (Sin et al, 2006) cited two reports which showed low levels of recruitment to training for these professions. The first looked at the entry of disabled students into teaching. Disabled students made up 4 per cent of students on Initial Teacher Education and Training (ITET) courses in 2000/01. The report pointed to course requirements for Initial Teacher Training and Qualified Teacher Status acting as potential barriers. The second (Teaching and Disability Wales, 2003) found that young disabled people in Wales are unlikely to choose teaching as a career. Disabled people reported that they were discouraged from considering teaching as a career option, experienced practical hurdles undertaking teacher training, faced additional costs when training and working (e.g. taxi fares) and a possible 'benefits trap', and that attitudes of employers and teacher trainers were negative.

It has also been found that between 1998/99 and 2002/03 the growth in employment of disabled people in the public sector has been greater in England and Scotland than in Wales (Hirst et al, 2004). Others have concluded from this that rate of growth elsewhere has been six times greater

than in Wales (DRC, 2006c) but the authors of the original research are more cautious, saying only that the findings for Wales are 'less clear-cut' and suggesting that the fluctuations in the data may be due to a smaller sample size, or variations in survey practice.

Age

There is little evidence on segregation by age, but what does exist suggests that it is not significant. Welsh Assembly Government (2008c) found that there is no difference in the kind of work, measured by industrial sector, done by over 50s and under 50s. No statistics have been analysed for differences in the occupations held by older and younger people.

Walkley et al (2006) found that a greater proportion of employees aged 25 to 59 work in the public sector in rural Wales than in the private sector. Younger workers, aged under 25 years, only comprise 8 per cent of the workforce in rural Wales, compared with 17 per cent in the private sector.

Sexual Orientation

The latest survey of LGB people for Stonewall Cymru (Williams and Robinson, 2007), found that only six unemployed respondents said that their sexual orientation had a lot of influence on their job choice, with other factors, such as educational qualifications, being more important to employed respondents' choice of job. However, the authors concluded that sexual orientation was not irrelevant to job choice because nearly 30 per cent of employed respondents and 57 per cent of unemployed respondents said that a good record on equality/diversity was a factor in choosing a job.

The study found that respondents were employed in most economic sectors: 62 per cent worked in the public sector, 23 per cent in the private sector and only 12 per cent in the voluntary sector. The types of organisations employing the most respondents included public administration (20 per cent), followed by health and social care (18 per cent) and education (10 per cent).

Religion

No relevant literature was identified. However, our own analysis of Table S154 of the 2001 Census of Population suggests that a higher proportion of Muslims hold occupations as managers, senior officials and professionals (34.2 per cent of all Muslims) than Christians (22.4 per cent) and people with no religion (22.5 per cent). A lower proportion of Muslims were employed in

associate technical and professional occupations or in administrative and secretarial occupations than Christians or people with no religious belief.

3.7 Flexible Working

This section includes literature on all forms of flexible working including part-time working (defined as working for less than 30 hours a week) and temporary working, as well as information about arrangements such as flexitime and working from home.

Race

Of the Welsh ethnic minority population as a whole, 64 per cent are employed in full-time work compared with 70 per cent of the White population. Part-time employment rates for the ethnic minority population are also lower than the White population – 17.9 per cent of ethnic minority groups work part time compared with 21 per cent of the White population (Sullivan et al, 2005).

According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2004a), men from ethnic minority groups are more likely to work part-time than men from White groups. As in the White population, ethnic minority women more commonly work part time than ethnic minority men. However a lower proportion of ethnic minority women aged 25–74 work part-time than do White women of the same age (30 per cent compared with 40 per cent). So, although their employment rates are lower than those of White women overall, once employed, ethnic minority women are more likely to work full-time.

Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and Gypsy Travellers

Cam (2007) has found that migrant workers in Wales have different working arrangements to migrant workers in Britain in general. Ten per cent of migrant workers in Wales are in part-time jobs – half the proportion of migrant workers in Britain as a whole and two and a half times less than the proportion of part-timers amongst the rest of the workforce. It is suggested that this might be because of the high concentration of migrant workers in manufacturing in Wales, which limits part-time employment among these workers.

Cam (2007) also finds that temporary working is much more common amongst migrant workers in Wales than the rest of the work force. Over 21 per cent of migrant workers in Wales are employed in such jobs, whereas the proportion of the rest of the work force in Wales working in temporary jobs is less than 14 per cent. Temporary working is associated with ‘agency temping’ which Cam suggests is more prevalent in Wales than the rest of Britain.

Gender

Part-time working is much more common amongst women than men in Wales as elsewhere in Britain. EOC (2006a) states that 42 per cent of women aged 16–64 in employment worked part time in 2005, compared with 9 per cent of men. Mothers of under fives have the highest rate of part-time working, but rates decline as children get older. Parenthood has virtually no impact on fathers' working patterns (EOC, 2006a). According to the Welsh Assembly Government (2007j), women are more than four times as likely as men to work under 35 hours per week: men are more than three times as likely as women to work over 42 hours. The ratio of full-time to part-time workers is the same for all age groups of women, but for men the ratio is highest amongst the 35 to 50 age group and lower for under 35s. Moles's (2007) study of rural Wales finds a similar proportion of women and men part-time workers, but notes that women are much more likely than to report that a lack of flexible working opportunities is a barrier to finding work.

Jones and Sloane (2003) report that there is no significant gender difference in men's and women's satisfaction with their working hours, although low paid females working full-time are significantly less satisfied with their hours than the norm, whilst higher paid women with shorter hours of work are more satisfied.

The primary reason for women working part-time is that they still bear the brunt of caring and domestic responsibilities. Women are five times more likely than men to give family reasons for working part-time and women working part-time are nearly twice as likely as men to say that they do not want full-time work (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j). Amongst full-timers, women work fewer hours per week than men. This holds true across all age groups (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h).

Estimates of the proportion of women and men working flexibly vary. EOC (2006a) estimates that 58 per cent of women and 25 per cent of men work some form of flexible arrangement, and gives the numbers and percentages of men and women with access to flexitime, annualised hours and term-time working. The EOC's formal investigation into flexible and part-time working concluded that flexible working is more widely available in Wales and Scotland than in England. The report stated that in Wales, 27.5 per cent of females and 21.2 per cent of males had flexible working patterns, compared with 26.7 per cent of females and 17.9 per cent of males in the UK as a whole (EOC, 2005a).

However, Dex and Ward's study (2007) found that amongst the employed mothers they surveyed, those in Wales were less likely than those in England to have access to any of the eight types of flexible working arrangements they examined. This was also the case for fathers for seven out of the eight arrangements. The authors concluded that the flexible working arrangements most commonly offered to mothers in Wales were part-time working (available to 83.1 per cent of the women surveyed) or flexible hours (available to 41.5 per cent). However, nearly one in 10 women in Wales (8.9 per cent) said that they had no access to any flexible working arrangements. Employed mothers in Wales were also less likely to take-up the flexible working options that were available than those in England, with the exception of special shifts, nine day fortnights and term-time working. A survey of 57 women who sought advice on possible pregnancy discrimination at work found that the right to request flexible working appears to be ineffective (Lux, 2004).

In terms of fathers' access to flexible working (including paternity leave), Thompson et al (2005) found that 45 per cent of fathers in Wales felt that they did not have enough information about paternity leave, a higher proportion than in England, although the sample in Wales was small (only 57 respondents). A different study (Dex and Ward 2007) found that a slightly higher percentage of fathers in Wales (25 per cent) did not take any leave than those in England (21 per cent). There were significant differences in Welsh fathers' access to flexible working arrangements. Approximately 20 per cent of fathers in Wales were offered occasional working from home compared with 30 per cent in England; however, Welsh fathers were much more likely than those in England to work from home all the time if they had access to this arrangement.

One reason for the difference may be because small and medium sized enterprises are particularly important in Wales with 20 per cent of employees working for employers with fewer than 10 employees, compared with 17.5 per cent for the UK as a whole (EOC, 2005b: 29). Small employers are less likely to have in place formal mechanisms for implementing flexibility (EOC, 2005b). It is worth noting that a series of events held to consult employers on the EOC's general formal enquiry into flexible and part-time working attracted only 12 respondents despite substantial marketing and promotion (People Matters (North Wales), 2005).

An evaluation of the Welsh Assembly Government's Work Life Balance project (2002–5) (Chwarae Teg, n.d.) details the experiences of the seven

organisations which participated in the project. It concludes that all organisations had 'overcome challenges' and had seen a 'change in attitude' by managers and staff to work-life balance as a consequence of the project. The evaluation also found that working flexibly provided tangible benefits to employers and employees e.g. improved staff morale, easier recruitment and retention, and improved team working.

Disability

Both Jones and Latreille (2007) and the Welsh Assembly Government (2003a) find that disabled people or people with a long-term illness are more likely to work part-time than non-disabled people. The former suggests that this flexibility may enable disabled people to accommodate their condition. However Welsh Assembly Government (2005h) includes data to show that amongst full-timers disabled people work the same weekly hours as non-disabled people.

Age

Part-time work is much more common amongst older people than amongst younger people. Nearly one in three people over the age of 50 work part-time – a much higher proportion than the under 50s (Wales Management Council, 2007). Retirement age marks a sharp division amongst older people. Whilst 21.4 per cent of people aged between 50 and State Pension Age (SPA) work part-time, 61.0 per cent over SPA do so. High though the proportion of part-timers over SPA may be, it is nevertheless lower than the proportion in England and Scotland.

Welsh Assembly Government (2008c) shows that older full-time workers work longer weekly hours than younger full-timers, this being so for both men and women.

Loretto et al (2005) found that older women workers in Wales have more access to flexible working than their counterparts in other parts of the UK. Comparisons with older men in Wales were not possible because of small numbers.

A survey of almost 300 employers in Wales by the Department for Work and Pensions (Metcalf with Meadows, 2006) found that employers in Wales were more likely than those in England to offer early retirement and employees were less likely to have a compulsory retirement age.

Sexual Orientation

In Stonewall Cymru's survey, just 12 per cent of the total were employed part-time (Williams and Robinson, 2007).

Religion

Part-time employment is more common amongst Muslim males than the population as a whole, although for Muslim women aged between 25 and 74, it was slightly less common than for women in the overall population (Lee, 2007).

3.8 Fair Treatment

This section includes research on all aspects of fair treatment at work. It includes recruitment and progression at work, dismissal, and harassment and bullying. A recent survey of workers in Britain found that a lower rate of unfair treatment was reported in Wales (5.1 per cent of employees) than in England (5.6 per cent) and Scotland (7.1 per cent). The lowest rate of bullying experienced personally was also found in Wales (3.1 per cent) compared with Scotland (3.6 per cent) and England (3.8 per cent) (Grainger and Fitzner, 2007).

Race

According to reports of a study of work place bullying in Wales (BBC, 2004), ethnic minorities are five times more likely to experience work place bullying than their White co-workers. They also suffer more stress, burnout, depression and anxiety. The study, of 250 workers from both the public and private sectors in Wales, found that while only 5 per cent of White workers reported being bullied, 25 per cent of ethnic minority workers stated this.

The EOC's study of the employment of ethnic minority women in Wales (IFF, 2007) found that instances of action to improve the recruitment and retention of Black and Asian women were relatively uncommon. In a separate study, the EOC study of the largest ethnic minority groups in Wales – those from Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, mixed-race, Pakistani and Somali backgrounds – held 11 focus groups with 86 women in Swansea, Cardiff and Newport (ICM, 2007). Virtually all of the women involved in the research gave examples of experiencing problems associated with their racial background in the work place. They believed that they were not treated fairly or equally in society, in general, and at the work place, in particular, as a result of their race. Almost all the older women in the focus groups recalled an incident that made them realise that they were from an ethnic minority and living in Wales.

Many of these were incidents outside of work, but many were experienced in the work place.

In terms of recruitment, the research reported some women's experiences where they had not been appointed because of their ethnicity. They also referred to issues in the work place linked to their ethnicity, e.g. acceptable dress and uniforms. Within the work place, those from the Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali groups that were working felt that they do not always 'fit in' to their work environment and are often excluded from after-work socialising. The report gives examples of how women from many backgrounds believed that their career progression or pay was being affected as a result of their gender and ethnicity. Some women that had managed to progress in their careers argued that it was more difficult and took longer to do so because of their gender and ethnicity.

A study of ethnic minority groups in north Wales (North Wales Race Equality Network 2004) reported that almost half of respondents believed they had been discriminated against, and felt that they often faced discrimination based on their appearance, ethnicity or name. Ethnic minority communities said that they felt isolated from the local employment market, and many did not access local employment services when looking for work as they felt the service they received was inappropriate. Employment service providers themselves did not seem to understand that the term 'ethnic minority' referred to the settled community, not just migrant workers.

Migrants, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Gypsy Travellers

A number of studies have identified reports of illegal practices in the employment of migrant workers in Wales, as well as practices which are legal but generally considered unacceptable, although all studies relied on third party accounts rather than direct evidence (Winckler, 2007a; Hold et al, 2005; Turunen et al, 2005). Contractual issues such as hours worked, variable hours, enforced overtime and lack of overtime pay and payment per shift rather than actual hours worked were also reported, along with lack of proper rest periods and contracts being signed under duress.

Gender

Almost all the literature we have identified about fair treatment at work concerns discrimination against pregnant women, all of which was generated by the EOC's general formal inquiry into the issue.

According to one survey of 100 mothers in Wales undertaken as part of the inquiry, there was less evidence of 'work place unpleasantness' in Wales than in England or Scotland (38 per cent reported this experience compared with 50 per cent in England and 54 per cent in Scotland) (Adams et al, 2005). More than 40 per cent of calls to the EOC Wales helpline were about pregnancy discrimination (EOC, 2004a).

In addition to this survey, EOC Wales commissioned a separate study of women who had contacted the EOC Wales helpline, a survey of employers in Wales and a survey of small and medium sized enterprises. EOC Wales also consulted with ethnic minority women, lesbian women and disabled women about the particular issues these groups faced. The findings are summarised in EOC (2004a).

The EOC Wales survey of 57 women who called the EOC Wales Helpline, between March 2003 and January 2004, for advice on potential pregnancy and maternity discrimination (Lux, 2004), found that a high proportion of women interviewed reported that their employers seemed to believe that pregnancy compromised the woman's ability to do the job. Employers often did not provide information on maternity rights and in many cases lacked awareness of the laws relating to pregnancy and maternity at work. Lack of risk assessments and a lack of implementation of recommendations were widespread, and employees found it difficult to enforce these rights. Several of the participants had prima facie cases for dismissal or constructive dismissal. Employees of large organisations in both the private and public sector reported that although they might be covered by good equal opportunities policies, local managers did not always apply these in practice. The report concluded that the impact of discrimination, even if in the form of negative comments, was very damaging to the women. They faced difficulty enforcing their rights in time and found it very hard to find alternative employment whilst pregnant.

The consultations with particular groups of women found:

- Concern amongst ethnic minority women about racism, negative attitudes and stereotypes; pressure from their own communities to conform to certain norms; and a lack of awareness of pregnant women's rights (EOC, 2004b).

- Concern amongst the four lesbian mothers interviewed about parental rights, especially the recognition of co-parents in employment policies, a lack of flexible working and some concerns about intrusive questioning (Parken, 2004).
- Pregnant disabled women had experienced prejudice and isolation at work, ignorance and discrimination by employers, hostility and lack of support by the medical profession, and also had to cope with complex legal rights and lack of advice (EOC Wales, 2004c).

The EOC's survey of 150 employers in Wales (Young and Morrell, 2005a, 2005b) found that 52 per cent of employers had managed a pregnancy in the work place in the last three years. The vast majority of employers felt that they managed pregnancy well and treated their staff fairly. However, a small proportion said that pregnancy caused resentment or was 'frowned on' in the first year of employment, with male bosses being more negative than female bosses. The survey revealed that just a third of employers had developed guidelines for managers when dealing with maternity issues at work. Uncertainty over a woman's return to work and issues related to staff cover were the most difficult for employers to deal with. Around a quarter (23 per cent) of employers could not name a statutory maternity entitlement and believed some statutory rights were actually additional benefits that they provided.

The research also found that while most employers hold positive personal views about women's commitment to work during pregnancy and on return to work, there were nevertheless less positive attitudes held by a substantial minority, e.g. 57 per cent agreed that 'some women abuse their rights during pregnancy, paternity leave and on return to work'.

A survey of 35 small and medium sized firms in Wales which employed between five and 99 employees (Leighton and Evans, 2004) demonstrated that small businesses find many of these problems especially difficult to deal with, mostly because they have little experience of managing pregnancy and often no HR department. Most of the firms hold strong views on employment law, and some felt beleaguered by the complexity. Firms fell into one of three groups: those who felt that employers bore the brunt of responsibility rather than society; those who felt that it was hard for employers to know their responsibilities; and a third group who were very critical of maternity law.

The major problem that small firms said they faced was uncertainty over the date of return from maternity leave, or whether the woman would return at all. Firms also identified a lack of information and advice to help them with employing pregnant women, including the need to undertake risk assessments. In many businesses, the responsibility for making sure employees were safe at work fell on the pregnant woman herself. Employers coped with maternity absences in a variety of ways. These were mostly unplanned and unsystematic, although when a woman did return to work they were more likely to be flexible in order to retain her. A study of how small and medium sized businesses managed pregnancy absence has also been published (PPM Associates, 2005).

White et al (2005) also looked at small firms, this time in one sector – tourism. They found that significant inequalities still exist in the tourism work place and that what they describe as ‘bottom-up power mechanisms’ – i.e. the relationships between women and men at work – can override legislative provision, so that women feel powerless to act.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission’s survey (2008) of attitudes found that almost half (49 per cent) disagreed that ‘being treated unfairly at work because you are a woman is a thing of the past’. Younger respondents were more likely to agree with this statement than older respondents.

Disability

A study of barriers to employment of disabled people found that employers in Wales had the lowest awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act in the UK and that awareness of Disabled Person’s Tax Credit was also the lowest (Goldstone with Meager, 2002). However there were only eight employers in Wales in the sample so the findings must be treated with some caution.

Age

Metcalf and Meadows (2006) found that employers in Wales were less aware of the Age Positive Campaign than those in England. The Equality and Human Rights Commission’s survey (2008) found almost universal agreement that people should be able to work beyond state pension age, although 40 per cent stated that teachers should not be allowed to work beyond the age of 70.

Sexual Orientation

An analysis of Employment Tribunal claims for discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation found that within Britain, claimants were least likely to come from Wales, along with Scotland and the North East (Savage, 2007).

Williams and Robinson's (2007) survey of LGB people found that almost a third of employed respondents reported feeling that they could not talk about their private life at work. Just over one in five reported being the butt of office jokes and just under one in five had experienced a lack of respect from colleagues or superiors. About 5 per cent had experienced some form of illegal discrimination, the most common being not receiving the same employer concessions as heterosexual employees, not being appointed to a job because of sexual orientation, and being dismissed or disciplined at work because of their sexual orientation. The public sector had lower low rates of discrimination in hiring, promotion and disciplinary procedures, but had higher levels of informal incidents. The proportion reporting discrimination in work in this survey is substantially lower than in the 2002–3 survey (Robinson and Williams, 2003) where 25 per cent of respondents reported having been dismissed from a job because of their sexuality. A large proportion also reported being a victim of harassment at work. A TUC report quoted in Hunt et al (2007) says that a third of all LGB workers in Wales reported harassment at work because of their sexual orientation.

Religion

Savage (2007) also found that Employment Tribunal claimants for discrimination on the grounds of religion were least likely to come from Wales, along with Scotland and the North East.

The ICM survey of 180 women in Wales (ICM, 2007) reported that Black and Asian women referred to a lack of understanding regarding their religious needs. Respondents from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Somali groups remarked that there were often difficulties in praying while at work. Although some organisations provided prayer rooms, they were not always suitable and women sometimes made excuses about leaving work to pray. Some Muslim women believed that they are unable to take certain types of work where staff are required to wear uniforms which are not appropriate.

3.9 Trades Union Membership

Race

No relevant literature was identified.

Migrant Workers, Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Gypsy Travellers

According to Cam (2007), the same proportion of migrant workers in Wales work in unionised work places as the rest of the workforce – about 35 per cent. Union membership is also relatively high among migrant workers in Wales, at almost 20 per cent, although it is lower than that of the rest of the workforce in Wales (32 per cent). Working at unionised work places and union membership rates are higher in Wales than in the rest of Britain for both migrant workers and the rest of the workforce. These figures are very much higher than those suggested for recent EU Accession country migrant workers which have been assumed to be the same in Wales as Britain as a whole at around 3 per cent (Winckler, 2007a).

Gender

According to government statistics (Grainger and Crowther, 2007), women in Wales are now more likely to be trades union members than men (37.3 per cent of women workers are members compared with 34.6 of men). This feature is primarily because public sector workers are more likely to be union members than private sector workers and a much higher proportion of women's employment than men's is found in the public sector.

Disability

No relevant literature was identified.

Age

Older workers in Wales are very much more likely to be trades union members than younger workers. More than four out of ten workers aged 35–49 and aged over 50 are union members, compared with just one in eight (13 per cent) of those aged 16–24 (Grainger and Crowther, 2007).

Sexual Orientation

The survey of LGB people by Stonewall Cymru (Williams and Robinson, 2007) found that 30 per cent of respondents were union members.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

3.10 Welsh Language Issues

An analysis of the same statistics for speakers of Welsh (Blackaby et al, 2006c) found that people who were bilingual were less likely to be unemployed than monoglot English speakers, even allowing for the effect of higher qualifications held by Welsh speakers, and that the advantage was especially great in Welsh-speaking parts of Wales.

Research suggests that Welsh language speakers are paid a 'premium' of between 8 and 10 per cent for their language skills (Henley and Jones, 2003).

Moles (2007) found that language barriers influence women (9 per cent) more than men (3 per cent) in their search for employment. When the individual responses are examined it becomes apparent that inability to speak Welsh is the main hindrance. Walkley et al (2006) found that over half of public sector employees in rural Wales are able to speak Welsh, compared with under 40 per cent of those who work in the private sector. The ability to speak Welsh is over twice as common amongst public sector workers in rural Wales than it is for such workers elsewhere in Wales.

3.11 Conclusions and Research Gaps

A great deal more literature on employment and the labour market has been identified than expected. It is also striking that this subject is much better served by official data than others. Not only are there relatively up-to-date surveys that have sufficiently large samples to allow analysis by at least some equality strands, but official data have also been supplemented by relatively large scale, good quality, surveys by other bodies.

As a result, most aspects of gender and employment in Wales have been addressed by good quality, recent, research although there are of course some areas that are, nevertheless, worthy of further investigation (lone parents' experiences of returning to work and women in trades unions are two such areas). There is some research on ethnicity in employment, although it is mostly small-scale. However, the most substantial gaps are on disability and age where, despite the prevalence of disability and long-term ill health and the ageing workforce, there is very little evidence indeed.

There was a little evidence on sexual orientation and religion, which was entirely down to the Stonewall Cymru surveys (Williams and Robinson, 2007, Robinson and Williams, 2003) and the Welsh Assembly Government's audit of Muslims (Lee, 2007).

4. HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Siobhan McClelland

This chapter reviews the literature in respect of health and social care. This includes the literature relating to mortality and morbidity, access to services, lifestyle and social care spanning the six equality strands. This is a complex field with multi-level challenges cutting across different equality issues. The issue of health inequalities has taken centre stage in Welsh health policy making and beyond. However, this focus largely lies outside the equality strands with the major emphasis being on socio economic inequalities.

A particular issue has arisen in the context of the literature in relation to age. Many health conditions are closely associated with age, e.g. arthritis with advancing years and certain infectious diseases with children, as is the provision of certain forms of care, e.g. social care of older people. Similarly, there is an extensive literature on the incidence and management of various forms of disability. These general areas have an extensive literature, and it has been outside the scope of this project to review all the research undertaken on *general* health and social care provision that is of particular relevance to certain age groups. Instead we have focused on research that has emphasised aspects of inequality.

4.1 Policy Context

The majority of issues related to health and social care in Wales are devolved, including policy formulation and implementation, funding, managing and supporting delivery of health and social care services and monitoring and promoting improvements in service delivery and improving the health of the population. A very limited range of matters relating to health and social care remain the responsibility of the UK government including, for example, recent discussions on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill. Health and Social Services form the largest single element of the Assembly's budget accounting for £5.5bn of an overall £14bn spend in 2007–08.

Health and social care are the responsibility of the Minister for Health and Social Services supported by the Deputy Minister for Social Services. Civil service support is provided by the Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) whose head is also the Chief Executive of NHS Wales. The DHSS also has regional offices in North, Mid and West and South East Wales.

Twenty-two Local Health Boards (LHBs) currently commission primary, community and secondary care services. LHBs are coterminous with the 22 local authorities which are responsible for the delivery of social services (provided both by the local authorities and by around 1,800 private and voluntary sector organisations). Specialised services are currently commissioned by Health Commission Wales (HCW). Community, secondary, mental health and tertiary health services are currently provided by seven NHS Trusts together with the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust. In addition, there are a number of organisations providing support to NHS Wales including the National Leadership and Innovation Agency for Health (NLIAH) which includes within it the NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights. There is also an NHS Welsh Language Unit within the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Chief Medical Officer within the Welsh Assembly Government has responsibility for public health, health promotion and health professional issues, including the National Public Health Services (NPHS). The Wales Centre for Health (WCH) has a broad remit to work with other organisations in Wales to improve health in Wales, while the Welsh Health Impact Assessment Support Unit (WHIASU) supports the development of the approach of health impact assessment across Wales.

There are plans to change the structure of NHS Wales, which are underpinned by a stated aim of the One Wales Programme of Government to eliminate the last vestiges of the internal market in Wales. The plans include the merger of NHS Trusts and Local Health Boards into seven new 'delivery organisations', the creation of a National Health Board, and a change in the functions of Health Commission Wales (Hart, 2008).

The current strategic direction for health and social care is contained within *Designed for Life* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005i) a 10-year strategy which 'aims to create a world class health service in Wales by 2015'. Whilst the strategy has proven controversial in terms of hospital reconfiguration the overarching aim of providing services as close to the patient remains a policy priority for the Welsh Assembly Government. A number of other strategies are also currently guiding the policy direction in health including the Chronic Conditions Management Framework (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007k) and Delivering Emergency Care Services (Welsh Assembly Government 2008p). *Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007l) sets out the policy direction of social services for the next

10 years. Public health priorities are set out in the Chief Medical Officer's Annual Reports (Chief Medical Officer for Wales 2003, 2006) and in the Health Challenge Wales programme. Work is currently underway to produce a Public Health Strategic Framework for Wales (due in April 2009) and a Rural Health Plan.

More specifically delivery of policy is guided by National Service Frameworks (NSFs) (for example for older People and in mental health) and Service Development and Commissioning Directives (for example in Chronic Respiratory Conditions). There are also Welsh Assembly Government Strategies for particular health needs e.g. autism (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008q) and suicide and self-harm (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008r). Local interpretation of national policy in health and social care is primarily manifested in the statutory Health, Social Care and Well Being Strategies (HSCWBS) that local authorities and LHBs must produce in partnership. In addition, local authorities must also produce a Community Strategy and a Children and Young Persons Plan.

Addressing inequalities in health has been a key strategic aim for the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government and can be traced through a series of policy documents. The policy has also been reflected in the development of a resource funding strategy known as the 'Townsend' formula (National Assembly for Wales, 2001a) which reflects socio-economic and demographic factors. The emphasis on health inequalities and, in particular, on the impact of deprivation on health status has resulted in a number of policy initiatives, notably the Health Inequalities Fund, Communities First, the Sustainable Health Action Research Programme (SHARP) and the Health Promotion Voluntary Sector Grants Scheme. All of these have supported specific projects throughout Wales, including a limited number with specific relevance to the equality strands. However, where evaluations have taken place, they have mostly been of the overarching policy initiative rather than of individual projects.

The remainder of the chapter explores health status, access to health and social care services, lifestyle and parenting, rural issues and the Welsh Language. However, the area in which the largest range of Welsh-specific research and literature exists, socio-economic inequalities, is not included.

4.2 Health Status

Race

Williams et al (2007) argue that there has been a 'paucity of statistical evidence' and a 'dearth of research studies' on ethnic minority issues in health. They point out that many public bodies have developed idiosyncratic approaches to ethnic auditing and monitoring and comment that the studies that are available are:

...small scale, parochial, lacking in methodological rigour and contributing little to vigorous theoretical debate.
(Williams et al, 2007: 194–95)

What evidence is available generally suggests that ethnic minority communities have poorer health than their White counterparts. Welsh Assembly Government (2004a) found that people from White and Black ethnic backgrounds had the highest percentage of limiting long-term illness, 24 per cent and 19 per cent respectively. These ethnic groups also had the highest proportion of their population made up by older people. In contrast, there was less limiting long-term illness in the Chinese and Other Ethnic group (8 per cent) which also has a low proportion of older people within its population. In terms of people who reported their health to be 'not good' when completing the census form, the White Irish group was most likely to do so (18 per cent) and the Chinese and Other Ethnic group least likely to do so (4 per cent). The overall figure for Wales was 13 per cent. However, there is a close relationship between ethnic groups reporting ill health and their age structures.

One of the most extensive pieces of work is the Health ASERT Programme Wales, a research programme commissioned by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer to investigate health promotion issues and enhance the evidence base among ethnic minority groups, refugees/asylum seekers and Gypsy Travellers. These have resulted in a series of reports on these issues (Papadopoulos and Lay, 2005; Aspinall, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). The majority of the reports are themselves reviews of the literature. As such, they mention the paucity of Wales-specific information in terms of research undertaken and of specific statistical Wales-based data on the groups being examined. However, the programme did also involve some primary research (Papadopoulos et al, 2008). This included data collected from 14 focus groups with members of the groups of interest (n=96 participants), a consultation exercise with key

informants (n=8), semi-structured interviews with local key stakeholders (n=9), and self-completion questionnaires with national key stakeholders who worked for UK-wide organisations (n=8).

The focus groups findings were that health problems related to cultural issues, socio-economic and environmental factors, mental and physical disease, age and gender related problems, barriers accessing services and lifestyle factors. The different population groups suffer from all common conditions to a variable extent depending on the above factors that vary within and between groups.

The issues raised in the ASERT reports on statistics warrant some discussion as they are key in shaping policy at a national and local level particularly in understanding the distinctive health needs of these groups and issues around accessing services. Whilst population statistics are available on ethnic minority groups, health-specific information is very limited. For example ethnic coding on the Patient Episode Database Wales (PEDW) is substantially incomplete and there is little information available at a primary care level (something which has been focused on by the NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights). The Welsh Health Survey is an important source of information on mortality and morbidity but as the reports make clear does not capture sufficiently large enough ethnic, and other population, groups to merit analysis and the reports provide a series of recommendations for redressing the deficiencies in statistical information. The reports also undertake literature reviews in respect of the specific groups and in undertaking this use English, Scottish, UK and international literature in relation to the population groups and health demonstrating a lack of Wales-specific evidence.

The Welsh Consumer Council (2004) looked at consumers from Black and ethnic minority groups and provided a brief snapshot of the barriers they experience. There is a brief health section which draws on other research (not necessarily Welsh-based) on the greater risk of certain conditions including kidney disease, diabetes, hypertension, stroke and mental health than the rest of the population and makes mention of perceptions of health, lack of facilities and on health services and diet.

Williams et al (2007) cite a number of local studies of health need, including Papadopoulos and Lay (2005) on the health promotion needs of ethnic minority groups; the mental health information and treatment needs of ethnic minority groups in Cardiff (Saltus and Kaur-Mann, 2005); the experiences of

carers from ethnic minority backgrounds (AWEMA, 2003). In addition, a few studies have been undertaken that have focused exclusively on specific groups, for example on the experiences of Bangladeshi patients in primary care settings (Hawthorne et al, 2003); the care needs of elders (Patel, 1994 cited in Williams et al, 2007); and the support needs of Bangladeshi carers (Merrell et al, 2005).

Migrants, Refugees and Gypsy Travellers

There has been some specific policy-based work undertaken by the National Assembly in respect of Gypsy Travellers including an issues paper produced for the Equality of Opportunity Committee (National Assembly for Wales, 2001b). A review of service provision (National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee, 2003) found that there are no centrally collected health indicators for Gypsies and Travellers and although there is research about the specific health issues, much of it is limited in scope. In so far as the review could identify research (most of it not specific to Wales), it found higher levels of infant mortality, maternal death rates, lower life expectancy, higher accident rates, and higher rates of illness due to the environment, such as diarrhoea, asthma, parasites and skin conditions and rashes, than in the settled community. The report also identified a high level of unmet need in providing dental care, well-woman services and health promotion.

Papadopoulos et al (2008) did undertake some primary research and confirmed that Gypsy Travellers, who tend to have poorer housing and sanitation, suffer frequent infectious diseases particularly among children.

Papadopoulos et al (2008) also found that asylum seekers and refugees were more likely to describe problems related to stress caused by previous torture and migration. Hewett et al's (2005) review of the experiences of children seeking asylum found a similar picture.

Gender

The Welsh Health Survey for 2005/06 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i) provides some information on gender (and age) in relation to health status. The survey reports that health status scores were lower for women than men indicating worse health and well-being among women. In terms of mental health the survey demonstrated a lower Mental Competence Summary Score for women than men indicating a perception of poorer mental health amongst women. Charles et al (2004) carried out a study of the mental health needs of women experiencing domestic abuse in one town but the report has not been accessed.

The Welsh Health Survey reported a higher percentage of women than men reporting being treated for a specific illness though the reverse was true in the case of heart conditions (excluding high blood pressure). In terms of life expectancy, a Bevan Foundation report (2006) concluded that the gap between men and women's life expectancy was closing with men now catching up with women. A recent statistical bulletin (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008s) demonstrates that average life expectancy for a man and a woman in Wales in 2004–06 is 76.6 and 80.9 respectively.

The Welsh Health Survey also included a specific study examining the health of adult carers (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008t). It has long been known that carers' health in general is less good than that of non-carers, but this was the first large-scale age-standardised comparison to have been undertaken. Its key findings included that:

- Among younger adults (16–44), a higher percentage of carers than non-carers reported being treated for certain illnesses and reported limiting long-term illness. There was little significant difference between carers and non-carers in older age groups.
- Younger adult carers, and particularly younger women carers, reported poorer mental health than non-carers.
- A higher percentage of younger adult carers than non-carers were smokers.
- Younger adult carers were more likely than non-carers to report using a GP.

Disability

There is a similar lack of evidence on the health status of disabled people as there is for ethnic minority groups. A review of evidence on disabled children prepared by NPHS (2004a) concluded that there was little routine evidence on the prevalence of disability amongst children.

The same study cites statistics from the Local Government Data Unit which show that, in the year ending 31 March 2003, 2,585 children and young people under 16 years of age were registered as having a learning disability in Wales. It also cites a Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) survey in Wales in 2002 (which was not accessed) which found a prevalence rate of 2.0

blind and partially sighted children per every 1,000 children and young people aged up to 16. Fifty per cent of the blind and partially sighted children identified in Wales had another disability and 31 per cent had additional complex needs including severe or multiple learning difficulties. The NPHS review also cites an audit undertaken in Wales in 2002 which identified 2,792 children and young people aged 0–19 required specialist support due to hearing impairment.

The Welsh Assembly Government (2008u) found that 6 per cent of adults reported being visually impaired. Visual impairment was more common in women than men and increased with age. In general, visually impaired adults reported higher rates of illness than the rest of the population.

In *Equal Treatment: Closing the Gap*, the DRC (Kerr et al ,2005) investigated health inequalities experienced by people with mental health conditions and learning disabilities. The study was based on interviews with 81 adults and 79 children with learning disabilities and follow-up interviews with 75 people; focus groups with 63 people with mild learning disabilities; and questionnaires and telephone interviews with members of 22 primary care teams and with 12 of the 22 LHBs in Wales.

The key findings were that people with learning disabilities had a higher rate of diabetes and a much higher rate of obesity than the general population. Rates of hypertension and asthma were lower. Of the 181 people who had health checks, new health needs were identified in more than half, including 8 per cent who had serious health problems such as breast cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure. In the follow up checks, two-thirds of those participating had new health needs, one in 10 having serious problems.

In a different study, Perry et al (2008) published new figures on health checks for those with learning disabilities (which had been introduced in 2006) to ensure that this group had the same access to health services as others. The figures showed that only one third of those eligible had received a health check with two-thirds receiving an invitation for a check. There was significant variation across localities – two-thirds of those living in Torfaen, Conwy and Swansea had received a health check with the figure dropping to 5 per cent in Rhondda Cynon Taf and Merthyr.

Skapinakis et al (2005) undertook a statistically based piece of research to explore mental health inequalities in Wales and the impact of area

deprivation, concluding that mental health differences in Wales could be partly explained by the level of regional social deprivation.

Age

There is a very substantial literature on the general health status of children and young people, adults and older people in Wales which is beyond the scope of this project. Instead, we have highlighted reports of particular relevance or which themselves provide summaries of research.

Children and young people

The NPHS produces a number of documents which draw together a wide range of statistical sources on the health and social characteristics of children and young people. NPHS (2004b, 2007a) provide key information on demography, determinants of health (including lifestyle), health status including data on morbidity, and mortality. Its review of health statistics and research for the National Service Framework for children and young people (NPHS, 2004c) covers very similar ground. It concludes that the general health of children has improved in recent years, primarily due to improvements in general living conditions e.g. sanitation, housing and nutrition, assisted by better health care interventions such as immunisation programmes. Reductions have been achieved in childhood deaths, accident rates have gone down and progress has been made in detection and treatment of many childhood diseases. However, the report also points out that there is scope for further improvements in levels of child health and that new threats to the health of children in Wales are emerging, e.g. mental health conditions and obesity.

The NPHS review of the health circumstances of children in what they term 'special circumstances' (NPHS, 2004d) concludes that there is a 'dearth of information'. There is, however, evidence that children in special circumstances frequently have unrecognised and unmet needs and are more likely to have poorer health than other children. The report cites an Office for National Statistics survey in 2004, which found that looked after children have a much higher rate of mental health conditions than those in the general population. Looked after children may have additional needs derived from poverty, undiagnosed health problems, poor uptake of preventive health care and histories of abuse or neglect but there are currently no routinely collected data on many aspects of the health status of these children.

The NPHS (2004e) reviewed evidence on children's mental health in general, and found that there were no routinely collected data on children's mental well-being. It notes the conflicting evidence on the prevalence of mental disorders, which range from one in 5 to one in 10 children, and also different evidence on the rates of depression and anxiety amongst boys and girls. Mental disorder is more common amongst Black children, children with special educational needs, families with five or more children, lone parent families, and low income and low social class families. Factors that increase children's vulnerability to mental health conditions are: having a learning disability; experience of physical or sexual abuse; enduring physical health problems; and having a parent who has a mental health condition. The risks are increased where there are a number of factors or an accumulation of experiences.

Meltzer et al (2003) uses data from a national survey of the mental health of young people aged five to 17 years, who are being looked after by local authorities in Wales. The report identifies the prevalence of mental health conditions in terms of three main categories: conduct disorder, hyperactivity, and emotional disorders by child and placement characteristics. It also looks at the impact of children's mental health conditions in terms of social impairment and adverse consequences for others as well examining service use. Of the five to 17-year-olds looked after by local authorities in Wales, 49 per cent were assessed as having a mental health condition.

NPHS (2004d) also notes that there are no routine data collected on the health of children living in families where there is domestic violence. It cites a study that was undertaken in Cardiff (Webb et al, 2001) to describe the health and developmental status of 148 children living in refuges for women victims of domestic violence, which identified that children had a high level of need. NPHS (2004d) also finds that no routine data are available to describe the health status of homeless children in Wales.

Another report in the NPHS series, on maternity, (NPHS, 2004f) reviews evidence on teenage pregnancy, although much of it is GB or UK wide. However, the report does note the significantly higher teenage conception rates and teenage birth rates in different parts of Wales, and notes that teenage pregnancy is associated with poorer health outcomes for both mother and baby.

Clements et al (2004a) presents the findings from the 2001/2 Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) survey, and compares Wales with other countries. The focus of the report is on sexual health. Parry-Langdon and Roberts (2005) provided information (as part of an international study but with a Wales-specific dimension) on the relationship between social economic factors and selected health outcomes for young people, concluding that deprivation clearly impacts both on this and behaviour.

A study of young carers in Wales (Seddon, 2001) concluded that:

- There is no accurate demographic information on young carers.
- There is no standard definition of young carers.
- There is no clear framework detailing who was responsible for young carers within local authorities.
- Local Education Authorities and local health groups were not aware of young carers.
- Practitioners lacked an explicit framework for assessing young carers needs.
- Young carers projects offered an invaluable source of support and provider of information.
- There is a significant gap between policy and practice.

Older people

The 2001 Census shows that the proportion of individuals with a limiting long-term illness (LLTI) increases markedly with age. Significantly lower rates are found in rural Wales and Cardiff, with significantly higher rates found in the South Wales Valleys (NPHS, 2007b).

Burholt and Windle's (2001) literature review for the Strategy for Older People in Wales considers evidence on cardiovascular diseases, traumatic brain injury, cancer, mental ill-health including dementia, musculo-skeletal conditions, and hospital discharge. The review highlights the much higher prevalence of almost all conditions amongst older people, although the data on which the review is based have now been superseded. Unfortunately much

of the research cited is not specific to Wales, and some of the research and policies are also now somewhat dated.

A similar review of literature on health promotion for older people in Wales (Windle et al, 2002) highlighted the following areas of particular concern: mobility, eyesight, medication, modifications to the home and osteoporosis. Once again, however, almost all the evidence cited is not specific to Wales.

The NPHS (2004g) provides a general profile of the health of older persons aged 65 years and over. Information is shown for Wales, the 22 local authorities/local health boards and, where appropriate, electoral divisions. The profile contains section on demography, determinants of health, dependency and general health status. NPHS (2007b) provides more detail. It finds that most people aged over 65 years of age report at least one chronic condition, and the number of conditions reported increases with age. The most common problems relate to movement, vision and hearing. In terms of eyesight, the report quotes data from the Welsh Health Survey (2004/05) that show a steep increase with age in the proportion of people reporting eyesight difficulty so that 10 per cent of males and 17 per cent of females have eyesight that is not good enough to enable them to see the face of someone across a room, with glasses or contact lenses. In terms of hearing difficulties, almost half of women and a third of men over 75 years old reported a problem (NPHS 2007b).

The most comprehensive and up-to-date source is the Welsh Health Survey, with latest data available for 2005/06 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i). The data show that health status scores decreased with age indicating poorer health in older people. The percentage of people being treated for specified illnesses increases with age except for asthma, mental health and epilepsy. The improvement in health status scores with age for mental health provides an alternative view to other reports on older people and mental health.

In 2001, Charles and Jones examined morbidity and mortality amongst older people. This examined mental health issues but also identified areas of higher disease/condition prevalence amongst older people including: osteoporosis, visual and hearing impairment; incontinence; iatrogenesis; ischaemic heart disease; stroke; respiratory disease and cancers. This is supported in the available statistics which demonstrate unsurprisingly that older people have higher levels of many serious health conditions.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified. Davies et al (n.d.) suggest that there may be differences because of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people's greater use of alcohol and tobacco and less frequent screening may contribute to higher incidence of certain diseases in later life, and also more widespread mental ill health, but the conclusions are based on reviews of UK and other literature rather than being Wales-specific.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

4.3 Access to Health and Social Care Services***Race***

A scoping study undertaken prior to the creation of a Health and Social Care Research and Development Network covering Black and ethnic minority groups in Wales concluded that there was a dearth of information about the health of ethnic minority groups (Saltus, 2005a). A network has now been established, but output is currently relatively limited.

The various ASERT reports (Aspinall, 2005, 2006a, 2006b, 2007; Papadopoulos and Lay, 2005; Papadopoulos et al, 2008) explore problems of ethnic minority groups accessing health promotion. Difficulties are attributed to a lack of interpretation, health promotion materials and events not being in community languages, and events and materials not being culturally appropriate. In terms of health professionals, it is stated that there is a lack of cultural awareness and that communities themselves do have cultural factors that affect their health and access to services. The reports also provide a series of recommendations in making improvements for health promotion services.

Further information on health promotion is provided by Leedham and Akhtar (2002), who reported on a research and development programme in Wales specifically looking at diabetes health promotion amongst ethnic minority communities in Wales. They found that people from ethnic minority communities were more likely to have a healthy diet if provided with dietary advice that accorded with their usual or traditional diet.

The Welsh Consumer Council (2005a) reported on consumer access to health information and concluded that those from ethnic minority groups faced

barriers from: difficulties in finding professional translators; losing spontaneity when using a translator; doctors not always explaining illness or medication adequately.

Brown et al (2006) looked at the experiences of 677 Black and minority elders in Wales and found that eight out of 10 were aware of local health services that were available, almost all had used their GP service, and over half had used hospital outpatients' services. Most had a positive view of the services. Criticisms, where they were made, tended to relate to a perceived lack of interest by service providers of the needs of older ethnic minority people, the lack of an interpretation service and generally poor communication. The majority felt that people from their own community had the same opportunity to access services as those from other community groups, but when the issue was pursued in more depth, all except those from the Jewish community felt that they were treated unfairly by parts of the health service because of their ethnicity. The Audit Commission in Wales (2003) undertook a review of diabetes services, which included an assessment of the awareness of the particular needs of ethnic minority people. It concluded that local health boards underestimated the prevalence of ethnic minorities in their areas and recommended greater targeting of services and awareness raising activities.

The Minority Ethnic Women's Network Wales (MEWN Cymru) (2006) documents the diverse experiences of ethnic minority women's organisations in Wales and the impact of these organisations. Although primarily written in narrative form, usually by the organisations themselves, there are some conclusions and recommendations on the way forward generally. The report concludes that a national mapping exercise is required and that the creation of a national forum is 'imperative' in order that organisations can provide practical support to one another, create a stronger voice and influence key decisions. MEWN Cymru also produced *Bridging the Gap* (2005) which although not health-specific does explore issues of ethnic minorities groups access to information and services concluding particularly the difficulties of those living in more rural communities in doing this.

The NHS Centre for Equality and Human Rights has developed the Patient Equality Monitoring Project (NHS CEHR, 2005) and has reported on developments within this, including the preparation of an ethnic monitoring resource, good practice guidance and an E learning tool, as well as training. It has also reported on progressing the data set notification in respect of ethnic minority coding for the PEDW and on information on ethnic minorities from GP

practices. Whilst not formally written up, a report to the steering group in June 2006 reported that:

- GPs were under no obligation to collect information about their patients' ethnic origins, impairments, preferred languages, religion or sexual orientation.
- The Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF), the method by which GPs are remunerated, includes only one single QOF point for GP practices that collect ethnic origin from 100 per cent of patients registering to that practice during the year and this was significantly limiting the availability of robust data on ethnic origin.
- The NHSCEHR would assist GP practices in collecting information (although no subsequent written up information on this is publicly available).

The CRE (2007a) also examined the implementation of race equality schemes in local government in Wales which has implications for this review, particularly in accessing social services. Although progress is reported, the pace of change was felt not to be sufficient fully to meet the requirements of equality legislation. The report states that community strategies, corporate and improvement plans very often make tokenistic references to equality and the report particularly cites the lack of inclusion of Gypsies and Travellers within schemes. Williams and Hold (2007) similarly found very slow progress amongst health boards and local authorities preparing race equality schemes.

A number of other reports have emerged which examine specific localised projects. One explored the health and care needs of Chinese women and older people in North Wales (Black Environment Network, 2006). This report concluded that there were difficulties in accessing funding for Chinese community services, in particular a Chinese nursing home; concerns about the availability of health services (such as eye tests) and an interest in developing culturally specific and appropriate health education initiatives. The SHARP project funded the 'Barefoot' Health Workers Project which reported in 2006 (SHARP, 2006). The overall aim of the project, which used an action community-based research methodology, was significantly to improve the health of socially disadvantaged and excluded ethnic minority groups. Although this could not be demonstrated within the timescale of the project, a range of activities and a two person model for working with the community

were developed. A report on the SHARP-funded 'Triangle' project in Riverside Cardiff highlighted the need for accessible health activities for women from ethnic minority communities (SHARP, 2005a). A 'Women in Action' network was formed with its first project providing women-only swimming sessions – at the point of evaluation, 130 women had participated in the project; 30 had received swimming lessons; and 10 had gone on to train as lifeguards (SHARP, 2005b). Other local studies have been identified but they are unpublished and have not been accessed (Saltus, 2005b; Pearce, 2004; Ethnos, 2003).

Gender

The Welsh Health Survey provides data on reported contact with various aspects of health care. Data for 2004/05 highlight a number of gender differences in access to health care. Seventeen per cent of adults in Wales reported visiting their family doctor within the previous two weeks, with more women than men doing so. More women than men also reported visiting a dentist in the previous year, an optician and a pharmacist. Women also comprise the majority of hospital admissions (56 per cent). In addition, women had more contact with community health services – one in four women compared with one in eight men reported contact with a health visitor, district nurse or community nurse and one in eight women compared with one in fourteen men reported contact with a chiropodist. Only in the extent of their contact with a physiotherapist were women and men about the same (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i).

On a particular aspect of health care that only affects women, a review of maternity services by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) (2007a) indicated that on the whole maternity services are being delivered in a safe and effective way. The Audit Commission's review of diabetes services (Audit Commission in Wales, 2003) found that provision for pregnant women was 'generally weak' and recommended improved monitoring.

Disability

The lack of evidence on access to health care by disabled people is surprising. What is available suggests that disabled people's experiences of health care are often poor.

HIW's review of how well the NHS in Wales commissions and provides specialist learning disability services for young people and adults (HIW, 2007b) did not find 'significant failings' in Wales as had been found in

England, although it did conclude that services were 'stagnating'. However, the review did highlight variation in services within Wales and also identified 'institutionalised comfort' wherein people are well cared for in terms of fundamentals but lacked stimulation. There is also a clear lack of investment in speech and language therapy (SaLT) which is key to helping people communicate better and in advocacy services, as well as flaws and gaps in systems for transition planning, assessment processes, and deficiencies in staff training leading to unmet needs. In an audit of the Children's NSF, Beyer and Richards (2008) point out that health care services for disabled children in Wales scored the lowest of all services and were well below meeting minimum targets. Children in Wales (C. Lewis, n.d.) also highlight the shortage of a number of different types of therapy provision for disabled children.

Kerr et al (2005) found that learning disabled people had slightly higher consultation rates than the general population with primary care. However, given the prevalence of diabetes amongst the group, they concluded that the number of consultations by people with learning disabilities nevertheless 'may be lower than expected'. Their analysis highlighted issues about making appointments, the attitudes of professional staff, time available to discuss problems, and the extent of explanations provided. Although these issues are common to other people using primary care, Kerr et al (2005) suggest that people with learning disabilities may have less confidence and be less persistent in seeking medical help.

Mencap (n.d.) found a generally high level of satisfaction with primary care services. Kerr et al (2005) suggest that the reason Mencap's findings differed from their own study may be due to different methodologies used, although the problems that were identified were similar: e.g. waiting times, anxiety, lack of privacy, difficulties with receptionists, communication problems with doctors, and insufficient time in consultations. We also identified another study by Mencap titled *Fulfilling the Promises* which we were unable to locate.

In terms of mental health conditions, the Wales Audit Office's baseline review of services found that: there are significant gaps in key elements of service delivery with considerable scope for greater co-ordination and integration of services for adults; the approach to empowering and engaging service users and carers varies considerably; and current planning and commissioning arrangements do not fully support the development of whole system models of care (Wales Audit Office, 2005).

A report by the Children's Commissioner for Wales (2007) reviewed child and adolescent mental health care provision in Wales. It concluded that the service was in crisis with fewer adolescent mental health beds per head of population in Wales than anywhere else in the UK. The placements that do exist in Wales are not always able to provide 24 hour care every day of the year and they are often not able to accept emergency admissions. The report also highlighted that children and young people with a mental health condition have to be placed far from home, out of Wales, and usually detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 in order to receive treatment, therapy and services. Many children who normally receive education through the medium of the Welsh language are unable to do so in most placements. There is a particular issue for young people aged 16–18 who are not in full-time education and so are deemed ineligible for support from children's services, but are not eligible for care from adult services, and for learning disabled mentally ill children who are sometimes also excluded from support. In addition, the report found that services for certain other children, e.g. those self harm or whose parents are drug users, were also inadequate. The report highlighted a lack of consistency between areas. The Wales Audit office is currently undertaking an enquiry into the provision of child and adolescent mental health services.

In terms of the experience of care, Turner (2003) undertook a survey of the attitudes of disabled young people to health. Based on more than 100 interviews, the report highlighted the various aspects of health care that children disliked, e.g. the smell of hospitals, food, waiting times, and lack of appropriate information. Wales Council for the Blind's survey of visually impaired people's experiences of health care (Wales Council for the Blind, n.d.,a), based on 25 telephone interviews and comments generated via its website, found that one third of respondents had had difficulty accessing GP services and half had had difficulty accessing hospital services. In both services, the key issues were physical accessibility and the attitudes of staff.

Age

Children and young people

The few studies that we have identified suggest that young people may not be particularly well equipped to access health care. The Welsh Consumer Council (Richards, 2005b) report on access to health information found that although younger people were more likely to use the internet than older people, they were less likely to know how and where to register with a GP or

dentist and were more likely to feel embarrassed and to lack confidence when dealing with health professionals.

Goodwin and Armstrong-Esther (2005) evaluated the SHARP funded Health of Young People in Powys in 2005. The project sought to identify interventions to meet the health and well-being needs of young people living in rural areas and developed four projects to achieve this: Our Advice Shop in School; a health and employment initiative; Radical, a mobile advice and information service; and a Healthy Community initiative.

A study in Cardiff of children living in women's refuges (cited in NPHS, 2004d) found evidence of poor access to services, e.g. because children were not registered with a GP or an incorrect address was held on GP records which meant that they missed routine care such as immunisations.

The HIW's (2007c) review of child protection arrangements in NHS trusts also identified services for adolescents with mental health conditions as an issue, along with the wider issue of appropriate care for adolescents on child or adult wards and liaison between Accident and Emergency services and other services in cases of possible child abuse.

Older people

The draft NSF for Older People in Wales defines standards for health and social services to ensure high quality care. Use of many health services increases with age (but not casualty, where use fluctuated, or for dentists) and the percentage of those on medication increases with age (except for accidents).

The Welsh Consumer Council (2005a) report on access to health information found that people aged over 65 were less likely to use the internet than younger people and that this could cause barriers to accessing information. However, older people were more likely to feel confident dealing with health professionals and to know how to register to access services.

There has been a suspicion voiced, for example by Help the Aged Wales (2007), that there may be discrimination against older people in accessing services. No Welsh-specific literature emerged in respect of this, although one specific study examined the effect of gender, age and geographical location on prevalence and incidence of Renal Replacement Therapy (RRT) in Wales (Van Woerden et al, 2007). This concluded that differences in provision of

RRT were evident, particularly amongst the very old where gender differences for haemodialysis were particularly marked. Significant numbers of very old patients who are currently not receiving RRT might therefore wish to receive RRT as the older population increases and as technology improves.

Matherton (2007) generally examines the impact of age discrimination on a range of health and social care services from a campaigning perspective and argues, for example, that women of all ages should be invited for regular breast cancer and cervical cancer screening and calls for an end to the practice of transferring mental health patients out of adult mental health services when they reach 65 regardless of the mental health condition for which they are receiving treatment. Matherton (2007) also cites a survey which showed that older people (aged 65 or over) were slightly more likely than those aged under 65 to have no access to an NHS dentist (33 per cent compared with 31 per cent).

The Audit Commission (2004) reviewed progress in developing mental health services for older people, primarily to inform the development of the Older Persons NSF. It identified that in 2001/2 those over 65 accounted for:

- 35 per cent of all NHS day care attendances.
- 33 per cent of all Community Psychiatric Nurse visits.
- 40 per cent of hospital admissions.

The report concluded that as the population grows older, this will be accompanied by increasing numbers of older people with mental health conditions. It also provides key challenges in four areas: getting early help and assessment; helping people stay at home; providing services for people who can no longer stay at home; and local commissioning and planning arrangements.

Sexual Orientation

There is limited research in respect of sexual orientation with one national and one local study emerging. Williams and Robinson (2007) found that 56 per cent of respondents reported contact with the health service in the last twelve months and of these, 21 per cent reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This compared with 13 per cent in the general population in the 2004 Living in Wales survey. Eight per cent of respondents felt discriminated

against by their GP; 7 per cent felt discriminated against by their local hospital/health service and 5 per cent felt uncomfortable while visiting a partner in hospital. Whilst discrimination scores were low, respondents living in North Wales were more likely to report discrimination than those living in South and Mid and West Wales. Those also reporting a disability were also more likely to report discrimination than those who did not. Discrimination also varied significantly by age, with those in the 21–30 and 41–50 age groups more likely to report it.

In a more local study, and of relevance given the findings in respect of North Wales above, community led research (Cook et al, 2007) on LGBT people's experiences in North and Mid Wales, which particularly focused on the impact of disclosure of sexual orientation on staff attitudes, concluded that it is necessary to increase awareness and understanding.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

4.4 Lifestyle

Race

As in other areas of health, there is a marked lack of data and research on the lifestyles of ethnic minority communities and no literature was identified on physical activity, nutrition or alcohol (except Ali and Cifuentes, 2006).

In terms of smoking, the All Wales Smoking Cessation Service notes that less than 2 per cent of clients accessing the services are from ethnic minority groups, although there is no Welsh data on the prevalence of smoking (UK data suggest that it is particularly high amongst certain groups, e.g. Bangladeshi males) (NPHS, 2006).

The only other study is on substance misuse in Swansea (Ali and Cifuentes, 2006) which was based on 168 completed questionnaires about half of which were completed by young people. It concludes that more than 50 per cent of the young person sample currently or had previously used drugs, particularly cannabis, alcohol and class A and B drugs (amphetamine, heroin, crack, cocaine). However, it found that 40 per cent of young people were aware of drug support services and only 9 per cent had used such a service themselves or knew of someone who had. The older people's sample was less aware of the issues of substance misuse than the younger people.

Gender

There is a little more information about lifestyles by gender, although it is hardly overwhelming. The Welsh Health Survey shows that men are more likely to meet guidelines for physical activity than women. Gender-specific attitudes to exercise are also explored in a report on physical activity (S. Williams, 2006), which discusses the impact of socio-economic group, age, gender, disability and ethnicity on physical activity. The report notes that men, children, non-disabled people and White people are more likely to be physically active than women, older people, disabled people and ethnic minority people. People from lower social groups are also less likely to be physically active than other people.

Looking at participation in sport, the Sports Council for Wales's survey of adults' physical activity (Sports Council for Wales, 2005) highlights gender differences in the levels of participation and in reasons for it. Women are seven percentage points less likely to be physically active than men and are also less likely to be a member of a sporting club. The top 10 activities for men include several team or competitive sports, whereas, for women the 10 most popular activities are mainly non-competitive and focused on general health and fitness. The report also found that people in rural areas are more likely to be physically active than people elsewhere. However, more recent research (Sports Council for Wales, 2007a) concludes that the gap between women and men's participation has closed, particularly among young people, although a gap still remains in participation in outdoor sports participation.

A more detailed study of participation in sport by secondary school aged girls was undertaken by the Sports Council Wales (2007b). This found that the main barrier to participation amongst both boys and girls is lack of time. Higher percentages of girls than boys feel that they are not good at sport, or do not know about what is on offer, while the main barrier cited by non-participant girls was their perception that they were not good at sport. An evaluation at the end of the first year of the Girls First project was also undertaken (Sports Council for Wales, 2003a).

In contrast to physical activity, the Welsh Health Survey reported that a higher percentage of women met the guidelines for the consumption of fruit and vegetables than men. Men are also more likely to be overweight than women (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i).

The same survey highlights gender differences in smoking prevalence. Slightly more men than women reported that they currently smoked, and slightly more men than women reported that they had given up smoking. Men also reported that they were more likely to be exposed to other people's smoke outside the home, e.g. in pubs and at work – this exposure should have ceased following the ban on smoking in public places in 2007 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i).

In terms of alcohol, the Welsh Health Survey shows that men were more likely to drink alcohol than women, and when they did so, they were more likely to drink above the guidelines than women. A greater proportion of men than women also binge drink. Binge drinking is most common amongst 25–34-year-old men, whereas for women binge drinking is more common amongst 16–24-year-olds (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007i).

There is some limited evidence on substance misuse and gender. Welsh Assembly Government statistics (2007m) state that of the clients seen for treatment of alcohol or drug misuse, more than two-thirds (69 per cent) were male.

Disability

The only relevant research identified is that by Kerr et al (2005) which shows that rates of smoking and alcohol usage amongst learning disabled people are lower than amongst the general population. They also found very much lower rates of cervical and breast screening for women than the general population, although blood pressure measurement was only slightly lower. People with mild learning disability had higher rates of screening than those with moderate or severe disability.

The focus groups participants in the research by Kerr et al (2005) suggested that they were aware of healthy food, the need for exercise, and threats to health from, smoking and being overweight. Some had been helped by GPs to access free exercise facilities but many lacked practical support to adjust diet, take up exercise regimes or give up smoking.

Age

Young people

There is a relatively large literature on children and young people's lifestyles. NPHS (2004b) provides a useful summary of key features of children's lifestyles.

On smoking, NPHS (2004b) cites figures which suggest that 20 per cent of boys and nearly 30 per cent of girls aged 15–16 in Wales smoke regularly. Smokers who start smoking at a younger age are less likely to give up. Clements et al (2004b) find that the proportion of 15-year-olds who report ever smoking in Wales is similar to Scotland, but lower than in England. More girls than boys smoke (65 per cent for boys compared with 51 per cent).

NPHS (2004b) also states that alcohol is widely used by children and young people. Since 1996, there has been a decrease in the proportion of 11–12-year-olds who report drinking at least weekly. In older pupils, however, weekly drinking has increased. Clements et al (2004b) use data from the 2001/2 HBSC survey and finds that young adolescents in Wales report substantially higher rates of regular drinking and drunkenness compared with many of their European and North American counterparts. More than half of 15-year-olds drink on a weekly basis.

There is an increasing trend of self-reported drug misuse among young people in Wales (NPHS, 2004b). The substances most likely to have been experimented with are cannabis followed by magic mushrooms, nitrites, amphetamines and glue or solvents. Clements et al (2004b) find that 36 per cent of 15-year-old boys and 32 per cent of 15-year-old girls in Wales have ever tried cannabis, a lower proportion than in Scotland and England.

Research by J. Williams et al (2001) based on a study of 142 children in local authority care and 119 children not in care found that looked after children were significantly more likely than other children to smoke and use illegal drugs. They were also more likely to experience changes in general practitioner; have incomplete immunisations; receive inadequate dental care; suffer from anxieties and difficulties in interpersonal relationships; and wet the bed.

According to NPHS (2004b), no routine data are available to describe the dietary patterns of pre-school, primary and secondary school children. Gordon and Roberts (2005) analyse the findings of the HBSC study for Wales, and find that less than half of 15-year-olds eat breakfast every day, barely a quarter eat any vegetables every day and barely a fifth eat fruit every day; moreover, between 35 and 40 per cent drink a sugary soft drink daily.

In two smaller scale studies of school children, Bullen and Benton (2004) found that children's concepts about food remain resistant to change despite

enhanced exposure to nutrition information, whilst Thomas's (2005) study of post-16 students found that males tended to regard being healthy as the absence of illness, whereas female students reported the importance of exercising regularly and eating a balanced diet. However, only a small percentage of the respondents identified the importance of eating fruit and vegetables in a healthy diet.

A Welsh Consumer Council report (Kearton 2003) found that in general, young consumers, especially those who had moved away from home, had fairly poor eating habits. On the whole, eating was viewed more as a necessity, meal times were more sporadic, and they expressed a greater demand for quick and easy food. Many had a good grasp of what constitutes healthy eating, but found it hard to imagine changing their habits.

NPHS (2004b) cites a self-reported survey of over three thousand 13–15-year-olds in Wales which indicates that a quarter of the children studied were either overweight or obese. The percentage of children, aged 11–16, exercising at least 4 hours per week outside school is below 50 per cent and is significantly lower for girls than boys (NPHS 2004b). Parry-Langdon and Roberts, (2004) use data from the HBSC survey on physical activity, sedentary behaviour and obesity.

According to NPHS (2004b), no information on sexual behaviour in young people is collected routinely in Wales. For Wales, rates of infection for all recorded sexually transmitted diseases are rising in 15 to 19-year-olds. Twine et al's (2005) study of 426 14–15-year-olds in two Cardiff schools found that the main sources of sexual health information were school, magazines and other young people. Young people are generally well informed about contraception, but ill informed about contraceptive services and have a negative attitude towards their utilisation.

In terms of oral health, the proportion of children brushing their teeth regularly increased from 1986 to 2000. There was a marked gender difference with girls having higher rates of teeth-brushing than boys. High proportions of children consume soft drinks containing sugar every day. Prevalence of dental disease and the percentage of children registered with a dentist vary throughout Wales. Gordon and Roberts (2005) compare data from Wales with other countries and find that in Wales 81 per cent of 15-year-old girls brush their teeth more than once a day, compared with 59 per cent of boys.

NPHS (2004b) states that immunisation data show high rates of coverage for most immunisations with the exception of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). Rates of MMR uptake in Wales are the lowest in the UK, outside of London.

The Sports Council for Wales undertakes a series of biennial surveys of participation in sport. One series looks at children aged 7–11 (Sports Council for Wales, 2003b) whilst the other looks at young people aged 11–16 (Sports Council Wales, 2006). The latest report finds that levels of participation in sport within the school curriculum have fluctuated since 2000, but the out of school activities have increased and the gender gap has closed. The average 7–11-year-old claims to undertake around seven hours physical exercise per week. Dislike of sporting activity was less of a barrier to extra curricular sport than a feeling that ‘they already do enough’, lack of time and ‘not being asked’. Despite high overall participation levels there is almost universal demand among 7–11- year-olds to participate in more sport. The findings for older children show that only 24 per cent take part in enough activity to gain health benefits and that boys are more active than girls. The question of physical activity in school is covered in section 4.5.

A number of studies evaluate the Welsh Assembly Government’s free swimming initiative (Bolton et al 2005a, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b, 2007b, 2007c) and conclude that the initiative had encouraged under 16-year-olds to swim in the school holidays.

Older people

Dix (2005) explored issues regarding older people and health promotion. This promoted the Welsh Assembly Government’s (2004b) Health Promotion Action Plan for Older People in Wales and identified the following statistics in respect of health behaviours in people aged 65 and over:

- 21 per cent of men and 6 per cent of women drink more alcohol than the recommended limits.
- 62 per cent of men and 52 per cent of women are obese.
- 20 per cent of men and 13 per cent of women meet the guidelines for physical activity.
- 16 per cent of men and 13 per cent of women smoke.

In terms of lifestyle, overall the percentage of smokers and of those drinking alcohol above guidelines decreased with age for adults. The percentage of people who met guidelines for physical activity also decreased with age, whilst the percentage of those who were overweight/obese increased with age.

The proportion of people who achieved the recommended consumption of fruit and vegetables showed some increase with age before peaking and declining for older people. Kearton's (2003) study found that older people had consistent eating habits, and more 'traditional' food preferences (meat and vegetables). They were more interested in food than younger people and spent time preparing and cooking meals. They showed good awareness of both 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' foods and were familiar with the 5-a-day concept and the need to reduce salt intake. The majority showed little interest in the nutritional information on food labels, largely as they found it too difficult to read and/or understand.

Welsh Consumer Council (2006a) confirmed that older people prefer traditional food, and also highlighted the impact that restricted movement e.g. because of arthritis, can have on people's ability and confidence in using every day kitchen utensils/appliances. A lack of motivation to cook also appears to be common, especially for those living on their own. Lunch clubs and other similar get-togethers were popular with many.

Burholt et al (2007) found that three-quarters of participants in a study of older people in Gwynedd did some form of exercise or outdoor activity. Bolton et al (2007b) finds that take-up of the Welsh Assembly Government's free swim initiative amongst over 60s had not increased because of a lack of interest in, or skill at, swimming, a lack of awareness of the initiative and poor transport.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature specific to Wales was identified, although Davies et al (n.d.) refer to other research that suggests greater use of alcohol and greater prevalence of smoking amongst LGBT people.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

4.5 Social Care

Whilst there is a relatively large general literature on social care in Wales, much less has been identified that specifically looks at the question of equality of different social groups.

Race

The literature overwhelmingly stresses that ethnic minority groups are 'overlooked' by social care services.

Brown et al (2006) undertook a major study involving a representative sample of 677 ethnic minority people aged over 50 across Wales, five focus groups involving 43 people and responses from statutory and voluntary organisations. They found that, in terms of social care, only half of those interviewed had heard of the help that might be available from local social services and that 'only a tiny minority' had made use of those services. Those who had done so were complimentary about the help they had received. However, there was some feeling that services were not available on an equitable basis and a general impression that local services tended to 'overlook' older people from Afro-Caribbean communities.

A study of ethnic minority carers found that the idea that 'they look after their own' was believed to be widely held (AWEMA, 2003). Based on interviews with more than 40 carers, two focus group discussions and a survey of local authorities and voluntary groups, the report concluded that ethnic minority carers were not receiving adequate support. Providers and carers felt that services were not culturally sensitive, there was a lack of awareness amongst carers of their entitlements and language was also a barrier.

We also identified a study on ethnic minority elders in Wales (Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity, 2000) but were unable to access it.

Gender

A survey of carers in Wales by Yeandle et al (2007a) found that more than a quarter said that they and the person they were supporting were not using any formal services. Carers pointed out that services were not flexible enough, not sensitive enough to needs, and that the person cared for did not want to use services. Over a third said they did not know what was available locally. Yet only 12 per cent of carers did not want to use services, and 62 per cent identified at least one service that they were not currently using, but would like

to have. Respite, breaks and sitting services were 'the most 'wished for' services', echoing findings by Winckler (2007b) and Carers' Wales (n.d. and 2007). A Wales Carers' Alliance survey (Bowen, 2004) found that only half of those surveyed had been told of their right to a Carer's Assessment and that only 38 per cent had actually had an assessment. A high proportion of those who had had an assessment were only partial. Winckler's (2007b) survey of carers in Neath Port Talbot and Yeandle et al's (2007b) study of Anglesey and Swansea found a similar picture, as did Withers' (2008) study of carers of adults with autism.

A number of Seddon's articles have explored the particular care needs of carers but these have not been accessed (Seddon, 2001).

Disability

In terms of the numbers of disabled people receiving social care, Welsh Assembly Government statistics (2007n) show that in March 2007, there were 13,420 people on local authority learning disability registers, 29,760 people with sensory impairments (blind, partially sighted, deaf with or without speech and hard of hearing) and a further 50,700 people had other forms of physical impairments.

Altogether local authorities provided 12.8 million hours of care, half of which was supplied under contract by the independent sector. In addition, the Direct Payments Scheme enables local authorities to offer cash payments to people who use social care services so that they can arrange their own care. A study of the use of Direct Payments (Social Interface, 2007), found only a minority of clients being offered Direct Payments. Awareness was generally low especially amongst mental health service users, and there were concerns about the way in which local authorities made decisions not to offer Direct Payments. Clients themselves did not investigate Direct Payments because they lacked skills and were afraid of the unknown or the responsibility and extra work, and they had low expectations. Where Direct Payments are used, most are used to employ a Personal Assistant, although some clients highlighted concerns about being the employer of an Assistant. Other problems highlighted included financial processes e.g. delayed payments, and the prevailing practitioner culture, which was seen not to focus on outcomes for individuals.

Lewis (n.d.) highlights the shortage of provision of different therapies for disabled children, e.g. occupational therapy and speech therapy, and quotes

a survey by the All Wales Network of Children's Occupational Therapists in March 2004. The survey raised serious questions in regard to equity of access to occupational therapy services across the whole of Wales and concerns that there must be whole groups of disabled children being denied services due to a scarcity of resources. Turner (2003) reviewed disabled children's experiences of social care and found that adaptations and equipment featured heavily in some disabled children and young people's lives. They appreciated extra care at home and had mixed views about spending time away from home, e.g. on short breaks, even though those who had stayed away were largely positive. Disabled children and young people said they needed to be given clearer information about the roles and responsibilities of social care staff.

The Wales Council for the Blind (n.d.a) found that one of the main issues faced by social care clients was the wait between diagnosis and first contact with social services. It found that the attitude of social services staff made a substantial difference to visually impaired people's experiences of the support on offer. In two other studies the Wales Council for the Blind also found that provision of Information and Communications Technology equipment and support was poor in colleges of further and higher education (Wales Council for the Blind n.d.b) and by local authorities (Wales Council for the Blind n.d.c). A study by RNIB Cymru reported that 'thousands' of older people are being left to cope alone when their sight fails. This claim is based on Unseen (RNIB, 2004), which found that older people with sight problems are at an increased risk of accidents, poverty and social exclusion because of inadequate support.⁹

Withers (2008) surveyed 132 adults with autism and interviewed nine adults as case studies. She found people with autism do not receive the help and equipment they require quickly. For example, 63 per cent of adults with autism had had problems trying to access appropriate support from a local authority or health services, while 36 per cent were not in receipt of a service as their local authorities did not have appropriate provision in place. Respondents reported that services are not provided with regard to dignity, privacy or equality in all settings. Only 47 per cent of adults had had an assessment of needs from their local authority since the age of 18, and 41 per cent had been told they could not be provided with the support they needed because they did not fit into existing service structures.

⁹ The report is cited on www.rnib.org.uk (accessed 16 June 2008).

The Welsh Assembly Government also funds advocacy services via its Advocacy Grant Scheme. An evaluation (British Institute of Learning Disabilities, 2005) found that a diverse range of advocacy initiatives had been supported. It concluded that the grant had been of significant benefit to learning disabled people, but the nature of the funding worked against developing support. However, it also identified significant gaps in the provision of advocacy including people from Black and ethnic minority communities or people with high support needs, as well as the self-advocacy needs of younger people.

In terms of carers' health, Tommis et al (2007) looked at the mental health of carers in rural and urban areas of north Wales. They found that a sitting service was linked to improved mental health irrespective of where carers lived, but that support from friends and family only improved mental health in urban areas.

Age

Young people

According to Welsh Assembly Government (2008v) 4,807 children in Wales were looked after by local authorities at 31 March 2008, slightly fewer than in the previous year. Foster care is by far the most common form of long-term care, although placements are by no means long term. Eleven per cent of looked after children had three or more placements during the year. The main reason that children were looked after was abuse or neglect.

During the year to 31 March 2008, 477 children aged 16 or over ceased being looked after. Less than half (46 per cent) had at least one GCSE or GNVQ. Of the care leavers who were still in touch with their local authority on their 19th birthday (93 per cent of leavers), only 49 per cent were in education, training or employment.

A census of all children in need is currently being developed. This aims to collect data about children in need and children on the child protection register who remain living within their families and communities. The census measures their characteristics, the activities of social services departments and some of the associated costs. A pilot is underway.

Older people

Very surprisingly, there does not appear to be much literature on social care and older people. Wenger, et al (2002 – not accessed) reported findings from

the Gwynedd Dementia Study, which found that levels of formal service inputs were low, but that most of the carers appeared to receive the services they needed. Problems were primarily associated with crisis support and long-term care is accepted reluctantly. Seddon and colleagues are currently researching the unified care pathway for older people with complex needs, in the context of their carers and have previously investigated, inter alia, the decisions of older people to enter residential care and the care needs of young carers.¹⁰ They have undertaken evaluations of services for carers in Neath Port Talbot and in Conwy, and of the Welsh Carers' Strategy and Carers' Grant, but unfortunately the project reports do not appear to be in the public domain.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

Welsh Language

In terms of the Welsh Language, the NHS Welsh Language Unit commissioned a study of Welsh language awareness in health care provision (Roberts et al, 2004), which particularly examined language choice in using health services and the effect of individual and organisational attitudes on this choice. As with other studies, the report concluded that greater staff awareness, in particular, as well as the availability of Welsh language services was important in future developments. This is reinforced by Madoc-Jones and Dubberley (2005), who explore the discrimination that may be experienced by Welsh speakers in accessing health and social care services in Wales. It emphasises the importance of providing linguistically appropriate services in Wales and suggests that the current provision of services in the Welsh language is limited or inappropriately framed. The authors also suggest a future direction for the provision of Welsh language services.

The issue of access to Welsh language services is also explored in a study of community pharmacies (Hughes et al, 2008). They identified that prior research had shown that Welsh speakers would generally prefer to use Welsh when discussing health issues, yet that option was not always available. The research used a questionnaire to establish that while there were high levels of Welsh language provision in some pharmacies, this was not the case

¹⁰ See http://www.awardresearch.org.uk/profiles_dianeseddon.html for details.

uniformly across Wales. There was significant variation from region to region, which generally mirrored the Welsh-speaking data from the 2001 census. Moreover, the study concluded that promotion of the availability of pharmacy services through Welsh relied in most cases on word of mouth. This meant that Welsh speakers might not be aware that access was in fact available.

The issue of accessing Welsh-speaking staff is taken forward in the response of the National Autistic Society (NAS) to the Welsh Assembly Government's Speech and Language Services for Children and Young People in Wales (National Autistic Society, n.d.). This finds a shortfall of 10.5 whole time equivalent Welsh-speaking therapists, but NAS suggests that this represents a minimal level of demand and that demand to meet the needs of those within the autistic spectrum alone is higher. The issue of access to Welsh-speaking health and social care professionals has recently formed part of the Health, Social Care and Well Being Scrutiny Committee's review of workforce planning within Wales (National Assembly for Wales Health, Wellbeing and Local Government Committee, 2008).

A study by Beaufort Research (2007) for the National Childminding Association (NCMA) into the use of the Welsh language within childminder settings in Wales surveyed childminders. The study found that almost 90 per cent used Welsh to some extent with the children they looked after. Childminders overwhelmingly believed that the demand for Welsh language childcare was growing and that this was driven principally by growing attendance at Welsh language schools.

Rurality

The Wales Rural Health Intelligence programme, based at the Institute for Rural Health, has generated a large number of reports on various aspects of rural health and well-being, which are too numerous to review here. However, in very many of them, the evidence is not specific to Wales.¹¹

The issue of rurality has been addressed with the overall emphasis on health and social care equalities. Buchan and Davies (2005) reviewed the literature in respect of access and service models in rural health. As with the ASERT studies, they used systematic methods and again found little that was Welsh-specific and concluded that there was a lack of evidence to inform access and service model issues in rural health.

¹¹ For details, see <http://www.irh.ac.uk/publications/respub.php#rhipmain>

Another study (Gartner et al, 2007) provides a profile of rural health in Wales examining demography, social determinants of health, access to services, rural deprivation, life expectancy, hospital admissions, mortality and morbidity. The report concludes that assumptions that rural environments are healthier are open to question particularly where there are pockets of low income. Health status is not uniform across rural communities. The less populated rural areas tend to have better outcomes and determinants of health than the more populated rural areas, while urban areas have poorer health status.

In terms of access, the report uses the pattern for elective admissions to hospital to demonstrate that the rates for those in more densely populated rural areas are similar to their urban counterparts whilst, unsurprisingly, those in less populated rural areas have lower rates. This may be due to access to hospitals, although interestingly it appears not to have impacted on health outcomes. The report, alongside the others already cited, states that more complex analysis is needed.

White et al's (2007) survey of town and community councils in rural Wales, found that 68 per cent of councils have no GP practice, 84 per cent have no dental practice, and 75 per cent of responding town and community councils had no pharmacy service. As expected, a very low proportion of settlements with the small populations had a GP surgery, whilst a higher proportion of larger communities – but by no means all – did so.

However, Milbourne and Hughes (2005) concluded that the perception of problems associated with accessing services is greater than the reality of such problems amongst rural households. Their survey found that 60 per cent of respondents considered that local people were experiencing difficulties accessing health services, although only 18 per cent actually reported difficulty accessing dental services and only 13 per cent did so for accessing a general hospital. Burholt et al's (2007) study of older people in Gwynedd outlines older people's experiences of difficulties accessing health care services.

4.5 Conclusions and Research Gaps

There are significant gaps within all the equality strands in the provision of specific all Wales studies. Notwithstanding the claims on the lack of literature on ethnic minority issues, the gaps are particularly marked in gender, disability, sexual orientation and religion (where no literature emerged at all).

Although some limited statistical information is available in respect of age and gender, there is little statistical information available for the other equality strands both in terms of patterns of disease, access to services, lifestyle or social care. This is notwithstanding the substantial investment in the Welsh Health Survey, which is the primary source of data. There is a key gap in profiling the pattern of diseases amongst those from ethnic minority groups in Wales. This is important given that some conditions, such as diabetes and kidney disease, are more prevalent in some ethnic groups than others. There are also gaps in understanding experiences of accessing services and these are particularly marked in social care where very little literature emerged at all. What evidence that does exist is mostly about the experiences of disabled people (especially learning disabled and visually impaired).

There are some potential developments on the horizon. As part of developing the research infrastructure in health and social care, the Wales Office of Research and Development in the Welsh Assembly Government has funded the development of the Wales Equality and Diversity in Health and Social Care Research and Support Service (WEDHS). The initial activity of the network was to undertake a scoping study to establish research priorities (Saltus, 2005a). Since then a number of research projects have been commissioned, mainly on ethnicity issues. These were due to be completed in November 2007 but have yet to provide published reports. These include:

- Mainstreaming Equality in the Wales NHS and Local Government: evaluation of key policy and strategy documents.
- A review of research that has specific focus in health and social care of ethnic minority groups in Wales (1980–2005).
- A study to explore the extent and nature of cultural diversity training within social work in Wales.

In conclusion, there is limited Wales-specific evidence in relation to equality and health and social care. The government has emphasised the reduction of health inequalities as a key component of Welsh health and social care policy, although the major focus of this is on socio-economic inequalities. In part, this might be attributed to the greater numbers affected by deprivation and this does of course cut across equality strands. There is a greater focus on macro determinants of health inequalities and on public health and health promotion than on service access issues, with a greater emphasis on health than social

care and little on parenting. There is clearly a need to develop and increase the evidence base for understanding the need for, and access to, health and social care services spanning the whole of Welsh society.

5. EDUCATION

Anita Naoko Pilgrim

Wales has long had an administrative control over its education system, which commentators describe as allowing for the development of a distinctive Welsh education (Daugherty and Jones, 2002; Rees, 2007; see also Rees and Power 2007; Fitz, 2000). Most recently, a Learning and Skills (Wales) Assembly Measure has been proposed under the provisions of the Government of Wales Act 2006 (see Welsh Assembly Government, 2008w).

Education and training currently come under the auspices of the Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills. Several formerly separate institutions have in the last couple of years been brought into the department. These include Education and Learning Wales (ELWa) and ACCAC (the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales), so that the department is now responsible for curriculum development and assessment in schools and the broader learning and skills sector (further education, adult learning, work-based learning, etc.). ESTYN (Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales) inspects each individual institution (apart from higher education institutions) and also reviews national provision in key areas which include areas of equal opportunity.

Controversially, control over teachers' pay and conditions of service have not been devolved to the Welsh Assembly Government and remain the responsibility of the Department for Children, Schools and Families for England and Wales, although the funding for teachers' pay comes out of the Assembly budget. The 22 local authorities in Wales deliver education as a core part of their service provision (Jones, 2002).

A non-selective comprehensive school system is still being encouraged in Wales, with an emphasis on collaboration rather than competition (e.g. through refusing to publish league tables). Also, the abolition of testing up to Key Stage 3 (age 14) and the recent introduction of a Foundation Phase of schooling for 3–7-year-olds means that early education in Wales follows a Scandinavian model of early start at school but late formal education. The introduction of the Welsh baccalaureate currently underway will also contribute to the distinctive character of Welsh secondary education

Responsibility for higher education is divided between the Welsh Assembly Government and individual universities, which have their own charters and

considerable independence. The universities are represented by Higher Education Wales – the national council in Wales of Universities UK (formerly the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the United Kingdom). Funding for Welsh universities is partly derived from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) but, significant tranches of funding come from UK-wide and international sources.

5.1 Policy Context

At the policy level, much work is being done which responds to the duty placed on the Welsh Assembly Government by the Act of 1998 to have ‘due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people’. The account of education policy by Chaney et al (2007: 170–74) focuses on gender, but offers an incidental understanding of how equalities in general are enshrined in policy. They comment that:

...the Assembly’s first years have seen the start of a series of unprecedented measures to engender state education policy in order to promote equality.
(Chaney et al, 2007: 174).

This comprehensive summary identifies four areas in which the Assembly government makes equality a central theme: strategic leadership, curriculum planning, training and inspection arrangements. However an ACCAC publication acknowledges:

...the key role in gender equality in schools rests with the governors, teachers, managers and local authorities. These are the people who create the atmosphere and culture of our schools on a day-to-day basis.
(ACCAC, 2001: 7)

Equalities in education remain enshrined in policy rather than being widely embedded in practice. In general, research suggests there is a gap between national and local government policy and between policy and implementation. In particular, ESTYN’s (2005a) survey on the implementation of the ACCAC guidance on equality and diversity found much remained to be done, as outlined below. Much of the research in all areas identifies a lack of dissemination of good practice and this may be one of the reasons for this problem.

There is a great deal of legislation and guidance which impacts on equalities and education in Wales, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – formally adopted by Wales in January 2004, the Government of Wales Act 1998, human rights legislation in Europe and equalities legislation passed in Westminster. In 2001, the National Assembly for Wales published *The Learning Country* (Welsh Assembly Government 2001a), its vision for education in this first decade of the 21st century. This has been followed by *The Learning Country 2: delivering the promise* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006k) and there is also a section on education in *One Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b), the agreement on power-sharing between the present Labour and Plaid Cymru government.

The Learning Country included a chapter on equalities issues, making reference to the absolute duty incorporated in the Government of Wales Act 1998 and also acknowledged the cycle of social, economic and educational disadvantage in which many people in Wales live and the need to tackle this in a knowledge economy. In *The Learning Country 2*, the separate chapter on equalities is no longer present.

The one equalities area explicitly referred to in *One Wales* is ‘Additional Learning Needs’ (formerly called Special Educational Needs), although there is implicit reference to continuing to tackle poverty and disadvantage and mention of rights to education for:

...[e]veryone, from whatever background, of whatever age, and whether Welsh-speaking or English-speaking.
(Wales Assembly Government, 2007b: 21)

Matters have moved on significantly since the publication in 2001 of ACCAC’s *Equal opportunities and diversity in the school curriculum in Wales*, with increased mainstreaming of equalities in documents related to governance – in particular, the ESTYN inspection guidance.

In guidance on inspecting primary and secondary schools, equality issues are thoroughly embedded throughout. For example, ESTYN is instructed not only to ensure staff teach in a way that *pro-actively ‘promotes’* (my emphasis) equal opportunities but also to ascertain whether students from different social, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds succeed. The latest guidance for primary and nursery schools and for secondary schools, which will come into effect from September 2008 (ESTYN, 2008), has been updated since the

2004 guidance (ESTYN 2004b) in line with recent research findings. For example, under '1.4 Do pupils succeed regardless of their social, ethnic and linguistic background?', the 2004 guidance documents only call for the inspector to see how different groups of pupils are performing. The 2008 guidance adds:

Different groups include pupils with SEN, pupils learning English as an additional language (EAL), looked after children, traveller children, children who are disabled or have medical needs, those with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and those who are more able and talented.

In 2002, the Welsh Assembly Government published its strategy on higher education *Reaching Higher* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002c). This and other higher education policy work in Wales is compromised by the need for higher education to operate in the global education market, without the available funding at the level of the Welsh Assembly Government unilaterally to support such ambitions. As Jones comments:

Government priority now was that the Welsh higher education sector contribute increasingly to the Welsh economy. In any case, without a successful economy the cultural and linguistic contributions envisaged in the early days could not materialize. (Jones, 2007: 33)

Research by the National Foundation for Educational Research (2006) highlights the important role of the voluntary and community sector in promoting a culture of lifelong learning in Wales. This sector provides widespread flexible learning and has good links to hard-to-reach groups. The research also identifies challenges faced by the sector. Other research (Pilgrim and Scourfield, 2007) has found that voluntary and community sector and statutory organisations make considerable contributions to anti-racist education in schools.

The Welsh Assembly Government (2006i) provides a good assessment of the availability of statistical data on equalities in education:

The School Performance Information system has detailed primary and secondary school data, which can be analysed by age, sex, and (to a certain extent) Welsh language ability. There are plans to

have more Welsh language data; and to have information [on] disability and ethnicity, but not religion or sexual orientation. The Higher Education Statistics Agency collects data on universities and other higher education institutions, which can be analysed by age, sex, ethnicity, and whether the student gets a disability allowance. There is information on courses taught through the medium of Welsh but no data on Welsh language ability, nor [any] on religion or sexual orientation. The Labour Force Survey has some data on education and training. The survey also has data on age, sex, ethnic group, religion, a range of Welsh language abilities, disability (as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act), and limiting long-term illness. There are no questions on sexual orientation.

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2006i: 51)

Gorard et al (2004) bring together a number of sources of data, including those on housing and health in Wales, not only to explore different facets of social, economic and educational disadvantage, but also to look at the links in patterns of disadvantage. The authors acknowledge that it is already commonly known that poverty is at the back of much 'disengagement', 'exclusion' or 'deprivation' – as the problem is variously termed. They make two important additional points. One is a critique of the way in which engagement with education is explored (mainly through asking those already engaged what problem they have had accessing courses). The second is to suggest that there is a generational attitude to learning which leads to whole families excluding themselves from support networks which are designed by government to lift them out of poverty but which they feel are 'not for them'.

Welsh Language

Policy documents that provide a statutory framework within which education is offered in Welsh and bilingual media include all the major education policy statements (Welsh Assembly Government, 2001a, 2006h, 2007b). Education policy is regarded as a keystone in the development of the language; Cen Williams describes a:

...language shift which has happened during the second half of the twentieth century, whereby the education system and the State rather than the hearth and home have increasingly become guardians of the Welsh language.

(Cen Williams, 2000: 129)

Williams also points to the gradual success of policies aimed at increasing take-up of Welsh medium education (in 1960, 33 candidates sat Welsh medium papers at O level in four subjects; in 1996, there were 16,540 entries at GCSE in 49 subjects).

Cann (2004) gives an account of relevant policies on the Welsh language and how these impact on education, including *Iaith Pawb*, the Assembly Government's action plan for a bilingual Wales. ESTYN (2004a) provides 'an overview of the "state of the nation"' in regards to Welsh language standards and provision in education, particularly following the publication of *Iaith Pawb*.

A finding in ESTYN (2004a) common to all the education sectors was the difficulty of recruiting appropriate staff to deliver the Welsh or bilingual education envisioned by national and local government adequately. However, considerable effort is being made to identify best practice in training more Welsh-speaking teachers and teachers of the Welsh language (Cen Williams, 2000; Roberts, 2002; ESTYN, 2004a). Another issue is continuity. ESTYN (2004b) comments on the drop in take-up between primary and secondary Welsh medium and bilingual education. Similarly, Cann (2004) notes the way in which a lack of sufficient provision in Welsh medium at the Higher Education level encourages students to switch to English medium schooling in order not to disadvantage themselves at later stages of their education. Publications also comment on the inevitable disparate level of provision across education sectors between the areas of North and North West Wales, where a majority of the population are Welsh speakers, and South Wales, where a majority speak English (see Chapter 1).

ESTYN (2004b) notes that a number of Local Education Authorities (LEAs) were producing their second Welsh Education Schemes (five year plans) in 2004 and that these were felt to be of better quality than those produced in the first round. However, the report comments that there is too much variation between LEAs in the numbers of students taking Welsh at different levels and too few strategies to raise the awareness of parents about the benefits of bilingualism.

5.2 Early Years

Early years provision is important not only for the children themselves, but also to allow their parents to engage in education. Among the programmes aimed at tackling child poverty (see Egan, 2007, for a recent account), Flying Start is aimed at early years and builds on the success of Sure Start, in line

with UK government programmes aimed at tackling child poverty in the earliest years and in the most deprived areas. Egan (2007) notes that it is too early for reliable evaluation feedback on the success of these programmes. However, a recent report by Save the Children and the Bevan Foundation (2008) commends the Welsh Assembly Government's work in tackling child poverty in the early years. A further initiative on which there has been some positive evaluation are the Integrated Centres, which offer a combination of adult and early years education as well as childcare facilities (Seaton, 2006).

Race

O'Neill (2007) notes that some parents are discouraged from taking part in education by the unavailability of childcare within their own ethnic community.

Gender

No relevant literature was identified.

Disability

No relevant literature was identified.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant literature was identified.

Religion

No relevant literature was identified.

Welsh Language

ESTYN (2004a) found that young children aged 3 to 5 are making good progress and receiving a good foundation towards their Welsh language skills, even when they come from homes where only English is spoken. The voluntary organisation, Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, was mentioned as providing effective support in this regard. However, there were too few data on numbers of children learning in Welsh in the non-maintained sector.

5.3 Primary and Secondary School Education

Chaney et al (2007) describe how the Assembly Government saw developing a Wales-specific National Curriculum as an opportunity to ensure it should be one with equality of opportunity and respect for diversity at its core. Personal and Social Education and Work Related Education were included as statutory elements with equalities issues embedded in them. The inspection framework and guidance documents for ESTYN also require inspectors to look for work,

which respects a wide range of specific equality strands, and whether schools pro-actively promote equal opportunities.

Two reports published in 2007 explored awareness of their rights by children and young people of school age: a consultation by the Children and Young People's Assembly (Funky Dragon 2007) and an edited collection of thinking among Non Government Organisations (Croke and Crowley, 2007). Funky Dragon (2007) found a lack of awareness among children and young people of their rights. This report identifies bullying as a major issue in education. It found that young people's opinions varied widely as to whether Personal and Social Education is useful and recommends that this should be an examined subject, taught by specially qualified teachers. There is divergence between how teaching is practiced and young people's ideas about teaching with respect.

Croke and Crowley's report explores progress made since the 2002 United Nations release of Concluding Observations of the Committee of the Rights of the Child on the United Kingdom. Education issues all receive an 'amber light' – good progress has been made, more needs to be done. The report recommends developing whole-school approaches, engaging groups such as children with special educational needs and Gypsy Traveller children.

A report by ESTYN (2007a) on those educated outside schools notes that almost all local authorities in Wales keep accurate data on these students. An earlier report on Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) noted that two-thirds of authorities could not systematically account for students not on school rolls.

Welsh Assembly Government (2007o) provides an account of the programmes and policies which it plans to implement to ensure that children's rights under the United Nations Children's Rights Convention are respected. There are also specific Welsh Assembly Government guidance documents on education for citizenship (2006i) and tackling bullying (2003e) and a Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales document on developing a curriculum which reflects equal opportunities and diversity (ACCAC, 2001).

A major thematic review on work to tackle bullying in Wales, with a full literature review, is to be published shortly by the Children's Commissioner for Wales. This will include reference to *prejudice bullying*. The review will recommend that internet support (a website) should collate and disseminate

examples of good practice in work to tackle bullying, and that policy-making and research units on bullying should be established. The Welsh Assembly Government has also recently commissioned a study of bullying.

Butler's (n.d.) study of identity-related bullying amongst 77 young people in Cardiff (based on focus groups and participant observation) found that all aspects of bullying were important to young people and that they did not want to focus on just one aspect. Bullying in school was found to be universal, and young people were critical of school approaches to tackle bullying. The report then looks at bullying and racism, disability and sexual orientation, and concludes with a number of recommendations to improve ways of dealing with bullying.

Race

There was little published research on race and ethnicity in education in the 1990s (Williams et al, 2003), but the situation has substantially improved in the last few years. In the most recent research, there is recognition of the need for multi-variant analysis and effort to provide this, although there is also doubt as to whether the data available are robust enough for this purpose. Another recent positive development has been commissioning studies on particular ethnic groups rather than homogenous surveys of Black and ethnic minority communities.

Statistics show a gradual rise in the numbers of school pupils from an ethnic minority background, with higher figures at present in primary schools (this is in line with Census findings for Britain). In 2006/07, the ethnic background of 94 per cent of all pupils aged 5+ specifying a category was reported as White (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007d). In terms of the breakdown within different schools, Welsh Assembly Government (2007n) shows that 93.2 per cent of pupils in primary schools were White and 4.9 per cent were from an ethnic minority background. A similar breakdown is evident in secondary schools (94.2 per cent White and 3.8 per cent from ethnic minorities) and in special schools (93.3 per cent White, 4.4 per cent from ethnic minorities).

A higher percentage of pupils from a Chinese or Chinese British ethnic background achieve the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) than any other ethnic group at all the Key Stages; the Black ethnic group has the lowest percentage of pupils achieving the CSI at each Key Stage. The figures also suggest children of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller backgrounds do poorly (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008x).

A study undertaken for the Welsh Assembly Government (Briggs et al, 2006) analyses statistics on the achievement of ethnic minority students. This study uses the dataset for all students in Wales, so it should be highly valid. However, there is evidence that ethnic monitoring in Welsh schools is inadequate (EALAW, 2003; Pilgrim and Scourfield, 2007).

Briggs et al (2006) find that when poverty in particular is taken into account, there are few significant differences in ethnic minority students' scores. They note that girls do better than boys, except among Indian and Chinese students, and much better than boys among Pakistani students. It recommends that these anomalies should be further explored. Black Caribbean pupils outperform White British pupils at age 11. However, O'Neill (2007) finds that Black and Asian students start secondary school already at a lower attainment level than other groups. Briggs et al (2006) note that by the time Black Caribbean pupils leave school, they are the only group to perform worse than White British. The authors suggest that aspirations and values drawn from families and communities can be key.

EALAW (2003) found that ethnic minority pupils in Wales have a lower attainment at Key Stages 1–4 by substantial margins (although there is wide variation between ethnic groups). Like Briggs et al (2006), the study notes that poverty played a strong part, but concluded that poverty alone did not account for the gap in attainment levels, particularly for boys. EALAW comment on the strong evidence of social and educational inequality between different ethnic groups in Wales which they attribute to: proficiency in English (as students' proficiency in English increases, girls 'close the attainment gap' but not boys); gender; Special Educational Needs; attendance (prolonged absence was common among some ethnic groups); socio-economic background; time in UK (and whether born here); parental education and literacy (particularly of the mother).

The EALAW report found that low achievement for most ethnic minority groups is more pronounced in secondary than in primary school. Black Caribbean pupils were found to do better than average at Key Stage 1, but suffer a marked decline at Key Stage 4. The report also noted that levels of training and confidence amongst teachers on cultural diversity and dealing with racism were unacceptably low. The recommendations included that better efforts should be made to involve parents and develop a diverse curriculum.

In 2005, both Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils achieved a lower average points score at Key Stage 4 than the overall average points score. In general, girls achieved a higher points score than boys across ethnic groups, but this was particularly marked in the Pakistani population. The proportion of Pakistani and Bangladeshi pupils achieving five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C was relatively low however the vast majority attained at least one A* to G pass. Whilst a high proportion of these pupils were not attaining the highest levels, they were still gaining worthwhile qualifications (Lee, 2007).

Croke and Crowley (2007) identify other groups whose educational attainment is significantly below average: working class White boys and children from Gypsy Traveller and Roma, Black and Asian ethnic groups. In spite of concerns about the achievement of White working class boys in Wales, there are no studies of White students in Wales.

The large majority of exclusions from school (2005/06) were of White pupils who accounted for more than 90 per cent of permanent exclusions, exclusions of five days or fewer and of six days or more. The next largest number was of students of mixed heritage, followed by Asian, then Black (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007p). Although the majority of exclusions are of White pupils, this is a smaller proportion than the percentage of the school population, and since children and young people of Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller backgrounds appear to be counted as part of the White population in schools, these data would benefit from further disaggregation.

Aspinwall et al (2003) comment on the extensive disrespect and lack of cultural awareness shown by both peers and adults for ethnic minority children and young people. They also found that the content of education did not reflect cultural and religious diversity. A study of ethnic minority populations in rural Wales found parents whose concerns about racism were not treated appropriately by schools (Gardner and Lanman, 2005). Gorard (1997) comments on a number of Asian families in Wales opting for private schooling, arguing that this is to get away from Welsh-language teaching. Scourfield et al (2002) write of Asian parents in the Valleys choosing private schools for their children so they could mix with international students.

Whilst research on issues of ethnicity in primary and secondary education remains patchy, it has significantly improved in a short space of time. A 1997 survey of schools in Torfaen cited in Williams et al (2003) found no evidence of ethnic monitoring, few schools with explicit policies on racist bullying, few

schools geared to multicultural education and reliance on the voluntary sector for interpretation. Earlier studies (Gorard et al, 1997) can only find that ethnic minority people in Wales are better qualified than their White counterparts.

O'Neill (2007) examined Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and African Caribbean communities in South Wales. Key barriers relevant to primary and secondary students identified were:

- Lack of fluent English language skills.
- Lack of practical support in Pakistani and Bangladeshi homes.
- Lack of appropriate support at key transition times (from primary to secondary and from school to university).
- Information and support to move on to higher level courses or into mainstream provision is not timely or comprehensive enough.
- Lack of positive role models from own community.
- Lack of understanding of the UK education system (for some communities).
- Low confidence and low aspirations.

Gypsy Travellers

The situation of Gypsy Traveller children and young people in education illustrates the importance of qualitative research in this field. Data on this group are not widely available, yet this is the lowest achieving ethnic group in education in Wales. In some datasets, people from these backgrounds are incorporated in the category of White students; thus they disappear into a much more highly achieving ethnic grouping, and also serve to bring down the average of that group.

The policy review of Gypsies and Travellers by the National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee (2003) found that different definitions of Gypsy Traveller people had led to enormously varying population estimates and that data collection was made more difficult by an association with eviction and worse for Gypsy Traveller people. In 2006/07, Gypsy/Roma and Irish Traveller children formed 0.2 per cent of the school

population in Wales at the primary school level, but 0 per cent of the secondary school population (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007p).

ESTYN (2005b) found that attendance by Gypsy Traveller children and young people was very poor. The same report found that Gypsy Traveller children's level of social and basic skills was judged to be low.

Research confirms that Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller families hold basic education in high regard, but view secondary education as inappropriate to the cultural and vocational ambitions they hold for their children. The policy review of Gypsies and Travellers by the National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee (2003) recognised a clash between a cultural tradition of education within the family with a child's right to full-time education up to age 16. Barriers identified were: prejudice, discrimination and bullying; accommodation issues; parental concerns about the school environment; traditional Gypsy Traveller model of education within the family; mobility and broken patterns of education; unfamiliarity of the school environment; and irrelevance of the curriculum.

A recommendation that best practice in Gypsy Traveller education should be collated for education professionals does not seem to have been acted on. Additional recommendations called for support for mobile families, a more inclusive curriculum and more involvement of families (there is now one school in Wales with a Parent-Governor from Gypsy Traveller communities). The attitude of Head teachers was mentioned as key.

In 2006, the Assembly Government commissioned research from the National Foundation for Educational Research into the education of Gypsy Traveller students (Jones et al, 2006). The research found that most Gypsy Traveller children in Wales attend primary education, but that approximately half of the Gypsy Traveller children do not continue to attend secondary education. There were a number of barriers identified to secondary education. The research showed that there is a need for additional funding to support the education of Gypsy Travellers because of the additional educational needs of this group, their lack of attainment, and the cultural influences which impact on their engagement in education. The report also recommended that there should be an overarching policy across local education authorities for Gypsy and Traveller children, and echoed recommendations made in other reports such as having a named contact worker in schools and local education authorities.

ESTYN (2005b) found examples of good practice in provision for Gypsy Traveller children, but that few schools promote positive aspects of Gypsy Traveller culture and few have a specific policy in place. In feedback to Pilgrim and Scourfield's (2007) study, Save the Children Fund Cymru staff, who have undertaken extensive project work with Gypsy Traveller children, confirmed that although there are cases of good practice in engaging with Gypsy Traveller children and young people's needs for education, these are patchy and poorly disseminated. A Save the Children Cymru survey of gypsy traveller children undertaken as part of the National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee (2003) report found a very high level of sustained bullying and prejudice. Save the Children Cymru also notices that schools seem unaware that Gypsy Traveller people's rights are covered by Race Relations legislation.

In addition, qualitative research points to the deep suspicion which Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller communities feel towards monitoring, associating it with eviction and worse (Jones et al, 2006; National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee, 2003).

Refugees and Asylum seekers

A consultation on refugee inclusion was circulated in 2006 by the Welsh Assembly Government (2006a) and finalised in Welsh Assembly Government (2008d). It identified schools as a crucial site for inclusion. Refugee and asylum seeking children and young people were said to be succeeding in school, although participation in extracurricular activities is low, mainly owing to poverty. The strategy made mention of specific funding set aside for refugees and asylum seekers, inclusion through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Strategy and guidance for teachers to complement this strategy.

Hewett et al (2005) found that both young people and professionals spoke highly of education provision for refugees and asylum seekers. However racism and bullying were common. Some Head teachers showed reluctance to accept students when they heard the word 'asylum seeker' and a couple of students had been moved to more ethnically diverse schools.

Gender

While there was considerable research on gender and education in the 1990s, mainly in relation to adult women rather than girls and young women, there seems to have been very little in the 2000s. Over 25 years, a problem has been identified with continuing strong uptake of gender stereotyped courses

and career choices. An EOC report from 1993 cites progress having been made in the previous 10 years, but that difficulties remained with young women's low aspirations and stereotypical course and career choices. Chaney et al (2007) cite a number of ACCAC policy documents stressing the need to tackle this question and commenting that:

...this difference is more marked in Wales than in other parts of Britain.

(Chaney et al, 2007: 171)

ESTYN's updated *Guidance on the Inspection of Secondary Schools* notes that:

Boys as a group underachieve compared with girls. Girls tend to leave school with low career aspirations. Girls and boys often make stereotypical choices of options and subjects at all stages.

(ESTYN, 2008: 98)

Between 2005 and 2007, girls continued to perform better at the Core Subject Indicator than boys at each Key Stage. The gap was smaller in Mathematics and Science than in English and Welsh First Language and has been decreasing slightly each year for the last 3 years (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008x). Girls outperform boys at all stages of education (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007q), with more girls than boys reaching the expected levels in Key Stages 1, 2, and 3 for languages; and slightly more for mathematics and science (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j). More girls get five 'good' GCSEs (i.e. grades A to C) than boys, and the gap has widened slightly in recent years, with 45 per cent of boys and 55 per cent of girls achieving this level in 2001, and 46 per cent of boys and 58 per cent of girls doing so in 2005 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j). More girls (56.9 per cent) get five good GCSEs than boys (46.2 per cent) and girls get a higher average GCSE score (43.0) than boys (36.8) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h).

Although rising concern has been expressed about boys' under-achievement, including in reports on ethnic minority communities (see above), there has been no research exploring this topic in any depth in Wales, although Skelton et al (2007) reviewed the UK evidence for the EOC.

Butler (2005), reporting on a Barnardo's project, found girls and boys segregating from early on, and gender stereotypes still impacting upon the children's aspirations and expectations for themselves and of each other. Renold and Allan (2006) provide some clues as to how this disjunction between achievement at school, yet low aspiration comes about. They describe how high achieving girls in primary schools have to figure out a complex balancing act between being 'bright' (academically able) and 'beautiful' (fitting a feminine ideal). In order to be popular, it is necessary to downplay achievement although some girls choose to celebrate their achievement at the expense of friendship networks. Renold and Allan note that in their efforts to fit in between what are perceived as contradictory ways of being, high achieving girls are often undermined by comments from teachers which suggested a lack of femininity or draw on stereotypes of the ethnic group they were from.

An EOC in Wales 1999 report *Different but Equal* advocated a 'whole school approach' to sex equality, pointing to under-representation of women on Boards of Governors and at Head Teacher level. In the 1990s, there were concerns about girls' aspirations, in particular those of Asian girls, and the lack of gender-specific policies in LEAs and schools, but the focus was shifting to the under-achievement of boys in qualifications. Salisbury (1996) called for ESTYN to undertake rigorous monitoring and reporting on equal opportunities and noted that although LEAs offered training and support, schools did not report taking this up, and that monitoring systems were not up to task (see also Reid, 1995).

Differences in the performance of boys and girls in each local authority are more or less the same. There are two exceptions. In Ceredigion, the difference is nearly double the average difference for Wales, but in The Vale of Glamorgan the results for boys and girls are almost the same (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j). More boys leave school with no qualifications than girls, but the numbers are going down for both (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007r).

In primary and secondary schools, girls and boys had similar rates of overall and unauthorised absenteeism, and girls and boys also have similar levels of truancy (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007s, 2007t, 2008h).

Boys accounted for over seven out of 10 permanent exclusions in 2005/06 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007t). Four times as many boys as girls are

permanently excluded from school: in 2004/05, the numbers stood at 374 boys and 91 girls (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007d). ESTYN (2005c) found that a high number of students in PRUs were boys and many had been inappropriately statemented.

In 2007, boys comprised 51 per cent of those completing Year 11 (normally aged 15/16). Most of these (84.5 per cent of the total) went on to full-time education or work-based training, with girls more likely than boys to follow this route. A higher proportion of boys than girls entered the labour market and twice as many boys as girls entered employment outside Government supported training. Boys were also more likely than girls not to be in any form of education, training or employment (Careers Wales, 2007).

A forthcoming publication by Emma Renold based on research conducted with Sally Holland (both at Cardiff University) will look after children will discuss the problematic representations of girls in care as 'failed' educational subjects, with 'failed' social and occupational futures. The research will also examine the ways in which girls try to negotiate an education when 'home' is experienced as a series of multiple dislocations (Renold, forthcoming 2009).

In terms of physical education, ESTYN (2007b) reports that unattractive sports kit and old-fashioned changing facilities with a lack of privacy put girls and young women off PE. Activities offered were too often traditional team games. The report recommends that PE teachers consult girls and young women on what activities they would enjoy, make a wider range of activities available, including at lunch times and after school, and that schools look for ways of engaging girls and young women in physical activities after they have left school. The Sports Council for Wales has also undertaken surveys of sport activity in primary schools and in secondary schools (Sports Council for Wales, 2007c, 2007d) which look at participation in more detail.

Disability

A policy paper from the Welsh Assembly Government (2007u) summarises recent research in Wales on disability and education. Drawing on research from Britain, it suggests that a high number of those with special educational needs (SEN) and disabled children may not be engaging in education. The paper notes that providers in Wales are unable to identify the full costs of supporting Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. There is no national approach to funding this support and providers find the funding framework confusing and burdensome. The paper recommends reviewing

assessment and funding systems, and looking at ways to help disabled young people move from education into employment. It identifies a lack of a range of essential professionals to support disabled learners. NPHS (2004a) cites data from 17 visual impairment advisory services across Wales, representing 839 blind and partially sighted pupils, which shows that the majority of pupils with a visual impairment were being educated in the mainstream sector.

ESTYN (2007c) briefly describes the adoption of the social model of disability by the Assembly in 2002 and provides an evaluation of the system of measuring outcomes for disabled learners. It identifies problems with inaccurate Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census data (the Welsh Assembly Government is taking action on this) and the datasets held by all 10 LEAs (which some are addressing). The report recommends reaching a common agreement on what defines learning outcomes for disabled learners based on personal achievement rather than crude attainment. It identifies problems with transmission of records between education establishments.

ESTYN found that disabled learners do not have equality of opportunity and therefore do not achieve as well as they might. There has been little change for disabled learners since the *Student Voices* research on behalf of the Tomlinson committee (1996) and too little emphasis is still placed on the perspective of the learner. The survey also found that standards of achievement and quality of teaching are good and sometimes excellent. A few learners do not receive the health or psychological support they need (there is often a long wait for support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). There are significant barriers in the way of disabled learners moving on to vocational and work-based learning. Sometimes learners are frightened to disclose mental health conditions to providers and do not receive appropriate support. The report also found that learners with challenging behaviour do not always receive support in managing anger.

ESTYN (2005c) found there was no published information about the number of students in PRUs with Special Educational Needs (SEN), nor any analysis of those needs, although it is likely that most of these students experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

ESTYN (2004b) also published a report on best practice in the development of statements, and a review of support for children with SEN which called for awareness raising of early intervention programmes among children and families (ESTYN, 2003). The latest Special Educational Needs Tribunal for

Wales's annual reports (2004, 2005, 2006, 2007) note that the number of cases coming to tribunal increased over the first part of the decade, only declining in 2006/07. Successive reports commented that the number of disability discrimination cases was low and pointed out that the former Disability Rights Commission did not offer a mediation service in this field (Special Educational Needs Tribunal for Wales (2006, 2007)).

A DRC in Wales report (Lewis et al, 2007) draws on research undertaken in a specific Unitary Authority in Wales, supported by an all-Wales advisory group of disabled young people, which it compares with research in Scotland and England from what was a GB-wide study. The research showed that, generally, parents were satisfied with schools, although parents of children in special schools were comparatively dissatisfied with the level of choice available to them. There was some evidence that parents felt schools worked hard to accommodate special needs, but that more needed to be done at the government and Local Educational Authority level. The research found a higher proportion of exclusions in Wales than elsewhere, but there is a need to ascertain if this is an anomalous statistic which relates only to the specific authority in their case study. This figure seems to be confirmed at the national level by data from the Welsh Assembly Government (2007t). Lewis et al consider students referred to special schools may be included in this figure. Given the extremely high number of students excluded who are receiving School Action support for SEN and that ESTYN found a lack of data on students in PRUs with SEN, there is a clear need to fill a major gap in research understanding of the issue of students with SEN who are excluded from education. There was strong awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, which may have led to the higher willingness to ask schools to make changes in order to accommodate children's needs. The report recommends that the considerable goodwill of parents of children and young disabled people should be supported with more effective explanation of schools' approaches. The study noted the problems for young disabled people and difficulties in transitioning from education into employment and found that there was considerable expertise in managing this in the voluntary sector which could be drawn on by statutory providers.

Turner (2003) reviewed the views of disabled children and young people on their education and found that they had very mixed views and experiences. Some disabled children and young people in mainstream school felt they were treated differently from non-disabled students, and bullying was a significant issue. Many disabled children felt that many teachers did not listen or

understand their needs whilst teaching support staff were supportive. Making friends and peer support were vital. Many disabled children faced long journeys to school which they did not like.

In 2001, the Welsh Language Board published a comprehensive research study on Welsh and bilingual medium provision for students with SEN (Roberts, 2001). The report makes several recommendations, including the need for holistic and integrated planning for SEN Welsh medium and bilingual provision, better dissemination of good practice and more cross-agency working. It notes staff shortages in areas such as speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and educational psychology. This report has been followed up by an Assembly Government Action Plan (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006j).

In 2003, one out of the fourteen special schools was found by ESTYN to be unsatisfactory in making no provision in Welsh, contrary to statute. Generally, however there was good or satisfactory provision with the use of incidental Welsh and the promotion of awareness of Welsh culture (ESTYN, 2004a.)

Pupils with statements

In January 2008, 14,994 pupils had statements of SEN – a decrease of 585 on the previous year (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008y). 1,404 pupils were newly assessed as requiring a statement during 2007, compared with 1,417 in the previous year).

91 per cent (13,692 pupils) of the total with statements were educated within their 'home' local authority. Twenty-five per cent of those educated within their 'home' authority are educated in special schools (3,375 pupils). As in 2007, just over half the number of pupils with statements were educated in ordinary classes, and just over a fifth were taught in special classes of mainstream schools. The percentage of pupils educated in mainstream schools – whether in the 'home' LEA or outside – varied considerably across LEAs, from 93.3 per cent in Ceredigion (which does not have a special school) to 17.6 per cent in Bridgend (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008y).

The percentage of pupils with SEN achieving the Core Subject Indicator between 2005 and 2007 ranges from nearly 47 per cent at Key Stage 1 to 10 per cent at Key Stage 4 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008x).

Around 50 per cent of exclusions from schools in 2005/06 were made up of students who were accessing School Action support for SEN. Around 10 per cent of students excluded had a statement (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007t).

GCSE results of disabled people are worse than those of other people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a) and they are nearly twice as likely to have no qualifications as other people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h). It is important to note with all these statistics that there is a significant number of disabled children who do not have a statement of SEN, although there will be overlap between the two groups.

Sexual Orientation

There is no research on resources for LGBT people in education.

A survey commissioned by Stonewall (Williams and Robinson, 2007) finds that there are high levels of homophobic bullying in education in Wales. Bullying took place because of the sexuality of parents and carers as well as because of the presumed sexuality of a child or young person. A study funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (Scourfield et al, 2008), exploring suicide risk among young people over issues of identity, gender and sexuality, collected data in Wales as well as England.

ESTYN (2005d) reports that sex and relationships education is rarely taught to a high standard in Wales and there is virtually no reference to LGBT sexuality in this report. A report from Terence Higgins Trust (2006) highlights the lack of provision for LGBT young people in Cardiff and the consequent lack of locations for delivering sexual health education. This places young men questioning their sexuality at risk, since their only opportunity to explore is in bars and nightclubs.

Religion

Funky Dragon (2007) reports that of those young people who had religious needs, 45 per cent said these were never taken into account. Aspinwall et al (2003) found that one of the complaints children and young people made about school uniforms was that these did not make allowance for religious faith. The Welsh Assembly Government has revised guidance on school uniforms following a legal case involving the exclusion from school of a Sikh girl for wearing a bracelet which had religious symbolism (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008z).

The last review of religious education undertaken by ESTYN was in 2000 (ESTYN, 2000). Although this found that standards had improved over the previous six years, events in the intervening time have placed a much higher importance on the role of religious education in establishing a tolerant and equal society. In a telephone conversation ESTYN said they did not think they were undertaking a new review soon (telephone query 15/5/2008).

Welsh Language

Rising demand for Welsh medium education in some areas has led to some children and young people being denied a place. ESTYN (2004a) comments on a lack of forward planning in this regard (see below). As discussed above, some ethnic minority parents are choosing Welsh medium education for reasons which have not been researched. There are currently a number of proposed closures of English medium schools in Cardiff and in this way, the City Council hopes to free up buildings and per capita budget allocations for more Welsh medium places. These plans are highly controversial.

ESTYN (2004a) found an issue of continuity; a significant drop between primary and secondary Welsh medium education, and figures from 2006/07 (see below) suggest this trend continues. A large proportion of students were found to be switching to learning Welsh as a second language at Key Stage 3. There were many reasons for this, such as a lack of provision of some subjects in Welsh medium at local secondary schools or decisions made by parents about secondary education in Welsh. However, ESTYN (2004a) did express concern over some schools seeking to boost the percentage of grades in Welsh as a second language in GCSEs by including first language Welsh speakers.

Inspection evidence showed that standards were good for Welsh as a first language at Key Stage 1 and improving at Key Stage 2. Standards were also improving significantly at Key Stages 1 and 2 in Welsh as a second language. Levels of achievement were consistently high in Welsh as a first language at both Key Stages 3 and 4 and the cohort being entered for GCSE in Welsh was rising slowly (in 2003). Standards were lower for Welsh as a second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 and rising slowly. A considerable proportion of students (a third) were not being entered for Welsh either as a first language or as a second language at GCSE, although it is a compulsory subject at Key Stage 4. Girls performed better than boys in Welsh at all levels. Language centres for non-speakers of Welsh new to Welsh-speaking areas were found to be effective (ESTYN, 2004a.)

Trends show that the number of pupils being entered for GCSE and A level in Welsh has increased over the past two years. Inspection evidence suggests that standards are improving (ESTYN, 2004a.)

The proportion of pupils taught and assessed through the medium of Welsh in Key Stages 3 and 4 continues to vary between LEAs in traditionally Welsh-speaking areas. The overall proportion of Welsh-medium subject entries at A level has also increased steadily in the last few years, with almost all subjects showing an increase. The highest proportion of Welsh-medium entries occurs in humanities, art and music, whilst the proportions in science and economics are low (ESTYN, 2004a).

In 2006/07, 22 per cent of classes in maintained primary schools used Welsh as the sole or main medium of instruction and 15 per cent of pupils in year groups 7 to 11 were taught Welsh as a first language and 84 per cent as a second language (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007d.) Examination results from Welsh medium schools are better than those from English medium schools (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h).

5.4 16–19 School Education

Race

Ninety-eight per cent of those who claimed maintenance allowances in Wales – a proxy for participation in post-16 education – classed their ethnicity as White, and 1 per cent each said that they were of mixed race, of Asian or British Asian origin, or Chinese or other ethnic origin. Less than a half of one per cent made up the group who were 'Black or Black British' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008aa). These figures are interesting given the claim in Briggs et al (2006) that it is poverty rather than ethnicity which is behind the lower achievement of some groups of ethnic minority students, particularly Black or Black British.

In 2007, lower percentages of ethnic minority than White students in Year 12 (normally aged 16/17) were moving on to formal education and training, and more were known not to be in education, employment or training (4.9 per cent compared with 3.2 per cent of White students). In Year 13 (normally aged 17/18) a slightly higher percentage from ethnic minority groups continued in full-time education (81 per cent compared with 78 per cent of White students). The least popular route for White students was work-based training non employed status, and the least popular route for those from ethnic minority

groups was work-based training employed status. A higher percentage of those from ethnic minority groups in both years did not respond to the survey or had left the area (Careers Wales, 2007).

Ethnic minority learners (both males and females and from all age groups) are well represented in school sixth forms, further education institutions and local education authorities, although learners from ethnic minorities under 30 are significantly under-represented in work-based learning (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006k). However, the available data (for 2001/02 and 2002/03) show that the completion rate for qualification aims undertaken by ethnic minority learners was well below the average of 84 per cent. The lowest completion rates were for learners of a Black ethnic group (77 per cent), in particular male Black learners (76 per cent). The attainment rates for learners from ethnic minorities were also below the average attainment rate and again the male Black learners had the lowest attainment rates – 40 per cent compared with an average of 60 per cent. Twenty-five per cent of ethnic minority learners recorded 'other' (i.e. not continuing in learning, entering employment or seeking work) as their destination on leaving learning, compared with 9 per cent of White learners (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006k).

Refugees and Asylum seekers

Hewett et al (2005) found that separated (unaccompanied) refugee and asylum-seeking children over the age of 16 were inappropriately placed in classes with adults, depriving them of important friendship networks.

Gender

In 2007, more students in Year 12 (normally aged 16/17) were female than male. The great majority went on to full-time education or work-based training, with a slightly higher proportion of girls (90.7 per cent) than boys (88.0 per cent) doing so. More boys than girls entered the labour market or employment outside Government supported training. The findings for Year 13 students were similar (Careers Wales, 2007).

Girls do slightly better at A levels than boys; in 2005, 70 per cent of girls who entered two or more A level examinations got two or more A levels (grades A–C), compared with 64 per cent of boys. Moreover, more girls aged 16 to 18 (62 per cent) are in full-time education than boys of this age group (53 per cent) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j).

Disability

ELWa (2005a) provides an assessment of disability issues in the post-16 education sector which is very similar to that drawn by Welsh Assembly Government (2007d) in education as a whole. Learners with Learning Difficulties who were interviewed were generally happy with the education support they received (but this should be treated with caution as interviewees may have had low expectations). However, the report draws attention to a lack of knowledge about the full costs of supporting Learners with Learning Difficulties, disparities of funding available to different providers and the confusing and burdensome funding structures. The funding structures could not always respond to specific needs of learners, e.g. for short courses. Recommendations made related to a clearer and simpler funding and data collection system; staffing (including shortages in some areas); a system allowing better sharing of resources; and collaboration and forward planning.

A DRC (2004) report on the post-16 education sector found significant good practice in individual colleges and that many disabled students have benefited from a supportive attitude. However it also found examples of stereotyping, ignorance and an inflexible attitude towards disabled students in Wales. Other findings in the report included:

- There were poor support services for deaf and dyslexic students in general, and for visually impaired students in smaller Welsh colleges.
- Only half of Further Education colleges had provisions to alert disabled students about emergency evacuation.
- Over a third of colleges had websites which disabled people find difficult to use.
- There was poor provision of adapted furniture and ergonomic equipment in South Wales's colleges.
- There was poor provision of adapted software for students with dyslexia.
- There was a lack of availability of British Sign Language provision, especially in parts of North Wales.
- The Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) was inadequate for many deaf students.

- There were delays in the provision of support.

Four per cent of those who claimed maintenance allowances classed themselves as disabled (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008aa).

Amongst the population as a whole, about the same proportion of disabled people as non-disabled people have one or more A levels as their highest qualification. However, only half the proportion of disabled people compared with non-disabled people have a higher education or degree level qualification (Welsh Assembly Government 2003a).

Sexual Orientation

No relevant research was identified.

Religion

No relevant research was identified.

Welsh Language

ESTYN notes the difficulties recruiting Welsh-speaking staff (ESTYN, 2004a). Cen Williams (2000) confirms that there are problems in training Welsh medium teaching staff. In his feedback from research on post-16 education provision in Welsh, he comments on the way in which classes have to be provided in a pragmatic way according to administrative necessity, rather than with the development of the individual student's linguistic proficiency in mind. In 2005, the Welsh Assembly Government published an updated Bilingual Vocational Strategy, in which it identified continuing problems with a shortage of staff and resources and set out its aims for developing Welsh medium provision in the post-16 education sector (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005j).

5.5 Further and Higher Education

In 2007, a higher percentage of those in ethnic minority groups completing Year 11 (normally aged 15/16) (almost 7 per cent) continued in full-time education than those who were White (Careers Wales, 2007).

Race

According to Welsh Assembly Government (2007v), 4 per cent of students in Welsh further education institutions were of an ethnic minority origin in August 2005, while 2 per cent of work-based learners were of an ethnic minority origin. In 2002/03, White students made up 92 per cent of the undergraduate

population in Wales, and 71 per cent of the postgraduate population. Asian students were the most numerous ethnic minority group among both undergraduate and postgraduate students (3 per cent and 13 per cent respectively). Chinese students made up 9 per cent of the postgraduate population. Eighty per cent of these students came from outside the EU:

There were almost 4,800 students with a minority ethnic background coming to Wales from outside the EU. This is a large proportion of the total minority ethnic population in Wales. (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004a: 37).

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) confirms that data are available for each year up to 2006/07 on the ethnicity, gender and disability of students at Welsh Higher Education Institutions in their publications (for purchase), and that if requested (for a fee), they could provide data on Welsh-domiciled students studying at other UK universities in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability. (Telephone conversation with HESA, 8/5/2008.)

A survey of 50 ethnic minority further education and work-based learning learners (York Consulting, 2006) found that overall, learners gave a positive account of their experience and enjoyed their learning environment. Most of the challenges faced by the learners in their learning environment related to generic issues, which were no different to other learners, like the lack of facilities or transport difficulties. A small number of those consulted highlighted some experience of stereotyping by teaching staff or difficulties with teaching styles when English was not their first language. Consultations with stakeholders highlighted the work being done to address the needs of BME learners and potential learners.

The study by O'Neill (2007) of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and African Caribbean communities in South Wales found a lack of appropriate support during transition from school to university, although Welsh Assembly Government (2005h) found that three out of 10 people from ethnic minority groups have a university degree compared with one in five White people.

Refugees and Asylum seekers

Numbers of refugees and asylum seekers on Higher and Further Education courses is low, the main barrier being that overseas fees are currently

charged (ELWa, 2005b).¹² The University of Glamorgan Race Ethnicity and Access to Learning (REAL) project supports re-training and re-accreditation of refugee health professionals.

Gender

At the end of 2005, a higher proportion of females than males aged 19 to 24 were in full-time education (25 per cent compared with 22 per cent) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007v). Throughout the 1960s, the number of men at university was double the number of women, but there are now proportionately more women students (55 per cent) than men (45 per cent) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j).

Disability

8 per cent of students in Welsh further education institutions in 2005/06 were disabled (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007v). Disabled people are half as likely to have a degree as non-disabled people. There are higher proportions of disabled male than female students taking further education courses. Disabled people receive as much job-related training as non-disabled people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a).

Age

Nearly a quarter of people in further education are over the age of 50 and nearly one in 10 is in higher education. Three out of 10 working age people over the age of 50 with no qualifications had taken part in some form of learning (not necessarily related to their work) over the past year; for those with GCSE qualifications (but nothing higher) it was six out of ten; and for those with a degree it was nearly nine out of 10 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008c).

Sexual Orientation

No relevant research was identified.

Religion

No relevant research was identified.

Welsh Language

The Welsh Assembly Government's bilingualism unit (previously ELWA's) is funding the development of materials in vocational areas such as caring and

¹² A number of organisations are lobbying for change on this.

health and tourism and leisure where bilingual needs are greatest. They have also planned a pilot training scheme to help Welsh-speaking FE teachers gain confidence to teach bilingually (ESTYN, 2004a).

In further education, ESTYN found there was much good practice in Welsh or bilingual education worthy of further dissemination, but that this was patchy and not enough was being done to market colleges' Welsh language or bilingual courses across the secondary and further education sectors in Wales. Cann (2004) provides a good overview of the policy background to Welsh medium provision in higher education in Wales. She argues that universities have a key role to play in supporting minority languages, since the provision of university education in that language confers status on it. She compares the situation in Wales with that in New Brunswick, a region of Canada where a monolingual French university has been established alongside a monolingual English university.

Cann (2004) and Morgan (2007) examine the reasons why a bilingual rather than Welsh language policy was chosen in Welsh medium higher education. Cann also notes that a large proportion of Welsh students aspire to study in Cardiff, seeing it as a big city with good amenities, although Welsh medium provision is limited there.

5.6 Adult Education and Training

Race

Fewer people from an ethnic minority origin hold at least level 2 qualifications than the population as a whole (55 per cent compared with 68 per cent). However, persons from an ethnic minority origin are equally likely to hold degree-level qualifications as the population as a whole (26 per cent) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007w). Amongst ethnic minority groups who are out of work, the Future Skills Wales survey (2004) found that they had similar higher-level qualifications and generic skills as the general population but that they had better entrepreneurial and foreign language skills. It also found that people from ethnic minority groups were more likely to cite childcare as a barrier to learning.

The study by O'Neill (2007) had some key findings of particular significance for women from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and African Caribbean communities in South Wales. These included that there was:

- A lack of partnership working across ethnic minority groups.
- A lack of childcare provision (for women), particularly provision in own communities.
- Isolation for Pakistani women who have come to this country in arranged marriages.
- Difficulties caused by cultural attitudes to women in Somali and Pakistani communities.

Learners from ethnic minorities under 30 are significantly under-represented in work-based learning (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006k).

Refugees and Asylum seekers

The consultation document on inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers circulated by the Assembly Government in 2006 notes that the potential brought by many refugees and asylum seekers to Wales is often wasted, including through un- and under-employment, and that there are a lack of post-16 education initiatives.

Welsh Assembly Government (2006a) identifies barriers faced by refugees in accessing education and training including poverty. Clarity for providers on eligibility is also needed. ELWa (2005b) sets out key issues around refugee and asylum seeker access to education and training, and recommendations for improving uptake. As well as the need for more provision of English as a Second Language teaching, it identifies a lack of research into the skills and qualifications held by asylum seekers and refugees, necessary for strategic planning and targeting resources. Welsh Assembly Government (2006a) notes positive feedback on English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. Providers had begun responding to the diversity of refugee needs through flexible provision. ESOL provision was insufficient to meet demand.

Migrant workers

Welsh Assembly Government (2008o) describes migrant workers as among those who may need a different level of provision:

...part-time courses, innovative teaching and learning strategies, and delivery in the work place or community settings.

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2008o: 15)

The report mentions a significant expansion in the provision of English as a Second Language classes, and makes a commitment towards appropriate funding to maintain these.

Gender

Rees (2005b) describes Wales as delivering on its statutory duty to pay due regard for equalities partly through gender mainstreaming. However, the body of research on women in education developed during the 1990s has not been further built on in the 2000s and childcare provision remains an issue for adult women wanting to engage in education. Aldridge et al (2007) found the lack of childcare/caring for others remains a greater barrier for women than men (11 per cent of respondents cited it as a barrier compared with just 2 per cent of men) – similarly, Future Skills Wales (2004) found women were more likely than the general population to cite childcare as a barrier to participation in learning), especially for Black and ethnic minority women (O'Neill, 2007). A number of reports in the 1990s identified good practice (Henshaw, 1996; EOC, 1993) but an EOC (1994) report raised concerns that these were isolated examples with specific project funding (see also Reid and Hutt, 1996). Other reports describe the deeply entrenched patriarchal values and attitudes in Wales and the way in which these have implications for the experiences of staff and pupils (Salisbury, 1996).

Figures show that a slightly higher proportion of women than men are without any qualifications (17 per cent compared with 15 per cent in 2005 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007j)) but there is no evaluation or other qualitative research which might give detail on these findings, or show how they have been achieved (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007w). A higher proportion of females are qualified up to level 2 and levels 4–6, whilst a higher proportion of males are qualified to level 3 or levels 7–8. Working age men tend to be slightly better qualified than women (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h).

Disability

Disabled people are more likely to hold no qualifications and less likely to hold qualifications at level 2 or above than non-disabled people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007w). Five per cent of work-based learners had a disability in August 2005 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007v). The Future Skills Wales survey (2004) found that people who were not working because of illness or disability had higher level skills in communications and problem solving but lower level skills in management and entrepreneurship.

In the past, disabled people were less than half as likely to be enrolled on an education course as non-disabled people, although the gap has narrowed recently; the gap is slightly wider for disabled men than women (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003a).

Age

Welsh Assembly Government (2008o) mentions that older workers may have a:

...diverse range of needs very different from those of young people. They are more likely to require part-time courses, innovative teaching and learning strategies, and delivery in the workplace or community settings.

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2008o: 15)

Just over half the people in adult education in Wales are over the age of 50. A quarter of working age people over the age of 50 have no qualifications (significantly higher than the proportion for the under 50s). A quarter of those over the age of 50 have a degree or an equivalent qualification, while for the other age groups it is a shade higher. One third of working age people over the age of 50 do not have the literacy skills to get a formal qualification. Just over a third of people over the age of 50 (and those aged 40 to 50) have the literacy skills to get five GCSEs at grades A to C. Half the working age men over the age of 50 and two-thirds of women do not have the numeracy skills to get a formal qualification, a bit higher than most other age groups. One in four men and one in eight women over the age of 50 (and those aged 40 to 50) have the numeracy skills to get five good GCSEs (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008c).

A survey of adult learners (Aldridge et al, 2007) found that in certain age groups, notably those aged 65 or over, participation in learning has decreased. Nineteen per cent said that they felt too old to learn.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant research was identified.

Religion

No relevant research was identified.

Welsh Language

Welsh speakers are more highly qualified than their non-Welsh-speaking counterparts (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007w).

There was a great deal of growth in numbers of adults learning Welsh after the establishment of Welsh for Adults consortia in 1994, but this growth appeared to be tailing off by 2004. Rates vary considerably between institutions (there seems no common factor influencing recruitment and this suggests marketing and planning are inadequate). Development of e-learning opportunities is limited. Completion rates are high, attainment rates much lower. However, many adults want to learn Welsh without wishing to achieve a qualification (ESTYN, 2004a).

In some areas, there has been significant growth in the number of courses held in the work place for employers and employees. In the best practice, course contents are tailored to meet the specific linguistic needs of the work place (ESTYN, 2004a).

Inspection evidence shows that few trainees complete any part of their training or assessment bilingually or through the medium of Welsh, even in the traditional Welsh-speaking areas. Many trainees from Welsh-medium or bilingual schools decide to switch completely to English for their training. Often, providers do not do enough to determine the demand for bilingual training, nor do they do enough to promote it actively. Providers often have difficulty in getting hold of Welsh-medium materials and assessors. Resources are not routinely available and this leads to delay in their provision (ESTYN, 2004a).

5.7 Conclusions and Research Gaps

Overall the literature published on equalities in education is predominantly in report format rather than in peer-reviewed academic journals. While the extensive provision of policy-based research and governance documents is to be commended, the lack of academic work means not only that there is a lack of work which has been through the rigorous process of peer review, but that there is also a failure to engage with cutting edge thinking on equalities currently being developed in international academic circles. Schools maintain a collaborative network supported by the Assembly Government's education policies (although not between Welsh and English medium schools which are beginning to compete for school buildings and per capita funding); however

the higher education sector has been divided by competitive funding issues and this has implications for research in Wales.

A common finding across equalities studies is that family attitudes are key in encouraging aspiration and attainment among children and young people, but that organisations are only beginning to reach out to parents and carers. It is also commonly found that the Head Teacher is key to the provision of a thorough-going equalities practice in a school.

Most research that has been undertaken has been on race and gender issues. There are near complete gaps in both qualitative and quantitative research on sexuality and education, and on religious faith issues in education. Another major gap is in qualitative or quantitative research which draws different equality strands together for analysis. There are many smaller gaps in the available research, which are identified in the body of this review.

Chaney et al (2007) comment that:

...the Assembly's first years have seen the start of a series of unprecedented measures to engender state education policy in order to promote equality.

(Chaney et al, 2007: 174).

However, research shows that equalities in education remains enshrined in policy rather than being implemented in practice. There is a need to bridge the gap between equality policy aspirations and equal opportunities in practice in education institutions.

6. HOUSING

Tamsin Stirling

6.1 Policy Context

Housing is a devolved area for the Welsh Assembly Government, which decides on the budget to be allocated to housing (and different aspects of housing), determines priorities, develops national strategies and policies, issues guidance and passes secondary legislation.

While primary legislative powers remain with Westminster, the Welsh Assembly Government is increasingly seeking a broad scope within the primary legislation to pass secondary legislation which meets the needs of Wales. The Government of Wales Act 2006 brought additional powers, in particular the development of Legislative Competence Orders from Westminster. This mechanism is currently being explored in relation to affordable housing.

The National Assembly for Wales's Communities and Culture Committee acts as a scrutiny committee for housing (along with community safety, community social inclusion and the Welsh language).

Clearly, housing is one of a range of services that come within the remit of the wide range of equalities legislation and general statutory codes applicable to public bodies such as those relating to race, gender and disability. In addition, there is a specific statutory code in relation to housing produced by the former CRE (2006). As part of these legal duties, comprehensive disaggregated statistics should be collected and analysed around race and disability.

The Welsh Assembly Government has passed a range of secondary legislation on housing issues.¹³ Much of this has been enabling legislation setting out details of the implementation of primary legislation. However, the Welsh Assembly Government has passed a number of pieces of secondary legislation which has resulted in divergence from the English context. For example, secondary legislation on homelessness identifies groups of people considered to be in 'priority need' for housing. These include pregnant women and households with children, care leavers and people vulnerable for a variety of reasons including old age, mental health condition or learning disability and

¹³ These are available online at: www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/wales/w-stat.htm

physical disability. The Welsh Assembly Government's Homeless Persons (Priority Need) (Wales) Order 2001 broadened the range of those considered to be in priority need to include 16 and 17-year-olds, people fleeing actual or threatened domestic violence, people homeless after leaving the armed forces and people homeless after being released from prison. Secondary legislation on temporary accommodation for homeless people (The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (Wales) Order 2006) sought to reduce the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for groups including young people and families with children.

The Assembly is currently seeking to use its new legal powers to seek a Legislative Competency Order (LCO) on affordable housing. The committee report putting forward the case for the LCO notes that the scope of the Housing and Regeneration Act when it was going through Westminster was not broad enough to achieve the changes required, hence the use of the LCO route (National Assembly for Wales Proposed Affordable Housing LCO Committee, 2008).

The current national policy context for equalities in relation to housing is set out in a range of documents. Taken as a whole, the content of the various strategies and action plans places a significant emphasis on ethnic minority groups, with far less focus on gender and the other equality strands.

Better Homes for People in Wales

The national housing strategy includes a section entitled 'Meeting the needs of specific groups' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2001b). This sets out actions in relation to a wide range of groups including ethnic minority groups, disabled people, older people, young people leaving care, people experiencing domestic violence and asylum seekers and refugees. The strategy notes that, from April 2001, all new social housing was expected to meet Lifetime Homes standards. A selective review of progress in relation to the National Housing Strategy included a narrative in relation to action taken by the Welsh Assembly Government on various aspects of equality (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006I). However, the document included nothing on outcomes from the various documents, working groups and funding streams referred to.

The National Homelessness Strategy 2006–08

Whilst equality is not specifically set out as an issue in the objectives of the strategy, an overall theme of the strategy is that of tailoring interventions to

the needs of individuals (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006m). In addition, the action plan which forms an integral part of the strategy includes actions for the Assembly and delivery organisations, such as local authorities, in relation to refugees, BME groups, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, disabled people, women, older homeless people, Gypsy Travellers and children and young people.

Race Equality Action Plan 2008–11

This recently published document (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008bb) focuses on actions in relation to a small number of themes – monitoring, inspection and regulation, stock transfer, tenant participation and private sector issues – which it is considered will ‘be effective in delivering change’. This document builds on the earlier *BME Housing Action Plan for Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002d) which emerged from research undertaken in the late 1990s and placed significant emphasis on the need for social landlords to understand and articulate local BME housing requirements. The plan led to the establishment of *Tai Pawb*, a national organisation whose mission is:

...to promote race equality and social justice in housing in Wales.

A specific requirement of this action plan was for social landlords to develop their own local housing strategies for ethnic minority groups or be partner to a regional or multi-agency housing strategy for them. This led to significant work at a local level to identify the housing needs of ethnic minorities and to consult with ethnic minority communities/groups, work which was supported by a Welsh Assembly Government-commissioned good practice guide on ethnic minority housing (Welsh Assembly Government, 2004c). Under plan rationalisation, the requirement to have a separate ethnic minority housing strategy has ceased for local authorities, with ethnic minority issues to be fully integrated into local housing strategies and then into each local authority’s overarching community strategy.

Refugee Housing Action Plan

This action plan was developed by the Housing Sub Group of the All Wales Refugee Policy Forum (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006l). The Sub Group identified a range of barriers to integration from the housing perspective and a series of actions to help overcome these barriers. The Action Plan was intended as a stand alone document to inform the development of responsive housing and related support services and to inform the All Wales Refugee

Inclusion Strategy (which has since been produced) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008d).

In addition, there are a series of other national strategies which are not housing-centric, but which have implications for housing and housing providers, e.g. *Tackling Domestic Abuse: the All Wales National Strategy* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005k) and *The Strategy for Older People in Wales* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003f, 2008e).

Some of the objectives and actions within Welsh Assembly Government's strategies/action plans have been supported by the allocation of specific resources or grant programmes. For example, an element of the Social Housing Management Grant programme was specifically targeted at action in relation to race equality and housing for a number of years.

All of the main national strategies that provide the policy framework for housing in Wales are currently under review:

- A new national housing strategy is under development with an anticipated launch date of spring 2009. Equalities and diversity is receiving attention in the process, with an external expert panel that met several times to ensure that equality/diversity is integrated into the new strategy. A review of the evidence base was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government to inform the development of the strategy (Tribal, 2008b).
- A ten-year plan to confront homelessness, as per the commitment in *One Wales* is being developed which will build on the current homelessness strategy.
- A new five-year Supporting People Strategy is in the process of being developed. Given that Supporting People is about enabling people to live independent lives in communities, it might be expected that equalities will be a strong theme within this strategy. However, no information about the emergent strategy was publicly available at the time of writing.

In addition, two other pieces of work at a national level have implications for equalities and housing:

- The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's commission on rural housing in Wales was published in June 2008 (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2008). The commission has examined the nature of housing needs in rural areas and how these are responded to. Consultation questions asked by the commission included exploration of evidence that housing problems in rural Wales affect the Welsh language and culture.
- The Assembly Government commissioned Sue Essex to undertake a review of the regulatory framework for registered social landlords (housing associations). The review considered all aspects of the delivery of affordable housing by registered social landlords and was published in June 2008 (Affordable Housing Task and Finish Group, 2008). In April 2008, the Deputy Minister issued a letter to registered social landlords setting out the 'quick wins' from the review. These include a proposal that registered social landlords should no longer need to get individual approval of Physical Adaptation Grants over the value of £3,000. Once implemented, this should speed up the process of getting adaptations for disabled people who live in registered social landlord properties. Whilst the review did not consider equality issues in any detail, the report notes that housing is fundamental to the Welsh Assembly Government's legislative commitments to equality of opportunity.

6.2 Housing Needs

Race

An analysis of ethnic minority communities and housing issues based on the 2001 Census (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003g) showed that:

- People from the White ethnic group and those of Pakistani and Chinese origin are more likely to own their home than to rent. The lowest rate of home ownership was amongst the Black or Black British: African group.
- Bangladeshi and Black African headed households are much more likely to be overcrowded than households headed by people of White origin.
- Twenty-two per cent of Bangladeshi households are made up of more than one family, more than three times the rate for households headed by White people.

- The proportion of all pensioner households ranged from around 3 per cent of those from an Asian or Chinese background, to 15 per cent of those headed by people of White origin.

2001 Census information (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h) also indicates that:

- Households headed by people of Black origin are most likely to be lacking in amenities.
- White Irish households are most likely to have no central heating
- Lone parent households were more apparent amongst Mixed or Black headed households.

The Welsh Assembly Government collects statistical information on ethnicity in relation to households applying as homeless to local authorities. Data for the period September to December 2007 indicated that 210 applications (7 per cent of the total) were from BME groups which resulted in 159 being accepted as homeless by local authorities (11 per cent of the total) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008cc).

Two reports detailing the housing and socio-economic circumstances of ethnic minority people in Wales have been published both drawing on various data sources and a literature review (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003g; Welsh Assembly Government, 2005l). On housing, the reports note that ethnic minority communities disproportionately live in some of the most economically deprived areas and in some of the poorest quality housing. Overall, ethnic minority households experience a higher rate of housing deprivation than White households irrespective of the social class of the household. However, the 2005 study, which drew on the 2001 census, concluded that the picture of ethnic minority housing needs is one of considerable diversity, with some ethnic groups having relatively advantaged positions in the housing and labour markets.

The Welsh Assembly Government-commissioned research of social landlords' implementation of the ethnic minority housing action plan for Wales comprised a systematic review of ethnic minority housing strategies and action plans produced by the 22 local authorities and 32 housing associations (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005m). The analysis revealed wide variation in the

quality, content and detail of the strategies/action plans as well as a lack of explicit linkage with Welsh Assembly Government objectives. Although the analysis identified a range of good practice, it concluded that some strategies and action plans did not fulfil Welsh Assembly Government expectations and only two strategies were assessed as having been developed in a way that enabled ethnic minority tenants and residents to contribute to their development.

The former CRE in Wales investigated local authority ethnic minority housing strategies by reviewing information available on local authority websites and asking six questions of each authority about their ethnic minority housing strategies and action plans. From this, the organisation concluded that local authorities in Wales were not carrying out race equality work within the housing service to the extent required under the Race Relations Amendment Act (CRE, 2007b).

Gypsy Travellers

Two linked studies of the housing needs of Gypsy Travellers in Wales have been undertaken (Niner, 2006a; Niner, 2006b). Both studies were national in scope and had a robust methodology. The studies identified the total number of Gypsy Travellers, their approximate locations, the extent and condition of the existing sites network along with the approximate cost of bringing sites up to a good standard of repair. In addition, the research estimated the current backlog and needs over the next five years as a need for permanent accommodation for between 275 and 305 Gypsy Traveller families.

A count undertaken in January 2008 showed that there were 788 Gypsy Traveller caravans in Wales and 57 sites, giving an average of 14 caravans per site (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008b). Six hundred and fifty-five (83 per cent) of caravans were on authorised sites with planning permission while 47 caravans were on unauthorised sites.

Gender

Literature on the housing needs of women across Wales is limited to a single study relating to female offenders (National Offender Management Service, 2007). Based largely on an analysis of data from prisons, probation and housing providers, the study found that 385 women on community sentences and released from prison were homeless in Wales during 2006. The study also identified a perception that female offenders are more capable than

males at resolving their housing needs, but that they have complex and multiple support needs.

2003 population figures showed that there are many more women over the age of 60 than men in Wales living alone and that this difference increases with age. There are three times as many women over the age of 70 living alone than men and four times as many over the age of 85 (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005n).

The Welsh Assembly Government collects statistical information on gender in relation to households applying as homeless to local authorities. Data for the period October to December 2007 indicated that there were 1,713 applications from women (56 per cent) compared with 1,369 from men (44 per cent) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008cc). Fifty-seven per cent of the applications from women were accepted compared with 37 per cent of those from men (this is likely to be heavily influenced by the fact that a significant proportion of the women will have children which will mean that they are in a priority need group).

Disability

Literature on the housing needs of disabled people in Wales is extremely limited. A feasibility study for a disabled persons housing service in South East Wales found that a significant proportion of the 186 disabled people consulted had experienced difficulties in meeting their housing needs (Disability Wales, 2004). The study also found that the lack of information about the housing needs of disabled people at national and local levels is compounded by a lack of information about the availability of adapted/wheelchair accessible housing.

Analysis of the 2001 Census (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005n) showed that:

- There was little difference in the proportion of households classed as overcrowded between all households and those with long-term limiting illness.
- Rates of home ownership were highest amongst households which defined themselves as being in good health and lowest amongst those which defined themselves as not in good health (irrespective of whether

they also defined themselves as having a long-term limiting illness or not).

Data from the 2004 Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005a) showed that:

- Disabled people make up a higher proportion of people who rent from a local authority or housing association than non-disabled people.
- There is significant unmet need for adaptations to people's homes – 21 per cent of local authority homes and 10 per cent of owner-occupied homes.

Age

There is a reasonable range of literature on the overall housing needs of older people in Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003h; Welsh Assembly Government, 2007x; Welsh Assembly Government, 2007y) with some studies analysing particular aspects of the older population (Davies et al, n.d.).

Methods used varied from desk-based research to studies involving significant contact with older people and housing service providers. In general terms, the literature identifies that the population of Wales is ageing (by 2026, households headed by an older person will account for a third of all households in Wales) and that older people in Wales are more likely to live in their own homes, to experience poor housing conditions, lack modern amenities or facilities in their homes and to need adaptations to enable them to live independently. Windle et al's (2006) study of more than 400 older people in North Wales found that owner occupiers reported the least housing difficulties and the best health status, whilst those in public rented properties experienced the most difficulties and the poorest health. Analysis found that housing difficulties, being cold with current heating and hours spent at home predicted poorer health status, which suggests that the characteristics of the home environment may help to explain the differences between tenure and health.

The aspirations of older people are noted to be changing (they seek more space, tenure choice etc), requiring responses from service providers in relation to the type of accommodation and services provided (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007x). Although there are significantly more older women living alone than older men, increasing male life expectancy is likely to result in an increase in demand from older couples for particular types of

housing and adaptations to their own homes (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007x). A significant proportion of older households in Wales are owner occupiers and this is projected to increase. This will impact on the housing and care needs of older people because much current provision specifically for older people is in the social rented sector (Welsh Assembly Government, 2003h).

A literature review noted that it is likely that the older LGBT population is growing at the same rate as that of older people in general, but there is a need for further research in Wales, in particular qualitative studies to explore issues such as discrimination, location and cultural identity (Davies et al, n.d.).

While the barriers that young people face accessing independent accommodation are well-rehearsed, research on the housing needs of young people in Wales is not extensive. Research using statistical analysis to look at the affordability of housing for younger working households concluded that, across Wales, 43 per cent of these households could not afford to buy a home at the lower quartile of prices in 2005 (Chartered Institute of Housing Cymru, 2006). Welsh Assembly Government-commissioned research on models of accommodation and support for young single homeless people involved an extensive literature review, case studies and discussions with young single homeless people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007z). The study found that the needs of young single homeless people are diverse and that there are specific gaps in provision for those with low and high support needs who need specific approaches to their accommodation and support needs.

As noted above, the Welsh Assembly Government collects statistical information on age in relation to households applying as homeless to local authorities. Data for the period October to December 2007 indicated that 1,149 applicants were aged under 25 (37 per cent of the total) (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008cc).

Data from the 2004 Living in Wales survey (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005n) showed that older people were:

- More likely to be owner occupiers (75 per cent) compared to all households (69 per cent).
- Less likely to be overcrowded.

Sexual Orientation

One study of LGB people's experiences of housing in Wales was identified (Stonewall Cymru/Triangle Wales, 2006). The study involved a self-selecting sample of LGB people who had experienced housing problems and a variety of housing providers. The study found that the housing needs of this group were primarily socially-based, linked to homophobia, harassment, rejection by family members and discrimination.

A National Assembly for Wales statistical bulletin on diversity published in 2005 noted that there were no official data relating to sexual orientation (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h).

Religion

Analysis of the 2001 Census (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005h) showed that:

- Twenty-six per cent of Muslim, 19 per cent of Sikh and 16 per cent of Hindu households were overcrowded, compared with 6 per cent of all households.
- The highest level of home ownership was amongst Christian (74 per cent) and Sikh (73 per cent) households and the lowest amongst Muslim (59 per cent) and Buddhist (60 per cent) households.

Welsh Language

A review of the role of the housing system in rural Wales commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government noted that the scale of in-migration during the 1980s and 1990s – when the population of rural Wales increased by 37,000 – and its nature – with a large proportion of in-migrants moving from England – has led to wide-scale concerns about culture and Welsh language. The local social and culture impact has fuelled an ongoing debate about the availability of, and competition for, housing. The report concluded that the rate of demographic change and its variable impact on the social composition of different localities is central to debates about rural housing in Wales and that attempts to date to respond to the issues through policy measures do not constitute an effective solution (Welsh Assembly Government, 2006n).

Research on second and holiday homes in Wales drew on existing data sources, a survey of local housing and planning authorities, five local case studies and a national consultation with key interest groups (Tewdwr-Jones et

al, n.d.). The research estimated the number of second and holiday homes as between 16,500 and 19,500 in 2001, (down from between 19,000 and 22,000 in 1991), with concentrations in a number of core areas on the west coast and North West Wales. The research found that the effect of second and holiday homes on the Welsh language was seen as less significant than permanent in-migration.

A scoping study of Eastern and Central European migrant workers in rural Wales found that the influx of migrant workers was considered to have had consequences on the housing market in rural Wales which in many areas was already under considerable pressure (Wales Rural Observatory, 2006).

Analysis of the 2001 Census (Welsh Assembly Government , 2005h) showed that:

- Home ownership rates were slightly higher amongst households with one or more skills in Welsh (73 per cent compared with 71 per cent for all households).
- Rates of renting from social landlords were slightly lower amongst households with one or more skills in Wales (16 per cent compared with 18 per cent for all households).

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Commission on Rural Wales concluded, on the basis of the lack of and/or anecdotal nature of the evidence presented to the Commission, that research is urgently needed on the relationship between housing and the Welsh language (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2008).

6.3 Provision and Experience of Housing Services

There has been no systematic review of the provision/experience of housing services across equality groups. This is despite the fact that there is evidence that some groups continue to experience or perceive that equality of housing opportunity is not yet a reality (Tribal, 2008b).

Race

Brown et al's (2006) study of older Black and ethnic minority groups' usage and experience of housing services found that two-thirds of their sample of 677 people were aware of local housing services, although this varied by ethnicity. Four out of 10 had previously contacted the local authority housing

service (most commonly council tenants) and most had a positive view about their experience. Where there was criticism, it centred on the availability of translation and interpretation services and staff's understanding of the needs of older people and older ethnic minority people specifically.

A study involving 35 focus groups with refugees identified a series of issues in relation to housing, including access to translation facilities, information, poor quality temporary and permanent accommodation and practices that work against integration (Threadgold and Clifford, 2005). A further scoping project focusing on refugees and housing identified a similar range of issues as well as identifying a range of good and innovative practice in relation to service provision (Robinson, 2006).

Gender

Services for women offenders were found to require redesigning in order to effectively meet their needs, including the provision of gender-specific temporary accommodation (National Offender Management Service, 2007).

Disability

A review of disabled facilities grants and other adaptations found that waiting times for adaptations could be significant and that people with sight loss may be accessing these services less than people with other types of disability (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005o). Gaps in service provision around information and advice on housing designed with and for disabled people were identified in South East Wales (Disability Wales, 2004). This study also found that a significant proportion of disabled people consulted stated that housing providers were not helpful (to some extent).

Age

A study of service provision for older people living in their own homes found that, at a basic level, services are available across Wales to support all older people, but local differences in the organisation, make up and availability of these services mean diverse experiences for older people based upon the area in which they live (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007z).

Evidence provided by a small number of young people as part of the National Assembly for Wales's former Social Justice and Regeneration Committee's review of youth homelessness indicated that they found securing access to responsive and appropriate services difficult, particularly in relation to statutory services, and they often required advocacy from voluntary sector

organisations to enable them to get access to the services/accommodation they needed (National Assembly for Wales Social Justice and Regeneration Committee, 2007). Research on youth homelessness identified a lack of agreed mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of different types of accommodation and support for young single homeless people, either in terms of cost effectiveness or outcomes for the young people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007z).

The 2006 Living in Wales survey of citizens' views in relation to housing advice services found that people who were younger than pensionable age were included in the groups most likely to be dissatisfied with housing advice services (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g: Part 2).

Sexual Orientation

A study of LGB people's experiences of housing in Wales found mixed experience of services, with specialist LGB providers being thought of more positively than mainstream housing providers (Stonewall Cymru/Triangle Wales, 2006). This study found that the majority of participants did not seek assistance from statutory or voluntary housing support services and that initial contact with a service provider was a significant influence on the degree of confidence they had in disclosing their sexual orientation.

Religion

No relevant research was identified.

Welsh Language

The 2006 Living in Wales survey of citizens' views in relation to housing advice services found that people who spoke Welsh were included in the groups most likely to be dissatisfied with housing advice services (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007g: Part 2).

While not citing its evidence base, a 2002 policy paper from the Welsh Language Board states:

...we believe the statutory planning and social housing fields are not sufficiently responsive to the needs of the Welsh language at present ...If the Assembly is to succeed in securing the future well-being of Welsh as a community language, it must ensure that

planning and housing policies at the national and local levels are compatible with that aim, and support it in practice.
(Welsh Language Board, 2002)

6.4 Conclusions and Research Gaps

While there is a reasonable range of literature on housing and equalities that is Welsh-specific, much of it commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government, there are significant differences in relation to the different strands of equality. The broadest research base is in relation to race, while those relating to gender and disability are very weak (with no literature identified in relation to learning disabilities or mental ill health). Research evidence on religion or belief and housing tends to form an integral part of the literature on race, rather than being explored as a separate issue.

The majority of the research identified relates to the needs of different groups in relation to housing and related services and/or the appropriateness of various forms of housing and housing services for the groups concerned. Such research helps provide an evidence base for national and local strategies as well as action plans and informs the allocation of resources. Evaluations of the extent to which national strategic objectives/actions in relation to housing and equalities have been achieved are generally lacking, with a small number of exceptions (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005l, 2006m; CRE, 2007b).

In addition, research/literature that explores how people from different groups and backgrounds experience housing services is much sparser than the literature identifying their needs. This is compounded by a lack of official data or monitoring information which makes it difficult to assess the numbers of people in a given 'equality' group, whether services are accessible to the whole population, how different groups experience services and whether equitable outcomes are achieved. This issue was raised by a number of the research projects reviewed (for example Threadgold and Clifford, 2005; Stonewall Cymru/Triangle Wales, 2006; Robinson, 2006). The experience of those who come within the scope of more than one 'equality group' and who therefore may face multiple discrimination needs consideration.

The focus of much of the research/literature reviewed is on the role of the social housing sector which only makes up around 17 per cent of the housing stock in Wales. A significant gap is therefore the issue of equality within the owner-occupied and private rented sectors. This is particularly pertinent given

the equality duties placed on local authorities, which clearly relate to their strategic housing role, i.e. their role in making appropriate interventions across the whole housing market and all tenures.

7. PUBLIC AND POLITICAL LIFE

Siân Gale and Victoria Winckler

This chapter identifies the literature available on public and political life in Wales in terms of participation, engagement and representation of under-represented groups, identifying in particular the role of the Welsh Assembly Government and the Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) in leading and supporting public bodies in becoming inclusive and accessible.

The literature available regarding different groups varies considerably. Whilst there is a reasonable amount of recent academic research available on gender and a limited amount on ethnic minorities, there is very little on the other equality strands.

7.1 Policy Context

The goal of engaging all citizens in public life and representation in both public and political life is covered in a number of Welsh Assembly Government policy documents. In its *One Wales* programme (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007b), the Welsh Assembly Government commits itself to a vision in which:

...all citizens are empowered to determine their own lives and to shape the communities in which they live.

It points out that it will collaborate with the Interfaith Forum to promote understanding across cultures and faiths and further develop and disseminate good practice models in Welsh public bodies.

In its *Annual Report on Work to Promote Equality and Diversity 2006–7* (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007aa) points out that the recommendations of the Beecham Review:

...is firmly grounded on a **citizen centred** model of governance and service delivery.

This necessitates greater participation by citizens and communities in public services which the Welsh Assembly Government identifies as having ‘clear implications for equality of opportunity.’ *Making the Connections* (Welsh

Assembly Government, 2004d) specifies four main principles underpinning public services reform. This includes equality and social justice, where 'every person (is) to have the opportunity to contribute and will reach out to those hardest to reach'.

Under the supervision of Professor Teresa Rees, the National Assembly for Wales developed an action plan to promote equality and diversity in public appointments (Welsh Assembly Government, 2002e). The aim was to encourage:

...diversity among applicants, modernising boards and enhancing equality in service delivery.

Citizenship is also a key theme in the Welsh Assembly Government's original Strategy for Older People in Wales (2003f) and in its latest version (2008e). These strategies have both stressed that all older people who live in Wales 'must get a fair deal and be able to contribute to society as equal citizens.' A programme of citizenship is one of the key themes of the strategy.

In terms of local government, the Welsh Assembly Government (2007aa) recognises that:

Political parties need to redouble their efforts to ensure that they select larger numbers of young people and women.

It aims to achieve this by working with the WLGA on 'councillor development, appraisal and equality and diversity training.' It also recognises the contribution of local government in improving people's lives, by considering the use of legislation to ensure that citizens are involved in the development of the Community Strategy, with the aim of reaching groups:

...that local evidence shows are under-represented in local public engagement processes.

CRG Research Ltd's report (2007) on the role of elected members in local authorities points out that:

...there is concern that members do not reflect the local community in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and socio-economic status.

The report did, however, identify that some councils had tried their own initiatives to attract and retain younger people and women as councillors by improving support services, holding meetings at times convenient for those in paid employment or with (child) care responsibilities, and by providing childcare facilities.

Sullivan et al (2004) conclude that the quality of available data on equalities in local government is not good, and that considerable issues relate to ethnic minority communities, disabled people, lesbian and gay groups and women:

Policy evaluation is the 'cinderella' of the policy process. General information about the state of equality is poor throughout Welsh local government, and the lack of availability of sources of disaggregated data is a matter of concern. The use of equality indicators within existing performance management regimes is unconvincing, and a more outcome-focused approach is demanded by local authorities to measure the impact of their policies.

(Sullivan et al, 2004: 9)

Equality management is driven by models of mainstreaming and integration which require resources, leadership, commitment and sustained action. Sullivan et al (2004) recommend continued funding for the Equalities Unit in the WLGA to support the development of more effective equality practice through the Equality Improvement Framework, which includes the Welsh language as an equality strand.

The WLGA is facilitating a number of initiatives including 'Widening Participation' whose aim is:

...to promote diversity in local elected representation and to broaden the base of local people showing an interest in standing for election.

Public Service Management Wales (PSMW) 'works to support and help build the capacity of managers and leaders across the public sector in Wales.' (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007aa). PSMW believes that 'positive action' programmes are required to:

...address the need to increase the diversity of leaders and managers within the public service in Wales.

To achieve this, PSMW has developed a number of programmes targeted at women, ethnic minorities and disabled people.

7.2 Elected Representatives

Chaney and Fevre (2002b) refer to 'descriptive representation', a situation whereby elected politicians are typical of the larger class of persons that they represent, e.g. ethnic minorities represent ethnic minorities, disabled people represent disabled people etc. They conclude that proportional descriptive representation is almost achieved in the case of women, and has realised substantial benefits, but that in 'minority' groupings, 'the absence of 'descriptive representation' is thought to have entailed significant costs', e.g. to establish complex bureaucratic structures to help the Assembly Government to engage with relevant groups.

Mackay (2004) considers whether 'women's descriptive – or numerical – representation' has led to improved substantive representation of women by better reflecting their diverse interests and concerns. Mackay identified that there have been positive outcomes in terms of gender perspectives in policy areas, the adoption of constructive working practices, and the introduction of particular initiatives, e.g. the gender pay gap campaign.

Chaney and Fevre (2002b) argue that devolution has helped to stimulate demand for descriptive representation, but state that the demand exceeds the supply of representation on offer. They suggest that descriptive representation will be the focus of an increasing amount of debate and controversy in future. CRG Research Ltd (2007) argued that issues about the diversity of councillors were linked to the attractiveness of the role, which in turn was linked to the overall perception of local councils by the public, the demands of being a councillor, and local political party structures. The Councillors' Commission (2007) undertook a review of ways of increasing diversity amongst local elected members, and included evidence from Wales. The 61 recommendations are now being considered by the Welsh Assembly Government, in conjunction with a panel of experts, which are expected to report in autumn 2008.

Race

There are currently no Welsh Members of Parliament from ethnic minority groups and the Assembly only acquired its first ethnic minority member in 2007.

In terms of local councillors, research by WLGA (2005) showed that only 0.8 per cent were from ethnic minority groups. These members have a shorter average length of service than White councillors, and more do additional work – 100 per cent were school governors.

The Welsh Assembly Government has worked with Operation Black Vote to increase awareness and understanding of its activities amongst ethnic minority communities. A number of articles by C. Williams (e.g. Williams and de Lima, 2006) explore the ways in which the Assembly has sought to include ethnic minority groups. She suggests that this is as part of a process of nation-building, and although there is undoubtedly greater inclusion than in the past, the process also raises some challenges.

Gender

Beddoe (2004) outlines women's long struggle in politics in Wales from 1918, the first election in which women were allowed to stand as candidates. She notes that for the period 1970–84, there were no women Members of Parliament in Wales, and that from 1984 to 1997 the only one was Ann Clwyd. Beddoe places the blame firmly on the processes of selection of candidates. She highlights how only the use of 'special measures' by the Labour Party in the 1997 General Election and the 1999 Assembly election eventually resulted in a huge increase in the numbers of women elected. In 2003, through a combination of the Labour Party's use of All Women Shortlists in some constituencies and other parties placing women at the top of their regional list candidates (see McAllister et al, 2003 for a full analysis), half the Assembly Members elected were women and women comprised the majority of the Cabinet – a world first.

Although much was made of this achievement, McAllister (2006) issues a note of caution, pointing out that many decision-making structures remain very male dominated and that the women elected bear a heavy burden of 'descriptive representation' expectations. Chaney et al (2007) also look at the background to women's representation in the Welsh Assembly. The authors suggest that further research is required on a range of issues including women voters' changing attitudes to a gender-balanced Assembly; the impact of gender parity on political operational styles; women's participation in the work of the Assembly; and the way the Civil Service is responding to the move to gender-equal politics. Ball and Charles (2006) looked at the ways in which women's groups had influenced the adoption of policies on childcare and domestic violence by the Welsh Assembly Government, whilst having the

effect of marginalising more radical views. Charles is building upon this work through a current study of the extent to which political processes in Wales are becoming gendered, although the project has yet to report.¹⁴

In terms of local councils, there is a long tradition of women being under-represented. The 2004 Census of Councillors undertaken by the WLGA revealed that only 22 per cent of Councillors were female and just 18 per cent of Leaders were female (WLGA, 2005). This general picture masks an even greater under-representation of women on some councils. Rallings and Thrasher (2004 cited in WLGA, 2004) found that women comprised less than 10 per cent of the council membership in four councils and more than a third of councillors in just two Welsh authorities. Merthyr Tydfil (along with Strabane) had the worst representation in the UK, with just one woman councillor.¹⁵ More recent media reports suggest that the proportion of women councillors has increased to 22 per cent in 2008 (BBC, 2008). This low level of representation is despite Welsh Assembly Government/WLGA campaigns in 2004 and again in 2008 to widen participation.

There also appear to be barriers to women's progress within local government. The WLGA census also showed that, on average, women councillors had served for a shorter period than men, and that they were under-represented on executive posts within the council (just 15.8 per cent of executive members were women whereas they were 21.8 per cent of all councillors). They were also slightly under-represented as chairs of scrutiny committees, although they were over represented as vice-chairs. Women councillors were also more likely than men to undertake extra duties with a higher proportion being school governors (WLGA, 2005).

Disability

No literature at all on disability and Assembly and Parliamentary members has been identified.

In terms of local councillors, the WLGA census (WLGA, 2005) identified that 16.7 per cent of councillors who responded to the survey said that they had a long-term health problem or disability that limited their daily activities or the

¹⁴ See <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/sociology/staff/academicstaff/nickiecharles/> for details (accessed on 16 June 2008).

¹⁵ See <http://www.fawcettsociety.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=61> (accessed on 16 June 2008).

work they could do. Slightly more women, those from ethnic minority groups and senior councillors reported a disability or limiting long-term illness than the rest of the population.

Voluntary sector groups representing disabled people have been involved in a number of initiatives that aim to increase the participation and representation of disabled people. These include BSL Futures, a project aimed at increasing the number of BSL interpreters in Wales, and Disability Equality in Action, a project managed by Disability Wales aimed at promoting the Social Model of Disability.

Polls Apart Cymru, a joint project between Scope and the DRC, was created to assess the accessibility of Welsh elections in 2003, since when it has looked at every major election held in Wales. The Polls Apart research is based on 'user evaluation' whereby a campaigner completes an access survey of the polling station which they use to vote. Local authorities and returning officers are also contacted to ask if they are aware of any specific access problems or if they have any examples of good practice. Their survey of polling stations used in the 2005 general election (Scott and Crooks, 2005) found that less than a third passed a basic test of accessibility with some local authorities not having any accessible booths. Their survey of the 2007 Assembly elections (Barnett et al, 2007) also found that 70 per cent of the polling stations that were surveyed did not meet five simple access tests – this compares with 77 per cent at the 2003 Assembly Elections and 70 per cent at the 2004 local and European elections. However, the National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee's (2007b) review of accessibility to polling stations pointed out some concerns about the methodology used.

This position, in which about two-thirds of polling stations are inaccessible, is despite the Electoral Administration Act 2006 which requires polling stations to be reviewed every four years, and the new Disability Equality Duty which requires public bodies to promote disabled people's participation in public life.

Age

No research on the age of Assembly or Parliamentary representatives has been identified. The census of local councillors (WLGA, 2005) showed that the average age of councillors was 57, compared with 59 in 2001. The average age of female councillors was very slightly lower than men's, whilst the average age of ethnic minority councillors was slightly older at 60.5 years. A quarter of councillors were aged 65 and over, a substantially lower

proportion than in 2001. The number of councillors aged 25–34 was marginally up in 2004 compared with 2001, but nevertheless was just 3.4 per cent of the total.

The Welsh Assembly Government has offered ‘severance’ payments to local councillors to retire from their seats (where councils agreed to participate in the scheme), but BBC (2008) suggested that the average age of councillors in those authorities that participated had not declined.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant research was identified.

Religion

No relevant research was identified.

7.3 Public Appointments

The Welsh Assembly Government makes more than 800 appointments to about 70 different public bodies, under the aegis of the Commissioner on Public Appointments. The Welsh Assembly Government identified public appointments as a key arena in which equality needed to be promoted – its Assembly’s strategic plan *A Better Wales* (2000) made a commitment to:

...increase the participation of under-represented groups in the management of public bodies.

This was followed up by a review of public appointments and a scoping study on researching barriers to appointments (Blackwell, 1998 and Rees, 2001, cited in National Assembly for Wales, n.d.). The study of the barriers themselves explored the particular issues experienced by women, ethnic minority groups and disabled people, which included networks, the nature and structure of public appointments, and the application process (National Assembly for Wales, n.d.). The Office of the Commissioner on Public Appointments (OPCA) and the Welsh Assembly Government both appear to have commissioned research on diversity in the appointments process, but it has not been possible to locate either of the reports.

As well as following the Commissioner on Public Appointment’s code of practice on public appointments, the Assembly has also actively encouraged under-represented groups to apply, e.g. through training, role models, board development activities etc. The annual report of the OPCA noted that in

2006/07, the Assembly's public appointments unit had met more than 30 organisations which worked with under-represented groups (The Commissioner for Public Appointments (2007)).

Race

Williams (2004) recognises the Assembly Government's commitment to encouraging and enabling a greater diversity of people to come forward for public appointments. In her research, she identifies how this is viewed by ethnic minority groups. She refers to the evidence given by AWEMA to the Richard Commission. This calls for a minimum of five ethnic minority Assembly Members based on the 8.5 per cent ethnic minority population of Cardiff as well as the Welsh Assembly Government's Public Appointments study where the pool of 'potentials' interviewed spoke of frustrated applications and misconceptions about skill and ability:

I think it is fascinating that people assume that black and ethnic minorities don't have the skills and experience and they think that attracting black or Caribbean or Asians is simply about saying 'oh we do need them' They think they are marginalised, they need some help. We don't! We know the issues, we know how to deliver; we just haven't been given the opportunity to do so.
(Williams, 2004: 159)

The proportion of people from ethnic minority groups receiving public appointments has increased from a low level at the start of the decade (EOC, 2002b) to 0.5 per cent in 2004/05 (National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee, 2005). 3.9 per cent in 2005/06 and 1.3 per cent in 2006/07 (The Commissioner for Public Appointments, 2007).

Gender

The EOC (2006c) found that in 2006, 33 per cent of appointments to such bodies were female, slightly down on the 2004 figure of 35 per cent. Nevertheless, both these figures were an improvement on the position in 2001 when women comprised 28 per cent of appointments (EOC, 2002a). However, there was little scope for optimism as the same study found that 63 per cent of all new appointments made in 2000/01 by the Assembly were men, a small decrease in the proportion of women appointees compared with the previous year.

The EOC (2002b) also showed that women were more likely to be represented on NHS bodies than other bodies.

Disability

The number of disabled people appointed to public bodies was exceptionally low at the start of the decade, when just four out of 820 appointments were disabled people in 2000/01 (EOC, 2002b). Since then the proportion of appointments awarded to disabled people has increased, to 11 per cent in 2004/05 (National Assembly for Wales Equality of Opportunity Committee, 2005), 7.6 per cent in 2005/06 and 7.2 per cent in 2006/07 (The Commissioner for Public Appointments, 2007).

Age

No relevant research was identified.

Sexual Orientation

No relevant research was identified.

Religion

No relevant research was identified.

7.4 Citizen Engagement

In the absence of 'descriptive representation' of many social groups via the electoral system, the Welsh Assembly Government and other bodies have made considerable efforts to engage with particular groups of citizens and to encourage their participation in civil society in Wales.

Chaney and Fevre (2003 summarised in Scourfield et al, n.d.) argue that third sector organisations have entered into partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government, in part as a response to the statutory role afforded to voluntary organisations in the 1998 Government of Wales Act, but also because of the lack of 'descriptive representation' of certain groups. Their study of three voluntary organisations representing women, disabled people and those from an ethnic minority background, concludes that active engagement of minority groups in policy making was a feature of the Assembly's first months, although engaging in this way created challenges for both 'partners'. The wider question of partnerships and networks in the early years of the Assembly is explored in Hodgson (2004, 2006). She concludes that whilst many groups have engaged in consultation, some feel frustrated by the experience and pay a 'high price' for their involvement.

Chaney and Fevre (2004) are also critical, and conclude that the relationship with the voluntary sector had worked much better in respect of the Assembly's procedures and policies than in respect of wider participation in the democratic process. They point to success in policy areas included providing services for Gypsies and Travellers, extending diversity amongst public sector employees and public appointments, and addressing the gender pay gap. However, they argue that little progress has been made in widening participation to the grass roots members.

Bristow et al's (2003) study of more than 140 people from voluntary sector organisations concluded that there are clear benefits to be gained from cross-sectoral working, including more inclusive and democratic decision-making, more joined-up service delivery, and a better understanding between organisations and sectors. However, the authors also identified challenges, including overlapping remits and lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities, lack of engagement by the Welsh Assembly Government itself and by local authorities. Some felt that the voluntary sector's representation was merely token.

Others (e.g. Wales Council for Voluntary Action, 2002) have pointed out that voluntary sector organisations are not necessarily representative of society as a whole.

An audit of political engagement by the Hansard Society found that people in Wales are less likely to be engaged in the political and electoral process on most measures than people in England or Scotland, whose engagement is already at a low ebb (Hansard Society, 2008). A considerably lower proportion of people in Wales than GB as a whole said they were interested in politics or knew anything about it, and a much lower proportion said they were certain to vote. However, the Home Office Citizenship Survey (Home Office, 2003) suggested that only a fifth of people in Wales felt that they had any influence over local decisions, a decrease on the proportion stating this in 2001.

Race

Williams and de Lima (2006) adopt a similar line of thought to Chaney and Fevre, and quote the Parekh Report (2000) which recognises that measures by authorities in Cardiff, Holyrood and Westminster are not in themselves sufficient:

...a community of citizens... has to be built from the bottom up as well as through government action.
(Williams and de Lima, 2006: 505)

Williams (2006) comments that although access to decision makers has improved, there is a 'skills deficit and lack of capacity' within the ethnic minority community, which:

...hinder meaningful engagement between policy makers and minority communities.
(Williams, 2006: 194)

Williams provides case study examples to show that consultation overload and elite burnout are commonly reported (Williams, 2006.) She also refers to the 'institutionalisation' of the ethnic minority constituency as a 'deradicalising force'.

The Electoral Commission (2002) notes that:

...a significant gap in our information exists with regard to patterns of ethnic minority electoral participation in Wales.
(Electoral Commission, 2002: 36)

Betts and Chaney (2004) found that 51.8 per cent of members of ethnic minority organisations believed that they could influence decisions.

The Minority Ethnic Youth Forum is an initiative started by the Welsh Assembly Government (2005p) to increase engagement with young people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Focus group discussions were held with ethnic minority young people in Wales to explore in depth the nature of engagement they wanted to have with the Welsh Assembly Government and mainstream bodies. The research also sought to find out the kind of structures ethnic minority young people preferred for engagement and how they wanted to be involved in policy development (Minority Ethnic Youth Forum, n.d.).

Gender

The Welsh Assembly Government funds the Women's Voice (previously the Wales Women's Coalition) as a means of engaging with women.

Betts and Chaney's (2004) research of the views of 'grassroots' members of NGOs explored patterns and processes of civic activism, and concluded that 37 per cent of women surveyed agreed, or tended to agree, that they could influence decisions affecting Wales.

Disability

The Welsh Assembly Government funds Disability Wales as a means of engaging with disabled people.

The only research on disabled people's engagement identified is a small element of the study by Betts and Chaney (2004) who found that 44 per cent of members of disability organisations believed that they could influence decisions, a higher proportion than the women included in the sample.

Age

Young people

The Welsh Assembly Government has gone to considerable lengths to establish mechanisms to engage with children and young people. As well as appointing a Children's Commissioner for Wales, local authorities were required to set up children and young people's forums which were supposed to include those from diverse, minority and marginalised backgrounds. It requires that every local authority set up a Children and Young People's Forum as a way of making local organisations listen to children, and it also established Funky Dragon, the youth Parliament for Wales.

Funky Dragon is a peer-led organisation that aims to ensure that the views of children and young people are heard, particularly by the Welsh Assembly Government, and to support participation in decision-making at national level. A survey of young people (Funky Dragon, 2007) found that compared with adults, a significant number of young people had been involved in government consultations, although it also found that there were ways that the experience could be improved. Despite this, only 18 per cent of young people thought that the Assembly listened to them, with 55 per cent saying it did not.

During the survey, it emerged that the vast majority of young people (80 per cent) thought that the voting age in Wales should be lowered from 18 to 16 years old, even though during the 2007 Welsh Assembly Government election, only 21.9 per cent of 18–24-year-olds exercised their right to vote.

Similarly, the Electoral Commission (2002) found that those in the younger age range of their sample were characterised by particularly low levels of interest and involvement in the political process. Davies and Dunkerley (2006) cite evidence from the 2003 Assembly election that young people were 'too busy to vote' as well as evidence from their own small-scale survey of young people about attitudes to the National Assembly for Wales. They conclude that young people are interested in politics, but are disillusioned with politicians and political institutions.

A Children in Wales report (2007) challenges politicians to address the overarching issues that its members believe require attention, in order to improve the lives of children and young people living in Wales. As well as the question of the voting age, it recommended that government documents be produced in 'child friendly' formats and resources be allocated to address some of the capacity issues to enable all children and young people to participate effectively.

Older people

Age Concern's EngAGE project aimed to involve older people as equal partners in the decisions and issues that affect their lives by equipping them with the necessary skills and support. An evaluation of the project, which ended in 2007, found that the scheme was valued by all those who participated – however, the evaluation was done by the project team themselves (Owen, 2007).

A report commissioned on behalf of the Caerphilly 50+ Positive Action Partnership (Gould, 2007) focuses on the civic aspect of citizenship – especially the links between people and their local authority. From the perspective of public sector organisations, the research records some movement towards creating opportunities for new forms of engagement; a concentration on 'consumerist' engagement in connection to the quality of public services; a prevalence for viewing the general public as apathetic; and a lack of resources – in terms of finance, expertise and time – to establish long-term engagement relationships. The report concludes that there may well be statutory requirements for public sector organisations to involve their public, but the extent to which they fulfil these requirements is likely to vary. It also draws attention to local government perceptions of large-scale public apathy about citizen engagement which can be interpreted as local government setting up a barrier to engagement.

Sexual Orientation

The Welsh Assembly Government funds Stonewall Cymru, which, as Chaney and Fevre (2004) point out, is the first government-funded dedicated consultative forum defined by sexual orientation in the UK.

Williams and Robinson's (2007) survey of LGB people indicated that 13 per cent of respondents were involved in local politics, with only one in 10 women reporting involvement compared with 17 per cent of men. Political activity was more prevalent amongst the older age categories compared with the younger age categories. Moreover, higher proportions of respondents from North Wales participated in political activities and respondents from South Wales were the least likely to do so.

Betts and Chaney's (2004) research of the views of 'grassroots' members of NGOs found that LGB people who responded not only had a high response rate to the survey, but they also were much more likely than other groups to believe that they could influence decisions affecting Wales.

Religion

The Welsh Assembly Government has established a Wales Faith Communities Forum. The Forum meets every six months, bringing together faith leaders and Assembly Members. Its mission is to improve and strengthen interfaith relationships, and examine ways in which all people in Wales can feel they are full stakeholders in Welsh society.

According to Chambers and Thompson (2006), there is a tendency for faith communities to be viewed as voluntary organisations by the Welsh Assembly Government. They surveyed 40 faith group leaders in Wales, noting that the impetus and profile of inter-faith work has increased, and the Interfaith Council for Wales and the Faith Communities Forum have been established.

However, this has its challenges due to difficulties in reaching consensus in some areas. There is also concern that faith groups' ability to engage are dependent on the goodwill of the political architects of civil society in Wales, established through personal relationships rather than through any formal agreement.

Gweini (2008) argues that the contribution made by faith communities to Welsh civil society is substantial, and includes a range of vital services which complement and enhance the work of government. The faith communities covered by the research are those represented on the Faith Communities

Forum, i.e. the various Christian denominations, Bahá'í, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh faith communities. The study concentrates on three areas where faith communities are involved in government including participation in regeneration initiatives and involvement in local Community Strategies, as well as the economic value of the provision of church halls etc as venues.

7.5 Community Cohesion

The Welsh Assembly Government has initiated the All Wales Community Cohesion project which is working in conjunction with local government, police and other bodies on the issue with a view to preparing an All Wales Community Cohesion Strategy.

There is little evidence on the subject at present. The Living in Wales survey contains questions about individuals' attitudes to their neighbourhood, including questions about whether people feel they belong and whether they are similar to their neighbours. However, the results are only broken down by type of neighbourhood. The 2007 survey included questions about attitudes to racial equality including Gypsy Travellers and Muslims, and about experiences of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, but the analysis of the results has not yet been published.¹⁶ As a forerunner to the results, the Welsh Assembly Government website comments that the British Crime Survey data suggests that the prevalence of victimisation was significantly lower in Wales than in England for personal crime (although not for household crime).¹⁷

The Equality and Human Rights Commission in Wales's research on attitudes around social cohesion, as well as Human Rights and equalities, found that overall the people of Wales feel a strong sense of togetherness and are largely comfortable with those from different backgrounds. However, it did highlight some serious negative perceptions and significant prejudice in relation to some people and communities, notably Gypsy Travellers, people

¹⁶ See the questionnaires on <http://new.wales.gov.uk/about/aboutresearch/social/ocsropage/living-wales/about-survey/questionnaires/?lang=en>

¹⁷ See <http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/crime2008/hdw200807171/?lang=en>

with mental health conditions, younger and older people (on some issues) and Transgender people (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2008).

Race

There is a little more evidence on community relations around race, in particular on refugees and asylum seekers.

The Home Office's Citizenship Survey (2004) suggested that more than four out of 10 people (43 per cent) in Wales thought that racial prejudice was worse today than five years ago, a lower figure than in many regions of England and Wales, although the survey does not provide a baseline figure. A small-scale study of conflict and the potential for mediation in Black and ethnic minority communities in Cardiff (Hughes and Mahill, 2007) found that most conflicts *within* ethnic minority communities are resolved through community structures, but that there was no effective single system to deal with *inter-community* conflict and that there was potential for mediation to help to resolve disputes. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (2008) found that more than a quarter of people interviewed were worried about ethnic minority groups coming to live in Wales, especially people from Eastern Europe (which worried 32 per cent of respondents), Muslims (30 per cent) and Black and Asian people (25 per cent). Sixteen per cent were worried about more English people coming to Wales.

Refugees, Asylum seekers, Migrants and Gypsy Travellers

The Welsh Assembly Government's approach to race equality is set out in its Race Equality Scheme, and it has also set out separate and specific strategies on refugee inclusion (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008d) whilst one on Gypsy Travellers is in preparation.

Lewis (2005) reports that attitudes to asylum seekers in Wales are more favourable than in other parts of the UK, and cites the Assembly's Refugee Forum and various strategies on refugees and asylum seekers as key influences. In one of the contributions to the Welsh Assembly Government's work on refugee and asylum inclusion, Speers (2001) examines how the Welsh English language local media covered issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers from April–December 2000. She concluded that the Welsh media lacked the 'hostility or hyperbole' that could be seen in the UK-wide national media. Nevertheless, she argued the majority of articles focused on costs and numbers, and the management of asylum seekers and refugees, rather than the conditions in countries that asylum seekers are fleeing or the

experiences they have had. Asylum seekers and refugees were given little opportunity to voice their own views.

Again, as part of the work done by the Welsh Assembly Government, the summary of a series of focus group discussions held with refugees in Wales (Threadgold, 2005) found that racism, anti-refugeeism and Islamophobia were common experiences for refugees. Threadgold and Clifford (2005) explore in more detail the findings from the discussions, including the nuances of integration and refugees' experiences of racism and discrimination. Hewett et al's (2005) study of the experiences of child asylum seekers in Wales similarly found that although local communities are seen as welcoming, over one third of children and young people interviewed had experienced racial abuse and harassment.

The studies of migrant workers in Conwy and Flintshire (Turunen et al, 2005; Hold et al, 2005) both found relatively low levels of racism, although those who were non-White were more likely to have experienced racism than White migrant workers.

The most recent study (Threadgold et al, 2008) found that although community tensions are not inevitable, members of minority groups reported discrimination, offensive cultural ignorance or racism. They also highlighted the complex interrelationship between class and immigration, noting that the segregation and lack of social mobility were experienced by White working class people as well as by immigrants.

Gender

With the exception of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's (2008) research on attitudes to discrimination, () there is a surprising lack of research on gender relations in the community, including on domestic abuse and sexual violence, although we have identified some local studies (e.g. Charles et al, 2006 – not accessed) and also data collected in the course of preparing local community safety strategies. The Welsh Assembly Government's strategy for domestic abuse is set out in Welsh Assembly Government (2005k).

The British Crime Survey (Finney, 2006) shows that in Wales (as elsewhere) more women aged 16–59 than men experience 'intimate violence' whether from partners (7.2 per cent compared with 3.6 per cent), other family members (3.6 per cent compared with 1.7 per cent), sexual assault (2.3 per

cent compared with 0.6 per cent). However, only slightly more women than men reported stalking (10.8 per cent compared with 9.3 per cent). Welsh Women's Aid (2007) reports that nearly 15,000 people have contacted the Wales Domestic Abuse Helpline during its two years of operation; of these, 48 per cent had experienced violence. Over the same period, there were 1,300 requests for emergency refuge accommodation. The EOC's report on domestic abuse (Jenkins and Dunne, 2007) provides a few statistics on domestic violence in Wales, pointing out that in 2003, it constituted half of all murders in South Wales and that in 2000, there were 173 women and 240 children/young people living in refuges on the day of the survey.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission's survey (2008) found that 97 per cent of Welsh adults said it was never acceptable to bully or hit a partner, with this proportion being consistent across sub-groups of the population. However, only two-thirds (67 per cent) thought domestic abuse was best handled by the police rather than privately.

Amnesty International Wales (2007) argue that, based on crime records, and interviews with police, outreach workers and other professionals with knowledge of the sex industry, there is specific evidence of sex trafficking of small numbers of women in Wales who have clearly suffered severely. The anecdotal evidence they gleaned suggested that the trade is sophisticated and extensive, with some 60 victims in Cardiff at any given time, as well as in smaller communities across the country.

Disability

No relevant literature was identified.

Age

The only literature on community cohesion and age identified is Butler's (n.d.) study of identity-related bullying amongst 77 young people in Cardiff (based on focus groups and participant observation). This found that community bullying happens on a regular basis, but that it is experienced differently by girls and boys and different cultures and varies between different socio-economic neighbourhoods. Butler found that bullying from young people tends to happen in gathering places, such as outside shops or park benches, and in isolated areas such as back lanes. Bullying sometimes spread from school into the community.

Sexual Orientation

In terms of sexual orientation, Williams and Robinson (2007) found that 22 per cent of respondents reported experiencing homophobic harassment in the previous 12 months. Respondents felt that the majority of incidents were 'not very serious' (67 per cent of violent incidents, 77 per cent of property crimes, and 87 per cent of harassment incidents, were described this way). Only a proportion of incidents were reported to the police – even in the case of violent crime, just over half of incidents were reported. Those who did report a crime were generally dissatisfied with both how the police handled the report and with the resolution of the case.

Religion

The only study identified was that by Mahoney and Taj (2006) which, based on discussion groups involving 600 women, found that women felt threatened in the current climate of negative feelings towards the Muslim community, and that a substantial proportion had experienced negative responses by statutory service providers, especially the police. Respondents also felt that the concept of honour is not understood by service providers.

7.6 Conclusions and Research Gaps

The evidence on participation in public and political life in Wales is extremely fragmented and uneven. Overall, there has been little investigation into any aspect of engagement, whatever the equality strand. Whilst Chaney's work (with Fevre) has cast some light on the role of influential women in the devolution settlement and post devolution and Williams has placed the question of ethnicity and engagement on the agenda, there is nothing on the views and experiences of ordinary people analysed by gender or ethnicity. Nor have other aspects of equality fared much better, with only the occasional study commissioned for a particular purpose, e.g. on access to polling stations or sex trafficking, or incidental analysis of one equality strand, e.g. of young people's participation in elections. The exception is refugees and asylum seekers, about whom there are a number of pieces of work. Given the emphasis in Welsh Assembly Government policy on inclusiveness, it is all the more surprising that its interventions are neither based upon sound evidence nor accompanied by monitoring and evaluation.

8. CONCLUSIONS

The exercise of reviewing literature on equality in Wales has proved to be a very substantial one indeed, not least because there is, against expectation, a considerable number of reports, articles, studies and evaluations which include at least some analysis of Wales by one of the equality strands – typically gender and/or age.

Not all of the literature identified which included evidence about Wales was presented as a study about Wales: sometimes the occasional reference to findings specific to Wales was incidental rather than the result of a systematic country analysis. Much more common, however, was research that had UK, GB or England and Wales coverage and offered no separate analysis at all, even when the methodology had carefully included a Welsh sample. Whilst such an approach might be understandable in smaller scale studies, it is surprising indeed to find it in so many government research reports.

Despite the volume of literature identified, it cannot be said that there is anything approaching a body of Welsh literature on any of the equality strands nor on equality within any of the subjects. Instead, there is a patchwork of miscellaneous studies, some commissioned by statutory bodies and some led by academics, but a great deal of it undertaken by various non-governmental bodies. As a consequence, not only are many studies hard to locate, but there is also a considerable duplication of effort as individual studies all analyse the same official data, for example on the ethnic origin of Wales's population. Of the research undertaken by voluntary bodies, many have limited resources and are consequently small scale with, for example, relatively small samples.

There is a surprisingly small body of academic research specific to Wales, (and what there is has often been commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government), and the literature is difficult to access without expensive subscriptions to numerous learned journals. The consequence is that there is little building of evidence into a coherent body of knowledge. There is also a lack of peer reviewed articles which means that there is little Welsh engagement with the latest thinking about equality elsewhere, e.g. in international circles.

Much of the research that has been undertaken is shaped by the availability of official data. The Welsh Assembly Government's various statistical bulletins on different aspects of equality (for example, women and men (2007),

ethnicity (2004), older people (2008) and disability (2003) and Muslims (2004)) are extremely valuable sources. However, they are limited by the lack of data, relying mostly on the 2001 Census of Population, and as a result they are not only somewhat dated but also have only partial coverage of the various issues. Other major Welsh Assembly Government data sources, such as the Welsh Health Survey and Living in Wales survey, offer no more than the occasional analysis by gender or age and none by other equality strands.

In terms of the literature identified, there is, overall, the greatest coverage on gender issues, particularly employment and education. There is much less, however, on gender and poverty, health or social care, and housing. In general, there is also a reasonable literature on ethnicity, especially education, employment and housing, although less so on health and social care and public and political life. There is also more coverage than might have been expected on refugees and asylum seekers, and on migrant workers.

All of the different chapters have identified that there is very little research on sexual orientation or religion – Anita Naoko Pilgrim refers to the ‘near silence’ on education. The exception in the case of the former is the Stonewall survey (Williams and Robinson, 2007) which bears a heavy burden as the sole source. This might be expected as the legislation on discrimination on these two grounds is relatively recent, and much more so than on gender, although no planned research was identified.

However the largest, and most surprising, gap is on disability where, across the board there is a paucity of evidence. On some key issues, such as employment and poverty, the research is limited to one or two studies, if that. There is nothing sophisticated enough to allow analysis of different types of disability nor of disabled people’s experiences. There is a little more evidence on disability and health and social care, although much less than might be expected, much of which concerns learning disability.

The dearth of data, and analysis of it, is all the more surprising given that public authorities have a duty to collect disaggregated data around disability, under the public sector Disability Equality Duty (as indeed race under the Race Equality Duty). This includes disaggregated data aspects of education e.g. attendance, attainment levels, exclusions, in schools, as well as in employment, use of health and social care services, allocations of housing and so on. Despite this, huge gaps still exist as data are often not routinely collected. If they were collected in these areas and across other equalities

areas, research and analysis would provide far richer and more meaningful information. Without the collection and analysis of these data, it is difficult to see how inequality can be tackled effectively.

There is an urgent requirement to address the massive research deficit, not only by commissioning more one-off studies (much though they are needed), but through a clear strategic lead. This is necessary to ensure that the not inconsiderable effort and expenditure on Welsh Assembly Government surveys produces data that can be analysed by equality strand, and that Assembly Government-commissioned studies are sensitive to equality issues. There is also a need to ensure that research by UK government departments adequately takes account of specific circumstances in Wales and presents findings accordingly. Within government bodies, the commissioning of research needs to be done on a more systematic basis than is apparent at present, so a body of knowledge about equality in Wales can begin to be built up. Those undertaking academic research need to be encouraged to value Welsh-specific studies and to share their findings with the Welsh policy community as well as the academic community elsewhere.

Lastly, this report cannot conclude without a comment about access. It is hard to over emphasise how difficult it has been to identify the research reviewed in this report – and it is inevitable that studies will have been missed. Much of the academic literature is accessible only in journals, to which only other academics have access. Welsh Assembly Government research is extraordinarily difficult to locate, not least because reports are distributed across many Assembly Government web pages, not all are published on-line, and a number of reports have disappeared from the website during the course of this project. Even the research published by the former equality commissions is difficult to access and does not distinguish between that which is specific to Wales and that which is not. Lastly, had it not been for Google, the many voluntary bodies' research would not have been found, given the plethora of different organisations. Unfortunately, very little of the research identified was easily accessible to visually impaired people.

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This report provides the first comprehensive review of research and statistics which relate specifically to Wales by race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion. Covering research published between 2000 and October 2008, it focuses on poverty and social exclusion, the economy and labour market, health and social care, education, housing and public and political life. The analysis is set within the appropriate policy context.