

“A neoliberal political agenda? The debate surrounding outdoor service provision for the homeless in Westminster”

Emma Colven
Geography BA
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Supervisor: Jennifer Robinson

ABSTRACT

This research is focused on the bylaw proposal put forward by Westminster City Council in February 2011 to prohibit the distribution of free refreshments within a zone of Westminster. It seeks to examine how and why the council sought to prevent soup runs operating in Westminster, how the soup run debate was conceptualised and mobilised by the council and by service providers, and how processes of neoliberalism have impacted on the 'local' scale, with regards to the provision of homeless services. A series of in depth one-to-one interviews with actors within London's homelessness sector were carried out, accompanied by a content and discourse analysis of policy documents produced by Westminster City Council. This research intends to respond to the geographical literature that portrays neoliberalism as hegemonic in shaping our experiences of space, and seeks to demonstrate that strategies of rule within urban governance cannot be categorised as purely 'neoliberal'. An exploration of the soup run debate enables more nuanced understanding of urban governance, and demonstrates how approaches to homelessness have been informed by different ideologies, and contributed to the creation of a 'fault line' within Westminster's 'landscape of care', wherein various service providers operate. Rose's (1993) concept of 'advanced liberal state governing' is useful in examining how council has sought to re-assert control over the third sector, using strategies of rule informed by 'governmentality' and neo-communitarianism. This research concludes that ideological differences between the council and the 'third sector' pose serious challenges to achieving a widely shared vision of greater collaboration. On the other hand, this has prevented the creation of a 'shadow state'.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This research is focused on the bylaw proposal put forward by Westminster City Council in February 2011 to prohibit the distribution of free refreshments within a zone of the borough. The objectives of this research were to examine how and why Westminster council sought to prevent soup runs operating in Westminster, how the soup run debate was conceptualised and mobilised by the council and by service providers, and how processes of neoliberalism have impacted on the 'local' scale, with regards to homeless services. The proliferation of neoliberalism in recent decades has been a key theme within geographical research, and there has been an overwhelming tendency to portray neoliberalism as a meta-narrative, inevitably causing the marginalisation of social groups within city spaces. These studies, mostly situated in the 'Global North', tend to portray the neoliberal agenda as hegemonic in shaping our experiences of space.

However, this research seeks to move beyond a one-dimensional exploration of neoliberalism and urban governance. This research is informed by recent literature that has sought to examine the uneven spatial impacts of 'actually existing neoliberalism' (Peck and Tickell 2002). By exploring the soup run debate and the different ideological approaches to homelessness, this research seeks to demonstrate that processes of urban governance cannot be categorised as wholly 'neoliberal'. The soup run debate is an ideological one, centred on the effectiveness of outdoor service provision for the homeless. It is a highly contested issue that has contributed to 'fault lines' within the homelessness sector (Cloke, Johnsen and May 2005). The soup run debate was mobilised by Westminster City Council and service providers during the consultation to both oppose and support the proposed bylaw. By exploring these arguments, this research seeks to acknowledge the role ideology plays in shaping both homeless service provision by the third sector, and the approach to

homelessness and rough sleeping taken by the council. In doing so, this research is able to move beyond a simplistic conclusion that neoliberalism is ‘bad’ (Ferguson 2010: 166). This research aims to offer a more nuanced understanding of the case study of Westminster additionally by acknowledging that, as well as a neoliberal agenda, Westminster City Council are faced with balancing multiple agendas which shape political decisions and governance. In understanding that neoliberalism is embedded within the practices of the contemporary formula of rule of the ‘advanced liberal state’ (Rose 1993) and is therefore inseparable from other political agendas, it becomes clear that the legislative approach taken by Westminster City Council towards soup runs is not necessarily a product of a neoliberal agenda. This research therefore seeks to offer a more careful analysis of the motivations behind the bylaw proposal.

This research begins by contextualising and outlining the proposed bylaw and the subsequent discussions, before summarising the arguments made for and against the bylaw. The soup run debate highlights important ideological differences between organisations in their approach to homelessness. The changing modes of governance over the past several decades in Britain, and in London more specifically, provide an important context for both the bylaw and for the soup run debate. Theoretical concepts from Peck and Tickell (2002), Ling (2000) and Nikolas Rose (1993) are used to link changes in formulae of rule to changes in the operations of services providers and the third sector within Westminster. Rose’s (1993) concept of the ‘advanced liberal state’ provides a useful framework for understanding how Westminster City Council have sought to prevent soup runs operating. The strategies of rule used to govern the advanced liberal state also provide a useful theoretical lens for revealing how neoliberalism has impacted on the local scale, through the introduction of financial relationship, and methods of mainstreaming and professionalisation intended to ‘conduct the conduct’ of the third sector. This research is able to explore the complex relationships

between service providers and Westminster City Council and, in doing so, highlights the risks and challenges posed by partnership approaches to homelessness. Additionally, rather than portraying neoliberalism as producing a simplistic ‘roll back’ of the state, the concept of the advanced liberal state helps to flesh out the particular changes in modes of governance, the new relationships created, the blurring of the civil-society/state boundary, and the council’s use of practices aiming to achieve the ‘conduct of conduct’.

II. THE GEOGRAPHIES OF NEOLIBERALISM

Cloke, May and Johnsen have produced substantial research on homeless services, exploring their role in shaping the homeless city (Cloke, May and Johnsen 2007; 2008), and the underlying ethos of such services (Cloke, Johnsen and May 2005). They concluded that soup runs provide ‘a series of important yet very complex spaces of care in the city’ (Johnsen, Cloke and May 2005: 323) and serve as a transitional service for the homeless, but identified a lack of research focusing on soup runs. However, more research has been undertaken in recent years to evaluate the effectiveness of soup runs. In 2005, as part of its Street Homeless Project, Shelter produced a practice briefing, ‘Food for thought: soup-runs and soup kitchens’, which assessed the value of soup runs and kitchens. The report was generally positive about the contributions of soup runs, but made a series of recommendations including the reviewing and coordination of soup runs, the setting of minimum standards (for example, regarding health and safety), the engagement of soup runs with other agencies and the inclusion of soup runs within local authority and homelessness agency strategies. Homelessness is a key priority for Westminster City Council and the council have commissioned a series of surveys to assess soup runs operating in the borough, including a review of soup runs in 2003 via a questionnaire, and a scoping and mapping exercise in 2005. In 2009, the council, the Department for Communities and Local Government, and Crisis collectively commissioned LSE Housing to research soup runs in Westminster. The report concluded there was an over-provision of services and highlighted the disruptive nature of soup runs to local residents and businesses. This research has been highly influential in shaping the council’s approach to soup runs, and also informed the proposed bylaw.

Much geographical literature is highly critical of the impacts of neoliberalism, both for the city and for social groups. Urban geography has demonstrated a preoccupation with public

space, concerning its significance to urban life (Madanipour 1999), its value and meaning (Herbert 2008), and attempts to preserve it (Valentine 2001). This has reproduced a republican view of public space, heralding access to it as indicative of democratic urban life, and therefore important for creating more inclusive city spaces (Lefebvre 2002; Harvey 2008). Much research has preached the demise of public space in the face of processes of fortification (Ruddick 1996), regulation (Mitchell 1995), privatisation and securitisation (Davis 1992). Social geography has often portrayed the spatial exclusion and marginalisation of social groups as an inherent characteristic of the neoliberal city. Research has explored the ways in which the homeless are marginalised from city spaces (Daly 1998), drawing connections between the social and spatial exclusion of the homeless (Ruddick 1995). Sibley (1995) applies Mary Douglas' psychoanalytical theories of boundary preservation to the motivations of urban planners to explore how particular social groups, such as the homeless, are marginalised. Davis' (1990) attack on the design of Los Angeles concludes that urban planners seek to design out the poor, allowing redevelopment to produce 'spatial apartheid' (1990: 230). Similarly, Mitchell (2003) expands on Lefebvre's concept of the 'right to the city', in his exploration of the marginalisation of the homeless in American cities through the use of enforcement and zoning legislation. He contends that the marginalisation of the homeless '[reflects] a changing conception of citizenship which... seeks to reestablish exclusionary citizenship as just and good' (Mitchell 2003:181-182). Mitchell has extensively explored the relationship between urban space, exclusion and citizenship in American cities, with particular focus on the homeless (Mitchell 1995; 2003; 2006). Additional research has explored the exclusionary practices of urban revanchism, gentrification and NIMBY-ism (Smith 1996; 2002; Davila 2003; Lees 2008), and legislation (Waldron 1991; Smith 1994; Jacobs 1996; Mitchell 1997; 2003; Herbert 2008; 2009; 2010).

However, recent research has provided more nuanced perspectives on neoliberalism. For example, Ferguson contends much research concerning neoliberalism has ‘left us with a politics largely defined by negation and disdain’ by simplistically concluding ‘neoliberalism is bad for the poor and working people’, therefore we must oppose it’ (Ferguson 2010:166). Ferguson emphasises the need for studies framed within the neoliberal context to be more specific, in order to offer a more progressive response to the criticisms of neoliberalism. In demonstrating that neoliberalism is a constant and uneven process rather than a unilateral phenomenon, research has been able to contribute careful analyses of the differentiated impacts of neoliberalism. For example, Peck and Tickell use the term ‘actually existing neoliberalism’ to acknowledge that neoliberalisation is a process ‘rather than an end state’ (2002: 383). Brenner and Theodore (2002b) also observed the socially and geographically differentiated nature of neoliberalism. May, Johnsen and Cloke contend that demonstrating an awareness of the ‘uneven, incomplete and plain “messy” character’ of neoliberalism can produce more nuanced understandings of its impacts (2005: 718). For example, in adopting such an approach, Burchell concludes that not all neoliberal governmental methods are ‘unambiguously “bad” ’ (1996: 35). Peck and Tickell articulate this idea when claiming it must be ‘acknowledged that there are few dividing lines between [the neoliberal] project and its “others” ’ (2007: 27).

The deconstruction of the welfare state and the rise of neoliberalism have prompted attempts to conceptualise changes in governance. Urban political theorists have attempted to move ‘beyond the state’ (Barry, Osbourne and Rose 1996: 1) to reveal its increasingly complex structure, as neoliberalism has posed challenges to conventional imaginations of the state. This has entailed a shift away towards the ‘meticulous examination of political systems’ (Mitchell 2006: 171). Peck and Tickell draw attention to the roll back of the state, not as a unilateral process, but an uneven one, involving the specific withdrawal of the Keynesian

welfare state (1992: 29). In particular, the shift from government to governance has become a 'dominant theme with urban politics literature' (Davies 2007: 199). Peck and Theodore theorise a transition from the roll *back* of the state to the roll *out* of the state (2002: 384), describing a shift from 'dismantling and deregulating' the welfare state to 'managing the contradictions of state-assisted marketisation' (Peck and Tickell 2007: 45). Additionally, it has been observed that the 'roll out' of the state has paradoxically led the state to be more involved in certain aspects of life, as new forms of governance are 'rolled forward' (Jessop 2002: 454).

The more recent changes to forms of governance are perhaps best understood using Foucault's theoretical work concerning the art of governing and political rationalities. Foucault used the concept of 'governmentality' to describe the processes whereby the state seeks to 'shape, guide, conduct and modify the ways in which [agencies external to the state] conduct themselves' (Foucault 1988 cited in Burchell 1996: 19). Many political urban theorists have used Foucault's ideas to conceptualise the changes in governance that accompanied the rise of neoliberalism. Thomas Ling (2000) examined British welfare policy over the last century, to explore the 'key differences in the basic rationale and practices of state welfare provision' (May, Johnsen and Cloke 2005: 707). Ling identifies three distinct periods: 'government', from the 1940s to the 1970s, when the majority of services were provided by the state in a hierarchal, linear structure; 'governance', from the 1970s to the mid-1990s, when the state attempted to reduce its responsibilities to provide welfare by outsourcing service providers and encouraging the responsabilisation of citizens; and 'governmentality', from the mid 1990s to present, describing a 'second, more powerful moment of roll-out neoliberalism' (May, Johnsen and Cloke 2005: 727). Although Ling's unconventional use of 'governmentality' as a particular temporal phase is problematic given that most research uses Foucault's traditional definition, Ling provides a useful historical

context for the specific study of British politics. One of the most notable contributors to makes use of Foucault's ideas, in a conventional way, is Nikolas Rose. Rose argues that governmentality retains contemporary significance to a new 'formula of rule' he describes as 'advanced liberal' (1993: 283). Governing the advanced liberal state seeks to govern 'through the regulated and accountable choices of autonomous agents' (Rose 1993: 298). In this way, the principles of governmentality are clearly embedded within advanced liberal strategies of rule, as the state pursues the 'conduct of conduct'.

Partly due to the roll back of the welfare state and political objectives of localism, the 'third sector' has become the focus of 'neoliberal thinking' (Bondi 2005: 106). The third sector can be broadly defined as 'self governing associations of people who have joined together to take action for public benefit, that are independent, do not distribute profits and are governed by non-paid volunteers' (Taylor 1992 cited in Fyfe 2005: 144). The rising political interest in the third sector has been matched within geographical research. The professionalisation of NGOs, as part of a neoliberal agenda intended to incorporate the third sector, has been a particularly prominent theme (Jenkins 2005; Bondi 2005). Within the context of governmentality, Kothari (2005) observed how promoting responsabilisation and self-regulation has contributed to the professionalisation of development NGOs. Similarly, in exploring the relationships between funders and NGOs, Dolhinow (2005) observed the demand for greater professionalisation. Dolhinow argues that NGOs play an intrinsic role in present 'advanced liberal order' (2005: 173), through facilitating the conduct of conduct.

Fyfe (2005) applies Etzioni's concept of 'neo-communitarianism' to theorise advanced liberal state practices involving the third sector. Neo-communitarianism, first adopted by New Labour's third way approach and currently reflected in Cameron's Big Society campaign, emphasises individual and collective responsibility over the role of the state to

provide welfare services. Its most important element is its emphasis on the role of the 'third sector' and state-civil society partnerships (Etzioni 1995 cited in Fyfe 2005: 141). Through mainstreaming the third sector, the state seeks to govern from a distance. These processes, some involving 'contractual implication' (Donzelot 1991 cited in Burchell 1996: 29), have contributed to the blurring of the 'boundary between state and society' (Mitchell 2006: 170). This has created a key tension within the third sector, concerning the risks posed by the incorporation of NGOs into state structures, and the threats to their ability to operate as spaces of resistance. Barry, Osborne and Rose (1996) observed the expectation to compete for funding as a result of the marketisation of NGOs. In exploring similar processes, Dolhinow (2005) concluded this has fundamentally altered how NGOs operate, both by threatening their autonomy and by marginalising those NGOs who do not secure funding. Dolhinow claims that through partnerships with the state, NGOs could become 'a site of neoliberal governance and end up reinforcing the very production of neoliberal political objectives they seek to deconstruct' (Dolhinow 2005: 174). Similarly, Davies suggests partnerships might be regarded as being 'inscribed' with 'neoliberal common sense' (2007: 201), forged to consolidate the 'grip of the state' (Davies 2007: 217).

Wolch (1989) articulates this concern in her theorisation of the 'shadow state'. Wolch claims the re-organisation of the state, as a result of the processes of roll back, impacted on the voluntary sector. She claims that in working with the state and in providing services previously provided by the state, the third sector is at risk from becoming a 'shadow state', which simply replicates public services, thereby losing the dynamic qualities characteristic of third sector organisations. Like Jessop (2002), and Wolch (1989), Davies identifies the paradox of neoliberalism, whereby processes of state roll back occur alongside the infiltration of the state 'ever more deeply into the practices of voluntary organisations, local communities, the home, and personal life' (Davies 2007: 217). Much research concerning

neoliberalism and the third sector has emphasised the potential dangers posed to the dynamism and autonomy of NGOs, by the rationality of rule called 'governmentality'. This is important in exposing practices that may be potentially exploitative, and for reminding us of the importance of a third sector as a space of resistance to state power. However, in contrast to research that assumes a power relation in favour of the state, Marcus Power (2005) has explored how spaces of neoliberalism are 'worked' through 'incorporation, internalisation, co-optation, resistance and subversion', to produce a complex interplay of power relations between the state and NGOs. There is perhaps room for more research like Power's, which explores the effectiveness of governmentality strategies on the operations of the third sector, and it is within this gap that this research is situated.

III. METHODOLOGY

Collection

I conducted eleven in depth interviews, lasting on average seventy minutes. I chose this method because it is suitable for obtaining detailed accounts (Valentine 2005). Interviews were conducted at various stages of the bylaw consultation, which meant a semi-structured interview schedule was most suitable. A list of topics within the schedule ensured I covered all themes (Bell 2000) and open questions were used (appendix three) to encourage an informal, conversational exchange important for discussing such a politicised topic, and intended to reduce the power relations inherent in the interviewee/researcher relationship (Davidson and Layder cited in Flowerdew and Martin 2005: 121). New ideas introduced by the interviewee were noted and explored. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Additionally, one telephone interview was conducted, and three via email. These were shallow in detail, but provided an indication of the interviewees' views. A full list of interviews can be found in the appendix (appendix four).

I sought to represent as equally as possible both those who opposed and supported the bylaw. Theoretical sampling was used to gain the specific perspectives of those involved in the bylaw consultation (Hoskin, Gill and Burkill 2003). In referring to documents published by Westminster City Council, newspaper articles and press releases regarding the proposal, a list of relevant organisations was constructed. Additionally, by cross-sectioning the boundary map with the soup run timetable from LSE report, a list of soup runs operating within the bylaw zone was constructed (appendix five). Initially, recruitment was conducted by email. This method was more successful where a direct email address was available, as opposed to a generic 'enquires' email address. The personal assistants to the individuals contacted

emerged as ‘gatekeepers’, who possessed the power to provide or deny access (Flowerdew and Martin 2005:116). The content of recruitment emails changed throughout the project. The research had begun with a one-dimensional focus, concerning the marginalisation of the homeless within urban spaces. However, as this emerged as too simplistic, the emails were adjusted according. For example, the phrase ‘the purification of public space’ was exchanged for ‘a study of urban politics’ (appendix six).

As well as contacting people directly, contact details were provided by interviewees, creating a ‘snowballing’ effect (Valentine 1997 cited in Longhurst 2003). Additionally, by telling people that somebody had recommended that I speak to them, I was able to exploit the power relations at play, either by creating a sense of obligation to talk to me, or by telling contacts that somebody else had deemed their views important. I also utilised my position as a volunteer at The Simon Community in several ways. Firstly, it gave me direct access to the Director, who was involved in the consultation and able to provide additional contacts. Secondly, as a recipient of Simon Community emails, I was able to access to a number of people associated with the organisation. This enabled me to contact a previous resident at the community, who had gone on to work for Crisis. Thirdly, stating in my recruitment emails that I was a volunteer gave me credibility in the eyes of some, as I was seen as more of an ‘insider’ with an understanding of the issues of homelessness. However, the importance of being an insider can be overstated, as there still exist ‘many points of similarity and dissimilarity between ourselves and research participants’ (Dowling 2005:33) and it was important not to assume too much common ground.

Secondary data sources were used where interviews could not be secured. This was partly due to being repeatedly referred to official documents when trying to contact the council. Although secondary data is limited to offering a ‘biased data set’ (Hoggart, Lees and Davies

2002: 132), as the documents were used as representative of the council's views, the inherent bias was a useful characteristic. The council documents used were the Bylaw Proposal Frequently Asked Questions (2011), the Rough Sleeping Strategy 2011- 2013, and the 'Transforming Lives' document (2011). Stenson and Watt claim discourses create 'a series of absent agendas, agents, objects of concerns and counter-narratives, which are mobilised out of the discursive picture' (1999: 192). To gain a wider view outside of the 'discursive picture' (Stenson and Watt 1999: 192) provided by the council, I used sources such as press releases and new stories from voluntary organisations, charities and media sources, to gain a fuller understanding of bylaw debate, and to better understand the discourses in the documents.

Analysis

The steps provided by Dunn were followed to analyse the interview transcripts (2005: 77). Firstly, due to the rich nature of the qualitative data obtained, each transcript was summarised and key themes were noted. Secondly, the transcripts were analysed, using codes identified prior to and during the research process. Thirdly, similarly coded text was collated and grouped into major themes. In being able to view the material thematically, further themes and patterns could be identified, and linked to the research aims and objectives. For the secondary data analysis, content analysis and critical discourse analysis were used (Dixon 2010). Content analysis enables patterns to be observed in the text, and reveals if particular 'signifiers' are of 'special significance to the author' (Dixon 2010: 394). This was useful for examining the frequency of certain phrases in the council documents as well as the context of their use. For example, 'partnerships' were repeatedly referred to throughout the Rough Sleeping Strategy, demonstrating the importance of a collaborative approach to homelessness

for the council.

Discourse analysis, meanwhile, seeks to highlight both the social setting in which the discourse is located, and ‘the argumentative schema that organise a text and establish its authority’ (Tonkiss, 1998 cited in Lees 2004: 104). Critical discourse analysis makes use of a Foucauldian reading of discourse, which claims that the production of meaning through language is inherently linked to power and its ability to ‘make itself true’ (Hall 2004: 347). In this way, discourse is understood as being embedded within systems of meanings and power, and works to construct and govern the way we talk about things. By attending to the production, character and consumption of the council documents (Jones and Natter 1999 cited in Dixon 2010: 399), I was able to gain an insight into the views of the council and the systems of meaning and power in which discourses were produced (Lindsay 1997). For example, the combined references to partnerships and commissioning, and to efforts to alleviate homelessness, worked throughout the documents to naturalise a multi-agency approach to homelessness as an inherently desirable outcome. Additionally, the juxtaposition of the criticisms of soup runs alongside a discussion of the need to reduce anti-social behaviour caused by ‘street activity’ works to associate these ideas. In this way, discourse throughout the document presents soup run providers as problematic. When combined with a focus on partnerships, this produces a system of meaning that works to promote the mainstreaming of volunteers into the council’s approach. This is rationalised through the council’s assertion that there ‘is no one agency that can manage the complexity of issues associated with rough sleeping’ (Westminster City Council 2011g: 2).

Limitations and Ethical Issues

Although I intended to represent as equally as possible the views of all those involved in the

bylaw consultation, this was problematic for several reasons. Firstly, there was a frustrating relationship between people's position of power, and the difficulty of gaining access to them. The height of this difficulty was in trying to contact Westminster City Council, although an email response was received from the Rough Sleeping Team. Despite my efforts to represent the range of views fairly, representation is complex and there is no guarantee of representing everyone equally. Ultimately individuals spoke for themselves. However, as important actors involved in the debate surrounding the bylaw, their views provided valuable insight.

My positionality posed considerable challenges to my attempts to present myself as an impartial researcher, for example by asking neutral questions (appendix seven). Although my role as a volunteer enabled me to seek common ground with soup run providers, it posed challenges when contacting those who supported the bylaw, as they suspected that I might be seeking to validate my own beliefs through the research. This made some less willing to talk to me. Mullings (1999) also noted the difficulties of trying to secure interviews with two groups between which 'antagonistic relationships' exist (1999: 343). Mullings takes a feminist approach to knowledge production to describe how she overcame the challenges of her positionality, and utilised her identity as both an outsider and an insider with business elites, to gain access to both workers and managers in the Jamaican press industry. I also learnt to use my different positions when contacting potential interviewees. For example, some I approached as a soup run volunteer, to portray myself as an 'insider' to the third sector. Others, meanwhile, I chose not to inform I was a volunteer, instead presenting myself as a student and an 'outsider' to the debate, without preconceptions or prejudices. Although my findings are inherently 'embedded, situated, specific and hence partial' (Mohammed 2001: 103), in demonstrating an awareness of my positionality, I hope to avoid perpetuating the 'God trick' (Haraway 1991: 189) of masculinist epistemologies that produces 'a gaze from nowhere' (Rose 1993 cited in Sundberg 2003: 182), and instead provide valuable

insight into the case study of Westminster. The soup run debate is a highly contested topic, linked to religious, charitable and ideological values and so a level of sensitivity was required. It was important to demonstrate engagement and understanding, through body language, tone of voice and asking questions sensitively. Ethical issues surround the selective disclosure of aspects of the researcher's identity to gain access to interviewees. However, Mullings (1999) suggests that although such practices might entail a level of deceit, the impact of the researcher's identity is largely beyond their control, and should therefore not be overstated.

Interviewees were provided with a consent form stating the aims of the research and their rights, and asking for interviewees to give the right for their comments to be disclosed within the dissertation. For those I did not provide with a form for at the time, I contacted at a later date to gain permission to use quotations. Mullings (1999) observes that power and authority can usually be attributed to the researcher, who ultimately controls how information is analysed and presented. As such, I was empowered by the research process, as I had full authority over how I represented the case study. It is important to consider these power relations, particularly when producing research that seeks to represent people's opinions, as the research could have material consequences. In acknowledgement of the fact that the way I represented my interviewees has 'the potential to change the way these people are thought about' (Dowling 2005: 29), I did not use any information interviewees disclosed 'off the record' and interviewees were given the opportunity to make alterations to the completed transcript (Longhurst 2003).

IV. THE CASE STUDY: WESTMINSTER, LONDON

Homelessness in Westminster

In order to understand why Westminster City Council sought to prevent soup runs operating within a zone of the borough, it is important to contextualise the proposal. Homelessness and rough sleeping has been a long-standing issue in Westminster. Westminster has the highest numbers of rough sleepers, defined as those people seen ‘bedded down’ on the street (Broadway 2010), of any London borough. In the period 2009/2010, rough sleepers in the Westminster borough accounted for 52% of all rough sleepers in the inner city boroughs. The council spends more money on services for rough sleepers than any other local authority in England at £9 million per year (Westminster City Council 2011e), although this was cut by two-thirds this year. The council has demonstrated a lack of faith in the effectiveness of soup runs as a homeless service. In 2004, research undertaken by the council concluded that there was an overprovision of soup runs, and that soup runs were contributing to problems of anti-social behaviour. Consequently, soup runs were put high on the political agenda, and the council has since attempted to hold meetings with soup run providers and run campaigns to emphasise these issues and reduce the number of soup runs operating. In 2007, the London Local Authorities Bill attempted to impose a citywide ban on soup runs. Although this was unsuccessful, it highlighted the soup run debate once again. In 2008, a meeting at the Soup Run Forum - an advocacy group set up in 2006 by Housing Justice - led to the publication of the 2009 LSE Housing report ‘Soup Runs in Central London, the right help in the right place, at the right time?’, which has since informed Westminster’s approach towards soup runs, and the bylaw proposal in February 2011.

The Bylaw

The bylaw proposal was comprised of two parts. The first was to prohibit rough sleeping; the second was to prohibit the ‘distribution of free refreshment’ (appendix one). The proposal targeted a specific area (appendix two). A public consultation ran from the 24th February to 25th March 2011. As it was fairly widely accepted that a ban on rough sleeping was not likely to be passed, most campaigners concentrated on opposing the second part of the proposal. In May, Westminster City Council published ‘Transforming Lives - Westminster City Council's approach to rough sleeping’, which stated that the rough sleeping bylaw would be dropped, but maintained that a legislative approach to soup runs would be pursued if an agreement between groups was not achieved. An eight-week ‘discussion and resolution period’ followed, during which time a series of meetings were held between interested parties to focus on collaborative approaches to homelessness. At a meeting held in May, between soup-run providers, charities, local residents and the council, a voluntary move from the bylaw area by soup runs was agreed upon. Some soup run providers agreed to move to hostels to operate as indoor soup kitchens, and a committee was established to consider indoor venue options and facilitate the voluntary move. This committee engaged in a series of confidential roundtable meetings, operating on an invite-only basis. In June, the council voted on whether to proceed with the bylaw legislation. In November, the council announced that the bylaw had been dropped.

The Soup Run Debate

In reviewing the arguments mobilised for and against the bylaw during the consultation period, two key observations can be made. The first is that the council is faced with balancing multiple agendas. The council sought to reduce soup runs, not only because of their specific approach to homelessness, but also in response to complaints from residents and businesses,

and in response to their own aims to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime. A second observation is that the bylaw is partly a product of the council’s specific approach to homelessness, and their conceptualisation of the soup run debate. The soup run debate was situated at the heart of the bylaw proposal discussions, and was conceptualised in different ways to both support and oppose the bylaw, as summarised in table one. The council contends that the soup runs sustain rough sleepers on the street, whilst many voluntary organisations emphasis the benefits of anonymous, open-access services. The soup run debate highlights the complexity of this study, as it demonstrates that the bylaw was not simply an outcome of a neoliberal agenda. Rather, the council’s decision to use a bylaw is situated in within a complex discussion of significant differences in ideology and approaches to homelessness, between the council and soup run providers. These differences have contributed to the creation of a complex ‘landscape of care’ in Westminster.

Table One. Summary of Arguments Made Concerning Outdoor Provision and the Bylaw

Arguments in Support of Soup Runs (and against the bylaw)	Arguments Against Soup Runs (and in support of the bylaw)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soup runs offer social engagement, the chance to build relationships and a sense of community for people who have been socially marginalised and isolated. • Soup run providers have the right to give food as an expression of their ideological or religious beliefs, just as people have a right to receive it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overprovision and lack of coordination of soup runs in the Victoria area is not beneficial to rough sleepers. • Soup runs are disruptive to local residents and businesses. • Soup runs do not build sufficient relationships with clients to be beneficial, as a lack of consistency and the nature of

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soup runs offer anonymity and a point of contact for people who may not wish to use the Building Based Services. • The proposal targets homeless people specifically, and reflects their social exclusion. It seeks to reduce the visibility of homelessness, to the benefit of local residents, business, tourism and commerce. • The proposal prioritises property and land values over the rights of vulnerable people. 	<p>outdoor provision make building relationships difficult.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By offering open access and anonymity, people are able to avoid engagement with providers and with public services. • Soup runs operate in opposition to the Building Based Services model adopted by Westminster City Council, and the Council’s desire for a ‘one offer’ service. • Outdoor provision is undignified. • Soup runs sustain a street-based lifestyle. • The contributions of soup run providers might be more beneficial in their local areas. • Volunteers could work more productively with the council’s existing initiatives
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The Landscape of Care

A desire to ‘roll back’ the welfare state, which accompanied processes of economic liberalism from the mid 1980s onwards, produced a decentralisation of government power and a shift in the responsibility to provide welfare services, from central government to local authorities, communities and NGOs. This impacted on the provision of homeless services in Britain, as the state became de-coupled from social policy (Ferguson 2010). It was during this time that NGOs took a more prominent role in providing welfare services, filling the void

created by dismantling the welfare state. In Westminster, NGOs began providing services for the homeless population, and soup runs became a popular form of informal service delivery:

“You have the growing up of [NGOs] and taking that space...things like soup runs...” (Interviewee 13, St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012)

The processes of state ‘roll back’ have also shaped the approach of Westminster City Council to homelessness, which has changed over time:

“[The Passage and St Mungo’s] day centres provided food, no questions asked...now pretty much you have to be in the system in order to go in and get a cup of tea.” (Interviewee 11, 02/08/2011)

Homelessness is a highly complex social phenomenon with no direct solution. As such, service providers operating within Westminster have adopted highly varied approaches. In

Westminster, NGOs and public services¹ operate within the same space, and take different ideological approaches to providing homeless services. This has created a complex ‘service landscape’ (Clove, May and Johnsen 2008: 258) or, I will refer to it, a differentiated ‘landscape of care’. To speak in general terms, NGOs tend to be based on charitable or religious ideologies. Public services, meanwhile, are set up out of a governmental responsibility to provide welfare services, in line with national agendas. These ideological differences have contributed to practical differences. For example, NGOs tend to offer food, clothing, emergency accommodation and street outreach, offering services both indoors and outdoors, such as soup runs. Public services in Westminster, meanwhile, operate on the basis of a Building Based Services model, in which indoor services aim to provide the rapid assessment and verification of rough sleepers. The council’s approach to homelessness is partly reflective of targets to reduce street homelessness at the city and national level. These services expressed a need to provide services that do not contribute to sustaining a homeless population:

¹ The use of the term ‘public funded’ is potentially misleading, because the services being referred to are not explicitly ‘public’. Rather, they work in partnership with the council. However, the term ‘public funded’ is used to simplify this discussion.

“We had to prove to ourselves and to everybody else that actually we were part of the solution and not part of the problem.”

(Interviewee 1, The Connection St Martin’s, 21/06/2011)

They do so by expecting behavioural outcomes from clients in return for services, which responsabilises individuals and ensures engagement with services:

“[People using the day centre] are going to be more limited in the way they can work with us...if they are not going to engage with our staff properly.” (Interviewee 3, West London Day Centre, 01/07/2011)

Services might include opportunities for training, rehabilitation programmes and assistance with finding accommodation. These services use the CHAIN database, which logs the use of services by clients, and is an important part of ensuring the engagement of clients. These are, of course, generalisations, and organisations with different approaches might still offer similar services. For example, despite different ideological approaches, a number of different organisations operate street outreach, to extend support to rough sleepers. Divisions are less clear-cut as a result of the lines between public and voluntary organisations becoming blurred over the past few decades, which will be explored further later. Nonetheless, for Westminster, a ‘principle fault line’ (Cloke, Johnsen and May 2005: 385), exists within the homelessness sector between those services expecting behavioural outcomes, and those services operating on a charitable ethos. It is within this differentiated landscape that the bylaw and the soup run debate are situated. Soup run providers operate on the basis of outdoor and open access, which conflicts with the council’s Building Based Services model and use of the CHAIN database. Whilst soup run providers have identified their service as a necessary alternative for

those not wishing to engage with Building Based Services, the council advocates a ‘one service offer’, aiming to ‘ensure... that all relevant services speak with one voice’ (Rough Sleeping Initiative 2010-2013: 26), and have therefore identified soup runs as problematic, claiming they reduce the incentive to engage with public services and enable rough sleepers to maintain their street-based lifestyle.

The complex arguments concerning the soup run debate demonstrate that the bylaw is partly the outcome of neoliberal policy, based on the responsabilisation of individuals and economic sensibility, but also of other political agendas, including the council’s approach to homelessness. It would therefore be overly simplistic to suggest that Westminster’s approach to soup runs is a ‘simple [implementation] of neoliberal philosophies’ (Rose, O’Malley and Valverde 2006: 97). For example, Westminster City Council’s Rough Sleeping Strategy demonstrates the ‘tensions between universalist principles of resource allocation and service provision, and a neo-liberal logic’ of governance (Stenson and Watt 1999:190). The strategy outlines eight priorities and action plans specifically related to rough sleeping, such as a multi-agency approach and the aim to reduce the number of rough sleepers to as close as possible to zero by 2012. The document also outlines other priorities, including reducing anti-social behaviour and crime, and a commitment to residents and local businesses. For Westminster it is a challenge to maintain the balance between multiple agendas. However:

“[Councils] get the balance wrong sometimes”. (Interviewee 13,
St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012)

Therefore, the bylaw can be regarded as an attempt by the council to resolve an imbalance in their handling of multiple agendas, by responding to the needs of residents and local businesses. Additionally, it is not possible to separate the neoliberal agenda from other

political objectives, since neoliberalism is ‘enmeshed, blended and imbricated with other forms of governance’ (Peck and Tickell 2007: 31).

V. NEOLIBERALISM AND STATE 'ROLL OUT'

The Advanced Liberal State and the Third Sector

A phase of state 'roll back' was subsequently followed by a phase of 'roll out', concerning the state's 'political, institutional and geographical reorganisation' (Brenner and Theodore 2002a: 345). During this time, the state sought to commission external agencies to provide welfare services, and as such, a 'multiplicity of agencies' replaced a 'hierarchical, bureaucratic management structure' (Fyfe and Kenny 2005: 180). Rose's (1993) concept of the 'advanced liberal state' is particularly useful for theorising this development. Rose describes how 'strategies of rule' have changed over the last fifty years, marking a shift from the formula of rule known as the welfare state to the 'advanced liberal state' (1993: 283). This has impacted on the third sector. Through the use of 'strategies, technologies, programmes, techniques' (Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996: 4), the advanced liberal state seeks to achieve the conduct of NGOs, such as homeless service providers, whilst ensuring they remain 'tied' to the state (Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996: 12). In this way, the state is able to govern at a distance, whilst guiding 'the regulated and accountable choices of autonomous agents' (Rose 1993: 298).

These strategies have also been informed by 'a political identity of rights and responsibilities' (Brown 1997 cited in Fyfe 2005: 553), theorised as 'neo-communitarianism'. In emphasising the responsabilisation of citizens in response to criticisms of the welfare state (Barry, Osborne and Rose 1996), neo-communitarian strategies recognise both the economic benefits of harnessing a voluntary work force, through processes of mainstreaming and professionalising (Fyfe 2005), and the social advantages of the third sector's ability to '[foster] the development of social capital and citizenship' (Fyfe 2005: 159), making it better placed than the state to address issues of social inequality (Jessop 2002). The strategies of

rule associated with the advanced liberal state have produced the pluralisation and autonomisation of social technologies, as part of a desire to de-governmentalise the state. New relations between expertise and politics have been created, as processes of marketisation have transformed service providers into ‘purchasers’ who bid for projects. The state has also sought to connect service providers to the ‘ambitions of government in ways that both preserve and shape their internal systematics’ (Rose 1993: 297). In Westminster, the strategies of rule associated with the advanced liberal state have included the introduction of financial relationships, and efforts to professionalise and mainstream homeless service providers.

Financial Relationships

In Westminster, some homeless service providers have undergone significant transformations as a result of changes in the formulae of rule over the last few decades:

“I mean the game has changed over the years...there used to be not much involvement from government, now you’ve got three tiers of government...” (Interviewee 13, St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012)

In the case of St Mungo’s, the transition to the advanced liberal state shaped the organisation’s development from a voluntary soup run, to a state-commissioned service provider in the 1990s, to experiencing an increased level of state involvement in the present:

“[Westminster council] gave [services] over to organisations like St Mungo’s to run... then... you’ve seen over the last ten years probably, the growth of commissioning of services and

...micro-managing of things.” (Interviewee 13, St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012)

Through working in partnership with the council, St Mungo’s has essentially become ‘an arm of the state’ (Interviewee 13, St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012). Similarly, Thames Reach has undergone significant changes as a result of marketisation processes, which have enabled the organisation to secure government funding to provide homeless services:

“Thames Reach has succeeded in attracting a lot of government funding through bidding to run services but we started out as a team of five outreach workers.” (Interviewee 15, Thames Reach, 25/01/2012)

However, Thames Reach does not recognise itself as ‘government funded’. This is because, like many other organisations, it receives funding from numerous sources and regards itself as an autonomous organisation. Alongside the rise of NGOs and new relations between expertise and politics, processes of marketisation have blurred the lines between public and private services:

“The distinction between non-government funded and government funded doesn’t make much sense in my mind”.
(Interviewee 15, Thames Reach, 25/01/2012)

This demonstrates the need for a re-assessment of the usefulness of the public/private or state/civil-society binary in discussions of homeless services in Westminster.

Funding is a contentious issue within the homelessness sector, sometimes perceived as an indication that an organisation shares the council’s approach to homelessness. In the same

way, some regard a lack of funding as a marker of independence from the council. It can be generally stated that those working closely with the council are receiving some level of funding. Similarly, Maloney, Smith and Stoker's research in Glasgow (1999) concluded that voluntary organisations working in partnership with the council in Glasgow tended to be those 'for whom a council grant was an important source of income' (Fyfe 2005: 155). Some interviewees articulated a tension between funding and freedom that might be likened to the international development arguments concerning 'tied aid'. For example, one interviewee suggested that those receiving funding have to 'be a bit strategic' and consider how they 'positioned' themselves around campaigns, because receipt of funding made them accountable to the council (Interviewee 11, 02/08/2011). Similarly, an interviewee suggested that autonomy was compromised by receipt of funding, stating:

“You can't really bite the hand that feeds you.” (Interviewee 14,
The Simon Community, 20/01/2012)

For some, financial relationships were seen as a threat to impartiality during the bylaw consultation, as financial relationships were perceived to impact on one's impartiality:

“...[Jeremy Swain]'s not the impartial person you should have
chairing such discussions, because Thames Reach have funding
from Westminster Council, or have had in the past, certainly”.
(Interviewee 11, 02/08/2011)

Those who receive funding also acknowledged the implications. One interviewee suggested that the financial relationship between St Mungo's and the council had introduced a level of accountability towards the council, because of the long-term relations created:

“I mean, you can still challenge things... but we can't say [anything] too strongly because you've got to go in the next day and be nice to people and say 'Can we have that money this for please?' ”(Interviewee 13, St Mungo's, 17/01/2012)

These comments demonstrate that financial relationships have impacted on the operations of service providers to some extent. This supports findings by Dolhinow, who found that NGOs sometimes have to 'comply' with their funders (2005: 181). This has important implications for the council, who are keen to extend a partnership approach. If NGOs perceive that receiving funding limits their autonomy, they are likely to remain resistant to working with the council. However, interviewee 13 also commented that funding did not particularly impact on how St Mungo's operate their street outreach, suggesting that the impacts of funding do not affect on all aspects of operation evenly, and so can be overstated.

Professionalisation and Mainstreaming

Pressure on NGOs to professionalise has been commonly associated with the third sector's increased involvement in service delivery. The professionalisation of soup run providers in Westminster has been an objective of the council, as demonstrated within the council documents. For example, the council suggests that voluntary organisations adhere to council regulations:

“There could be an agreement that [soup runs] sign up to a more robust Code of Conduct” (Westminster City Council 2011g: 12)

This is an example of the ‘little regulatory instances’ (Rose 1993: 298) characteristic of attempts to govern the advanced liberal state. The pressure on the third sector to be more professional was also recognised by interviewees:

“Voluntary organisations speak more and more like the Council and they need to [in] order to get through even the first section of bidding.” (Interviewee 3, West London Day Centre, 01/07/2011)

This interviewee’s articulation of a connection between funding and professionalisation is consistent with research from Fyfe (2005), who observed the pressure on voluntary organisations in Glasgow to become more bureaucratic and professional. Similarly, Dichter (1999) observed that NGOs have become ‘more corporate like’ in response to expectations from government for greater professionalism (cited in Lewis and Kanji 2009: 212). Additionally, attempts have been made by Westminster City Council to ‘mainstream’ soup run volunteers, primarily to reduce the number of soup runs operating in the borough. ‘Mainstreaming’ refers to the process whereby voluntary organisations are subject to state involvement, through partnerships or practices of regulation (Plowden 2003 cited in Fyfe 2005). Attempts to mainstream organisations operating within Westminster have aimed to bring them into alignment with the goals of the council and of central government regarding street homelessness. There was evidence of this within the council documents, in which the council have consistently emphasised the need for multi-agency partnership approach as part of their Rough Sleeping Strategy.

The council documents clearly demonstrate the council’s desire to harness a voluntary work force to better serve their objectives regarding street homelessness. For example, the council’s Transforming Lives document proposes the formation of a Central London Charter that would require voluntary organisations to be ‘performance monitored against an agreed

standard specification' (Westminster City Council 2011g: 16) to better 'coordinate the voluntary resources' (Westminster City Council 2011g: 13). Cloke, May and Johnsen similarly observed 'attempts by government to mainstream soup run providers, as part of the government's attempt to assert greater control over homeless services' during the 1990s (2005: 333). Westminster City Council also express a desire for additional support from volunteers in the future, describing the ways voluntary organisations could be involved in a two page outline of 'alternative and more diverse ways of helping' (Westminster City Council 2011g: 13). These include harnessing the skills of volunteers, linking voluntary soup runs to local authority outreach teams, and selecting and matching volunteers to particular services. This approach is justified through the council's assertion that:

'We must be able to work together so that good and charitable intention can be positively harnessed and benefit felt by all.'
(Transforming Lives, Westminster City Council 2011g: 7)

The vision of a more collaborative approach to homelessness was one not exclusively held by the council; service providers also interviewed recognised the benefits of a partnership approach:

"Our whole approach is about saying "...Let's look at how you can [help]... in line with other services and other strategies, so that everyone's working together better." (Interviewee 10, The Passage, 27/08/2011)

"And our aim...has always been to say: "Let's work together, let's have a more coordinated...and strategic partnership-type

approach.” (Interviewee 6, Housing Justice, 18/07/2011)

These comments highlight the potential for greater collaboration within the homelessness sector in the future, but also beg the question: what is preventing greater collaboration if it is so widely desired?

VI. LIMITS TO GOVERNING THE ADVANCED LIBERAL STATE

Ideological Differences

The successes of the advanced liberal strategies of rule used by Westminster City Council to govern soup run providers have clearly been limited; the pursuit of a legislative approach was a response to the council's failure to conduct the conduct of soup run providers to achieve the desired outcomes. In the case of Westminster, the ability of the council to regulate the third sector and form partnerships is partly limited by the 'fault line' created between the council and service providers by ideological differences. Evers observed the importance of ideological factors, which 'distinguish voluntary organisations from business organisations' (Evers 1992: 165). Both the importance of ideology and its role in preventing greater collaboration were evident in the interviews:

"I'm naturally keen to make partnerships but I can't compromise certain Simon Community principles." (Interviewee 4, The Simon Community, 06/07/2011)

"But it's sort of two different conversations that clash, really." (Interviewee 6, Housing Justice, 18/07/2011)

"I've got a different belief to someone else, so that means we don't join up." (Interviewee 13, St Mungo's, 17/01/2012)

It would seem that the council have underestimated the importance of ideology for the 'third

sector', and its ability to prevent greater collaboration. This is supported by research from Evers, who observed that the state 'usually fails to consider systematically the degree to which strategies of voluntary and non-profit organisations are influenced by ideological factors' (1992: 165). The inability to foster collaboration and partnerships was evident within interviews. For example, The Connection at St Martin's, who work in partnership with the council, and The Simon Community were unable to work with one another to provide hot meals to the homeless indoors:

"I went to see [The Connection at St Martin's] to say that we could provide some chefs and we could probably provide some food... they liked this idea a lot, but we said we would want it to be open access... so they couldn't do it." (Interviewee 4, The Simon Community, 06/07/2011)

The Simon Community chose not to compromise its ideological values and so was unable to work with The Connection at St Martin's. The inability of organisations to work collaboratively and the issue of indoor/outdoor provision demonstrate the limits imposed on partnerships by differing ideologies, and highlight the potential difficulty for the council in pursuing civil/society- state partnerships in the future, particularly as budget cuts force an increased reliance on the third sector to provide to a growing homeless population. The Simon Community is an example of an organisation that has made efforts to maintain autonomy from the government and resist pressures to be integrated into existing government initiatives, so to be able operate on the basis of their own ideological values:

"We don't have any funding from the government as a founding principle... it means we don't have any government targets or

schedules... we are then independent and free to campaign.”

(Interviewee 4, The Simon Community, 06/07/2011)

The tension between gaining resources through funding, and maintaining the ability to operate as a space of resistance has fundamentally shaped Westminster’s landscape of care and the relations within it. For The Simon Community, a lack of government funding represents ideological autonomy from government. By refusing government funding as a ‘founding principle’, the organisation is able to ‘[draw] sharp demarcation lines, which they seek to uphold between themselves and the ruling political power’ (Evers 1992: 165). In this way, The Simon Community is able to maintain its ethos, which is mirrored in its approach. This has contributed to accusations of being ‘reckless’ or ‘irresponsible’ (interviewee 4, The Simon Community, 06/07/2011). However, the organisation has gained a valuable level of independence from attempts to be regulated. This was demonstrated by the comments of one of interviewee, whose job at the time involved coordinating soup runs. She explained that:

“The Simon Community has got its place and its role very much sorted.” (Interviewee 10, The Passage, 28/07/2011)

For this reason, she had chosen to prioritise other, less established soup run providers. In this way, The Simon Community have been successful in resisting attempts to be mainstreamed, therefore preventing them from constituting a ‘shadow state’ (Wolch 1990). However, the bylaw had material impacts on soup run providers within Westminster, the most significant being the voluntary movement of all soup runs away from the Victoria area. This voluntary move might be seen as a successful outcome of the advanced liberal strategies of rule used by the council. In the case of The Simon Community, it is unclear as to whether they were able to evade limits placed on them by the council in terms of outdoor service provision, because

although they voluntarily moved out of the bylaw area, they were keen to emphasize that this was an independent decision:

“We have been looking around [for alternative soup run venues], independent of this initiative in Westminster...we are going to re-route... not [to the venues] that the Council have recommended for us, but that we have found.” (Interviewee 4, The Simon Community, 06/07/2011)

In finding its own indoor venues and in demonstrating a clear awareness of attempts from the council to be regulated, The Simon Community was able to continue to maintain distance from the council and has therefore been successful in retaining the third sector qualities that enable it to operate as a vehicle for resistance, for example through campaigning. The soup run debate illustrates the importance of ideology for NGOs providing homeless services in Westminster. Viewed pessimistically, this is perhaps the most challenging factor for partnerships, and poses considerable challenges to the shared desire for greater collaboration.

Partnerships and the ‘Shadow State’

Partnerships and processes aiming to mainstream and professionalise the ‘third sector’ risk threatening the third sector qualities of such organisations. For example, Fyfe highlights the dangers of subsuming voluntary organisations within government frameworks, which risks the reproduction of standardised services already provided by the government. In this way, it becomes clear as to why neo-communitarianism has been referred to as ‘neoliberal economic sensibility camouflaged in [legitimacy rhetoric]’ (Hay and Watson 1992 cited in Fyfe 2005: 554). Interviewees acknowledged that measures should be taken to avoid civil-society/state

partnerships exploiting NGOs to an economic advantage:

“ [Soup run providers] should at least have the food paid for or something, if they’re going to be part of [public services]”.
(Interviewee 6, Housing Justice, 18/07/2011)

Subsuming NGOs into government frameworks risks the creation of a ‘shadow state’ (Wolch 1989), in which the advantageous qualities of the third sector, such as their ability to facilitate social resistance (Desai, Vandana and Roberts 2008) and provide an alternative avenue for development (Lewis and Kanji 2009) are compromised. Similarly, Fyfe found organisations are ‘unlikely to be able to contribute to service delivery in the way the government hopes’ when brought into alignment with political goals of the state (2005: 159). In being ‘incorporated into the neoliberal project as service providers, their dynamism is effectively neutralised’ (Jenkins 2005:220), and valuable social capital is lost. This runs the risk of creating an overly bureaucratic system of homeless services, which directly conflicts with earlier political objectives of de-governmentalisation. This was recognised by service providers in Westminster:

“And do [soup runs] always need to be joined up with what everyone else is doing? No, I don’t think so. I think that becomes like 1984 and very mechanistic.” (Interviewee 13, St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012)

Some maintain that NGOs should serve as a third space to challenge state power, and should therefore resist pressures to be mainstreamed (Amin, Cameron and Hudson 2002 cited in Fyfe 2005: 159). This was acknowledged by interviewees:

“You don’t want to have the inability for people to protest or say things, or to go and help someone out.” (Interviewee 13, St Mungo’s, 17/01/2012)

“I hope people exercise their independence and their human spirit.” (Interviewee 11, 02/08/2011)

The Soup Run Forum was regarded as a facilitating structure for maintaining the third sector qualities of NGOs, by offering a space for some soup run providers to more effectively voice their opinions to the council:

“If you want to say: ‘Well hold on, this is wrong’ ... You have a voice.” (Interviewee 14, The Simon Community, 20/01/2012)

For homeless services in Westminster, maintaining the dynamism of the third sector was associated with being able to provide alternative services to the council and operating independently from the state:

“It is also important that people who are on the streets and are not in touch with mainstream services are supported”. (Interviewee 4, The Simon Community, 06/07/2011)

Although these comments highlight the challenges of greater collaboration between the council and the third sector, they are also important indications that the third sector is far from operating as a ‘shadow state’ (Wolch 1989).

VII. CONCLUSION

In focusing on the bylaw proposal in Westminster, this research offers a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of neoliberalism. In exploring the soup run debate and the importance of ideology in shaping approaches to homelessness, this research was able to demonstrate the inefficiencies of representations of neoliberalism as a metanarrative, and avoid contributing to the geographical literature that casts the practices of the state as outcomes of a purely neoliberal agenda. This has important implications for geographical research conceptualising the impacts of neoliberalism on formulae of rule. In demonstrating that the bylaw was not simply an outcome of a neoliberal agenda, concerned with the responsabilisation of individuals and the roll back of the welfare state, this research revealed how the council seeks to balance multiple agendas and objectives, including a neo-communitarian approach to the third sector, a Building Based Services approach to homelessness, the needs of local businesses and residents, and the desire to reduce anti-social behaviour and crime. Therefore, this research demonstrated how the neoliberal project has permeated urban governance, to become inextricably linked to numerous other agendas. In this sense, neoliberal strategies cannot be separated from other strategies of rule. Whether or not the bylaw did contribute to the marginalisation of the homeless, it was not the outcome of a purely neoliberal agenda. Therefore, this research has demonstrated that we can explore the politics of urban governance without immediately reverting to the conclusion that ‘neoliberalism is bad’ (Ferguson 2010: 166).

A differentiated ‘landscape of care’ has been created in Westminster through changes in the formulae of rule over the past fifty years (Rose 1993). The strategies of rule associated with the advanced liberal state (Rose 1993) have fundamentally altered the way in which homeless

services have been provided within Westminster, creating new relations between expertise and politics, and the state and the third sector. Rose's framework helps to conceptualise the complicated relationships between the council and the third sector, and move beyond the binaries of state/civil-society, public/private, to produce more nuanced understandings of the advanced liberal state. This research has demonstrated how these strategies of rule have, in some cases, fundamentally reshaped the operations of homeless services providers in Westminster, such as St Mungo's.

The existence of a differentiated 'landscape of care' has important implications for the politics of service delivery within the advanced liberal state, and the importance of ideology cannot be understated. For many voluntary organisations, ideological beliefs form the foundation of their charitable work and are a non-negotiable factor. In seeking to understand how the soup run debate was conceptualised and mobilised by the council and by service providers, this research highlighted how ideological differences have created significant 'fault lines' in the approaches of different organisations working within Westminster's highly differentiated 'landscape of care', largely between those expecting behavioural outcomes and see soup runs as problematic, and those who favour open access services and support soup runs.

Westminster City Council has made use of advanced liberal strategies of rule (Rose 1993) to attempt to regulate soup runs operating within Westminster. This has involved strategies of rule aiming to achieve the conduct of soup run providers, including the introduction of financial relationships and practices of mainstreaming and professionalisation, which have been informed by the concepts of 'governmentality' and neo-communitarianism. Using this framework, the bylaw can be theorised as a response to the council's failure to conduct the conduct of soup run providers successfully, necessitating a legislative approach. However, in the discussion and resolution period, the council was able to secure a voluntary move by soup run providers out of the proposed bylaw area, therefore demonstrating the

council's successful implementation of self-regulation, and their ability to conduct the conduct of soup run providers. This poses potential challenges to the maintenance of an autonomous third sector.

However, in addition to exploring the attempts by Westminster City Council to mainstream the third sector, this research demonstrates the attempts by NGOs operating within Westminster to preserve their own ideologies, and maintain their independence from the council. The relationship between ideology and funding poses a significant challenge to attempts by the council to conduct the conduct of homeless service providers in Westminster. For some NGOs, such as The Simon Community, the belief that entering into financial relationships with the council had the potential to reduce their autonomy was reason enough to resist partnerships. The resistance of voluntary organisations to compromise their ideological values has therefore limited the impact of the strategies of rule adopted by the council. Ideological differences also work to protect the third sector from constituting a 'shadow state', and being subsumed into government apparatus.

Westminster City Council have stressed the importance of civil society-state partnership as part of a multi-agency approach to street homelessness that provides clients with 'one offer', to encourage engagement with services. The council has recently had to make £60 million cut backs meaning that, according to the Westminster City Council Cabinet report from March 2011, the new budget for homelessness will be £3.1 million. Exacerbating this, figures show that street homelessness had increased by 23% from autumn 2010 to 2011 (Shelter 2012). This means the services provided by the third sector are more important than ever, which is perhaps why the council is so keen to emphasise partnerships. However, it is unlikely that the council will realise its vision of a wholly collaborative approach to homelessness or the even

and complete ‘conduct of conduct’, given the fundamental ideological differences that exist between the council and some NGOs.

A lack of collaboration between the third sector and the council, and an inability to ‘conduct the conduct’ of the third sector as desired, may lead to more assertive strategies of rule being taken, as demonstrated by Westminster City Council’s attempt to take a legislative approach to soup run providers. A greater understanding on the part of the council of the importance of ideological values might contribute to improving relations with voluntary service providers. Greater commitment to the Soup Run Forum might be beneficial in supporting these relations, although the lack of funding for a Soup Run Coordinator this year indicates this sort of investment on the part of the Council is unlikely. I feel this research has been able to contribute meaningfully to discussions about greater collaboration between the council and various organisations, and I hope I have been able to emphasise both the hopefulness within the sector for partnerships, and the inherent challenges.

VIII. AUTO- CRITIQUE

The objectives of this research were realised insofar as being able to explain how and why the council sought to prevent soup runs operating in Westminster, by effectively using Rose's (1993) 'advanced liberal state' framework. This research demonstrated how the soup run debate was conceptualised and mobilised by the council and by service providers through highlighting the importance of ideology for service providers. In seeking to answer how processes of neoliberalism have impacted on the 'local' scale with regards to homeless services, this research explored the changing strategies of rule that accompanied the shift from the welfare state to the advanced liberal state, and contributed to the development of a differentiated 'landscape of care'. This research was also able to describe how strategies of rule, informed by governmentality and neo-communitarianism, have involved the third sector in interesting ways, and the subsequent challenges of greater collaboration in the future.

In writing this research, my positionality hugely shaped the literature I looked at and the questions I asked. Although I became much more open-minded in my approach once I began researching, in hindsight I would have taken a more open-minded view of the bylaw from the beginning. However, my personal investment in the issues concerned was more of an advantage than a hindrance, particularly with regards to how I sought to represent the views of those involved (consciously and with care). It might have been beneficial to use focus groups to explore the soup run debate arguments more efficiently. Having two groups, one in support of and one in opposition to the bylaw, would have created a safe environment for discussion, and helped reduce the impact of my identity as a soup-run volunteer. Additionally, this research might have benefitted from more differentiated representations of the views of residents, local businesses and the council, none of whom were wholly unanimous in their opinions. In hindsight, having underestimated the vastness and depth of the data collected, I

would have adopted a more rigorous approach to my data analysis, as the process became time consuming than was perhaps necessary.

There is scope for further analysis of the impacts of governing the ‘advanced liberal state’ on the third sector. In particular, there are opportunities to explore both the impacts of the Localism Bill and the Welfare Reform Bill, which have yet to fully manifest in the landscape of care. Additionally, the findings of this case study will no doubt resonate with other places, and so this research could benefit from an extension into comparative urbanism. Daly (1996) carried out research comparing ‘responses to homelessness by public, voluntary and self help organisations’ in America, Canada and the UK. The comparative element of Daly’s work makes it highly valuable, but it would certainly benefit from a review. Additionally, Brenner (2004) has used a comparative urbanism framework to explore the re-scaling of state space through the re-articulation of urban policy, and Pierre (2011) has outlined the challenges within comparative urbanism of exploring the relationships between civil society and service delivery, as the public/private boundary continues to blur. This research could therefore be extended to explore the effects of neoliberalism on formulae of rule within and between cities.

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X. APPENDICES

1. Extract from Bylaw Proposal

LYING DOWN AND SLEEPING ETC

3. (1) No person shall lie down or sleep in or on any public place.
(2) No person shall at any time deposit any materials used or intended to be used as bedding in or on any public place.

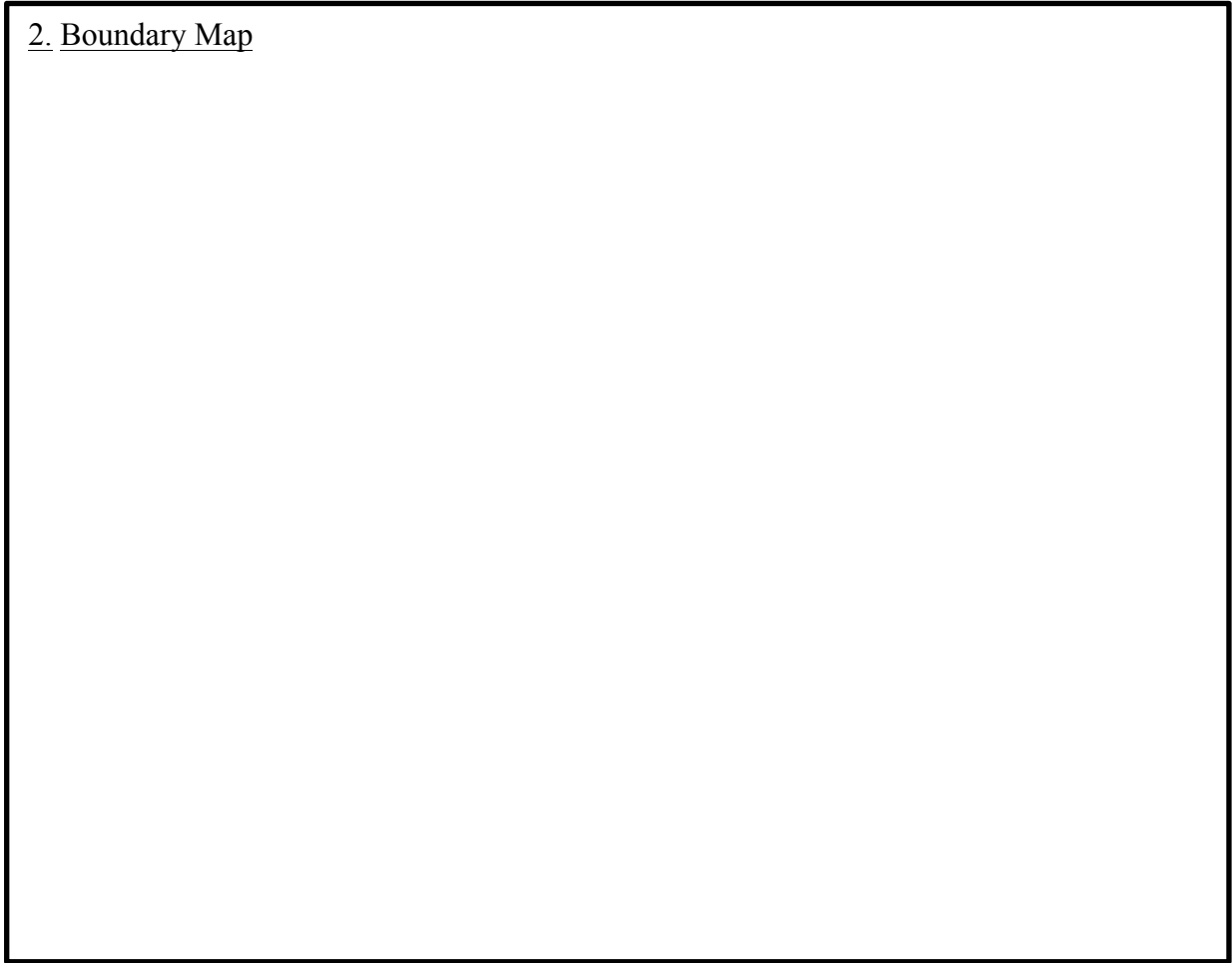
4. DISTRIBUTION OF FREE REFRESHMENT

- (1) No person shall distribute any free refreshment in or on any public place.
(2) No person shall knowingly permit any person to distribute any free refreshment in or on any public place.

5. EXEMPTIONS

- Bylaw 4 does not apply to the distribution of free refreshments -
- (a) to persons taking part in a sporting event;
 - (b) on any premises on which there is in force a premises licence under Part 3 of the Licensing Act 2003 or a temporary event notice under section 100 of the same Act;
 - (c) if the distribution is of samples of refreshments and is carried out for marketing purposes on land adjacent to retail premises in which the same refreshments are available for sale;
 - (d) by the Council or any health authority (or any person acting on behalf of the Council or any health authority) exercising powers to protect public health.

2. Boundary Map



3. Interview schedule with list of topics

Introduction:

- Consent form, outline the aims and objectives

Basic information:

- Tell me about the organisation you work for - their philosophy, work, aims
- What is your role?
- Tell me about the services that you operate.
- What are the benefits of these services?

The Proposal

- What are your thoughts on the proposal? (Why do they agree/disagree? With which parts do they agree-disagree?)
- Why do you think the council put forward the proposal?
- Do you feel this is an issue of public space? (interpretations of public space, public)

Soup Runs

- What are your views of soup runs? Why?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of soup runs? (for the homeless, for residents etc.)
- Has the soup run debate been an ongoing issue?

Relationship with the council

- What is your relationship with the council? (funding, implications of funding)
- How are the council perceived within the homelessness sector?
- What has been your experience of communicating with the council?

The Consultation

- In your opinion, how has the consultation process gone?
- Are you involved with the Soup Run Forum? (opinion of how it operates, advantages and disadvantages)

Implications

- if the bye law had been passed, what outcomes would you have expected?
- what do you think will happen now it has been withdrawn? (impact on relations)
- how do you see the proposal fitting into the wider political context? (e.g big society, new coalition government, Conservative Westminster City Council)
- Transforming Lives document: did you read it? What do you think about the potential for soup run volunteers to work in different ways/with the council?

Debrief




4. List of Interviews

Interviewee	Organisation	Format	Date
1	The Connection, St Martins	In person	21/06/2011
2	Liberty	Telephone	30/06/2011
3	West London Day Centre	In person	01/07/2011
4	Simon Community	In person	06/07/2011
5	Sacred Heart Church	In person	13/07/2011
6	Housing Justice	In person	18/07/2011
7	Housing Justice	Email	18/07/2011
8	Charing Cross Police Station	In person	26/07/2011
9	The Passage	In person	28/07/2011
10	The Passage	In person	28/07/2011
11	N/A	In person	02/08/2011
12	Westminster City Council	Email	05/08/2011
13	St Mungo's	In person	17/01/2012
14	Simon Community	In person	20/01/2012
15	Thames Reach	Email	25/01/2012

5. List of Soup Runs Affected by the Proposal

The Core
Coptic Church
Celestial Church of Christ
De Paul Trust
Hampshire Run
Harlow Chocolate Run
Lighthouse Chapel International
Missionaries of Charity
Michael Roberts Charitable Trust
Quaker Run
Simon Community
St Francis (Stratford)
Sacred Hearts Church (Wimbledon)
Streetlytes

6. Example of the Changes to Recruitment Emails

Colven, Emma    Actions ▾

To: [redacted]

Sent Items 15 June 2011 15:11

Dear [redacted]

My name is Emma Colven and I am an undergraduate geography student at UCL and a part time volunteer at the Simon Community. I am undertaking research into the purification of public space in Westminster with regards to the proposal put forward in February by Westminster City Council to ban rough sleeping and the distribution of food in a designated area.

[redacted] at the Simon Community suggested that I try to contact [redacted] to see if she would be available to discuss the proposal with me in the form of an interview. I would be very grateful if you could pass this message on for me. I look forward to hearing back from you,

Kind regards,

Emma Colven

To: [redacted]

Sent Items 01 July 2011 15:27

- Flag for follow up. Start by 20 July 2011. Due by 20 July 2011.

Dear [redacted]

My name is Emma Colven and I am an undergraduate geography student at UCL and a part time volunteer at the Simon Community. I am undertaking research into Westminster City Council's proposal put forward in February to ban rough sleeping and the distribution of food in a designated area.

I am trying to speak to a range of people involved who have so far included [redacted] who kindly passed on your email address and suggested you might be available to help me with my research. I would be really grateful if you could find the time to chat to me about the proposal some time in the next few weeks.

I am available to contact via this email address or on [redacted]. Kind regards,

Emma Colven

7. Extract from Interview Transcript

CG: There's been, not quite sure demographics, when we first started - and you might know the organisation was created out of a merger, several mergers over the years - we had one employment training worker. It's now our largest team, so that's changed. And I think that possibly, I mean we're not on an island, I think we're part of a wider rights and responsibilities and if you look at what's happened to welfare over the last five, ten years, it is moving away to a conditional model that you are not expected to simply take benefit and not try anything to move into work so I think society is changing and homeless organisations are caught up in that. Not caught up in, but they must be part of what is the relationship between service users and service providers. And I think because of that, and because they, there was a danger a few years ago - no, we were asked - no, people thought we might be part of the problem rather than part of the solution, so were we attracting 5,000 homeless people to the centre of London, creating dependencies, giving rise to all sorts of anti-social behaviour which had an effect on the community, on the economy so we had to prove to ourselves and to everybody else that actually we were part of the solution and not part of the problem. And providing things like access to important training, staffing our own social enterprises were successful, seeing us move resources increasingly into the solution rather than subsistence, and our kind of plans for the future, instead of being 50/50, being about 70% solution and 30% subsistence. But demand for our services is going up, so actually we're trying to move the agency in one direction, at a very time when it's being dragged back because actually numbers of people using is services are going up, there's a danger that other people, other agencies are closing. So actually if there is a magnet effect, it will be enhanced by that network of agencies around London and nationally that are kind of falling apart a bit, and there have been clearly issues about destitution and poverty which are forcing us practically back towards the kind of soup kitchen end of the service spectrum. There's a battle in all homeless agencies about what you're there for. Particularly those groups that have it in the church. What I'm desperately trying to do at the moment is make sure that there isn't a split between faith based organisations and secular organisations, because I think it would be very damaging if faith based seemed more traditionally at the more caring subsistence end, looking after people, whilst secular organisations, it's possible to generalise, more about helping people to move on and kind of being a bit more assertive and driven by outcomes and funded.

EC: So, you have a partnership with the Council, and Cathy was telling me about the funding and where it comes from. And what's your relationship with The Passage and St Mungo's? Are you the three BBS?

CG: Yes.

EC: And do your services overlap?

CG: They shouldn't overlap - well, they're based on the same model, intending to get people off the street, to use buildings, once they're in buildings, to move onwards and upwards. We each have a zone within Westminster which we're responsible for. So Westminster divided Westminster up into three zones, and we've got this kind of, it's called Central. The Passage got South. St Mungo's got West. Not quite sure how that works out. And obviously ourselves and the Passage probably have each got 40% of the rough sleepers, and St Mungo's, who don't have day centre, so operate in a slightly different way. And I think that model, at the moment we're saying there's an issue about Westminster but I think, by and large, what they want us to do and what we believe is right is still holding on. It's when you've got specific issues around soup runs and begging that it starts to fracture but I believe the strategy, by and large, is right. And I do, there are people who actually... Keeping a homeless person on the street every year, I'm not sure where these figures come from, costs roughly £30,000 a year. So if you look at the cost of the services that go into maintaining just one person on the streets, it's thirty thousand quid a year, whether it's our services, our cost per person, their use of accident and emergency services, their involvement with court justice and what have you, it's a huge sum of money. And you can now look at, through CHAIN, you can take people out, and you can look at what's happened to them over the years, and you can take individuals and you can look at the numbers of times they've been contacted on the streets, the number of hostels they're been in and out of, the number of times - and, you know, you're looking at hundreds of thousands of pounds of expenditure and you can ask yourself the question: 'Surely there must be a better way of using those resources?' And 'Why on earth should I, to put it crudely, try and raise hundreds of thousands of pounds a year to maintain that group of people where they are. So, you know, I think there's a move within the homeless organisations, I think that they're getting a bit more direct and a bit more assertive, a bit worried about costs.

EC: So is it more progressive?

CG: It is.

EC: Because it seems like the idea of the building just being in a building itself, is seen as a step

from the street.

CG: I think we're clear about what we're attempting to do. There are clearly some people - one of the issues for us is that there are 23 people on the streets on our patch who have been on the streets - I presume you've picked up all the criteria about for voluntary, entrenched, and multiple street counts - it's 23 people who are not using this building and we do a lot of consultation with people who use the building asking them how we can provide better services and what have you, but the real issue for me is how, what do we do to encourage those people who are not using the building to use it? Particularly if our targets are about reducing rough sleeping to as close to zero as possible. If 1/3 of the people who are on our street counts every time we do street counts, aren't using the building, it's almost impossible to reach that figure. Within that, there may some people for whom the model of service delivery has to be different. It may be that actually it's got to be a very almost case work approach, it maybe that on Friday afternoons we have a service that is working with that group of rough sleepers where we provide free food. So it may be that, actually, we have got to work in different ways and very creative ways to engage that group of non-integrators. Rather than seeing everybody, other than two people who come in here everyday, it's actually been one kind of group of people whose needs can be met in exactly the same way.

EC: So, would it be fair to say your services are driven by the fact that you need outcomes?

CG: Some of them, but there's still, you know, the heart and soul of this organisation is about caring for people, but meeting needs is how you do that. And clearly there is a group of people whose needs we are not meeting and we're asking ourselves why. Is it us, or is it them? Is it the fact we are so busy with our income that actually people play with their feet because they feel everything's too busy, too chaotic and not for them. And then we've got a responsibility at creating different ways of delivering services without rewarding the people for not engaging with our mainstream services, so that there is a prize to be won for not engaging with our services, because we will treat you different and we will treat you specially.

EC: Do you have contact with those 23 people?

CG: Yes, our outreach workers do. But yeah otherwise we wouldn't know who they were and where there are. But there is still a group that are, after all these years of pushing the Building Based Services model, there is a group who are still not engaging with people.