



**CGAP**

Centre for Charitable Giving  
and Philanthropy

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Southampton**

# The Local “Ecology” of Charitable Resources: Case Studies in Contrasting Communities.

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## Focus of this paper

To explore evidence of existing variation and/or similarity in the charitable landscapes of two contrasting case-study areas – one affluent, and one deprived – in South East England.

Looking specifically at:

- The relationship between charities and need at a neighbourhood level
- Differences in the flow of charitable resources at a neighbourhood level
- Are there inequalities?
- Policy relevance of this evidence

## Policy context

To explore how these communities might respond to:

- Austerity measures and reductions in public spending
- Big Society and Localism agendas which include the withdrawal of the state and the devolution of power to small communities.

## Sources of evidence:

- Desk top research to identify **charities** registered to, and giving benefit to 2 contrasting case-study areas from the same non-metropolitan district council/local government area in SE England.
- **43** semi-structured interviews with **51** individuals from **41** different organisations. Respondents included managers of charities, trustees of charities, and key stakeholders from case-study areas.
- Timeframe for collection of evidence – Sept 2010 – Aug 2011

## Profiles of neighbourhood case-study areas

Area	Type of housing and living environment	Other characteristics
<p><b>The Estate (20% most deprived)</b></p>	<p>Three times as many people living on The Estate compared to The Village.</p> <p>Social housing which consists of tenancies in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less popular low-rise flats</li> <li>• Individual houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of state benefits</li> <li>• Relatively high population turnover</li> <li>• Benefited from Regeneration initiatives and Area Based Grants from the State</li> <li>• Ethnically homogenous – predominantly white British</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Village (20% least deprived)</b></p>	<p>1.5 times as large as The Estate, and less densely populated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High levels of owner occupation</li> <li>• 11% social renting – two small housing estates (residents appear marginalised)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prosperous village</li> <li>• High proportion of retired people, some of whom have moved into the area for retirement</li> <li>• Ethnically homogenous – predominantly white British</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">rg.uk</p>

## Distribution

- The Village has approximately four times as many charities, per person, as the Estate
- Greater sustainability (79%) of registered charities in The Village compared to The Estate (42%)

## Types of charities registered to and benefiting the case-study areas

	The Estate	The Village
Registered faith charities - the majority of these have a strong charitable presence in the case-study communities	1	7
<b>Small charities primarily funded by donations, fees and sales, and run by volunteers - meet a mix of needs – health/disability, social isolation, community, mutual benefit, cultural.</b>	3	<b>11 (58%)</b>
Small educational charities for deprived children, mostly from the Estate, run by staff members	1	1
<b>Larger charities, primarily funded by central or local government staffed by paid professionals. Meet core basic needs of community, early years, health, advice + 1 cultural</b>	<b>9 (64%)</b>	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>

## Charities registered elsewhere that benefit the case-study areas

The Estate	The Village
Support for parents who have difficulty parenting	Social activities for socially isolated elderly people
Housing associations offering socially rented housing	Housing Association for socially rented housing in 2 small areas of deprivation
Support for women experiencing domestic abuse	Drop-in mobile SureStart
Work with young people at risk of offending	3 volunteer run charity shops in aid of hospices
Support with unemployment	Volunteers raising money for popular large national charities

## Visibility of informal activity

The Estate – less visible	The Village – highly visible
<p>Various activities, like Women’s Institute, bingo, Good Neighbours scheme, support for international aid, that are organised through local churches (adds to work of The Estate’s one, formal faith charity)</p>	<p>Well advertised highly visible <i>unregistered</i> organisations that provide access to sport, public spaces, environmental issues, community, the arts, gardening, languages and social activities</p>
<p>Small unregistered environmental group</p>	
<p>Invisible (to researchers) informal activity undertaken through strong social ties – neighbours and family</p>	<p>Invisible (to researchers) informal activity undertaken through strong social ties – neighbours and family</p>

## **Interviewee views on differences in levels of formal engagement:**

- Residents of The Estate: chaotic lifestyles, poor time-management, lack of confidence, lack of project management skills, successful people leave the area - all affect capacity to take part.
- Residents of The Village: lots of project management skills, lots of recently retired people who have moved into the community. Use of weak social ties.

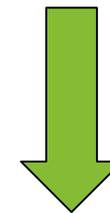
# CHARITABLE ECONOMIES

## The Village



## The Estate

External statutory funding  
flows into the Estate



Pays for provision of services

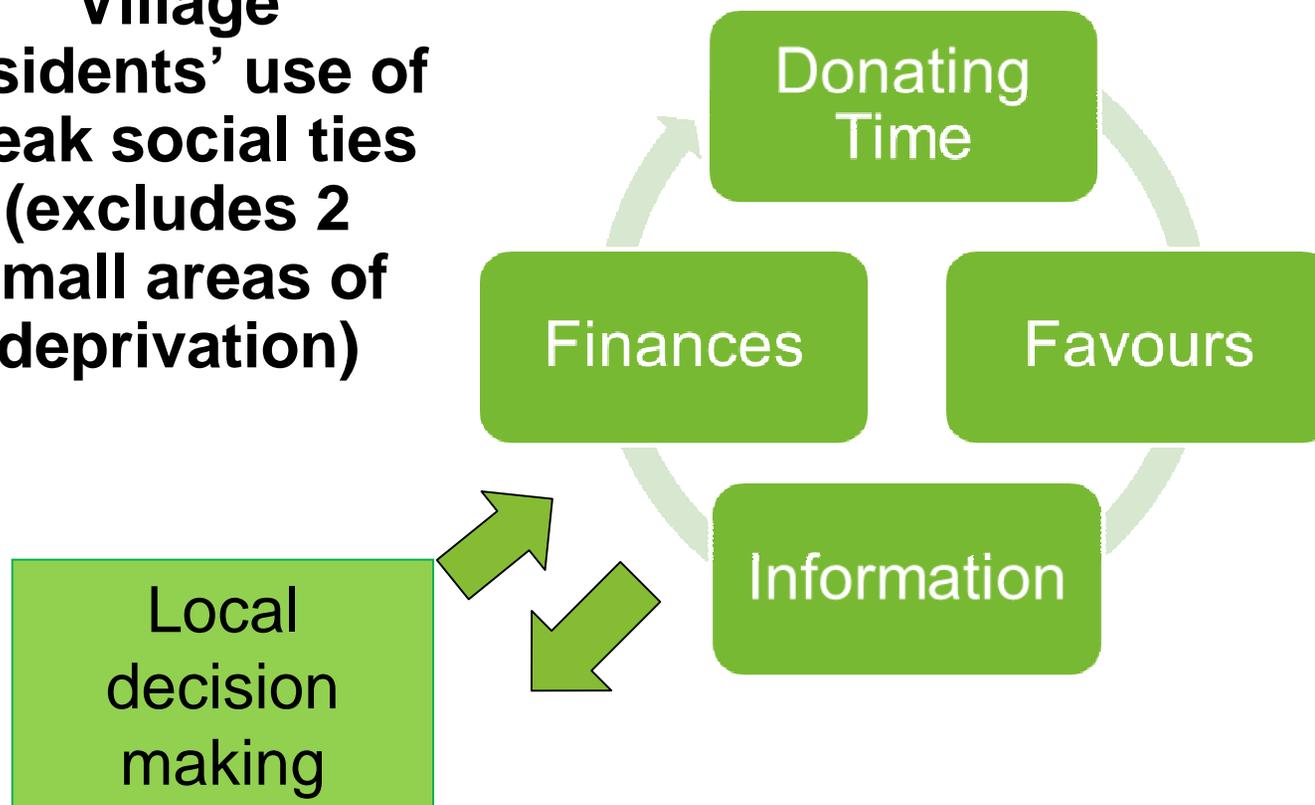


Flows back out of community as  
wages to non-local professionals,  
and rents to Local Authority



## The charitable ecology of The Village

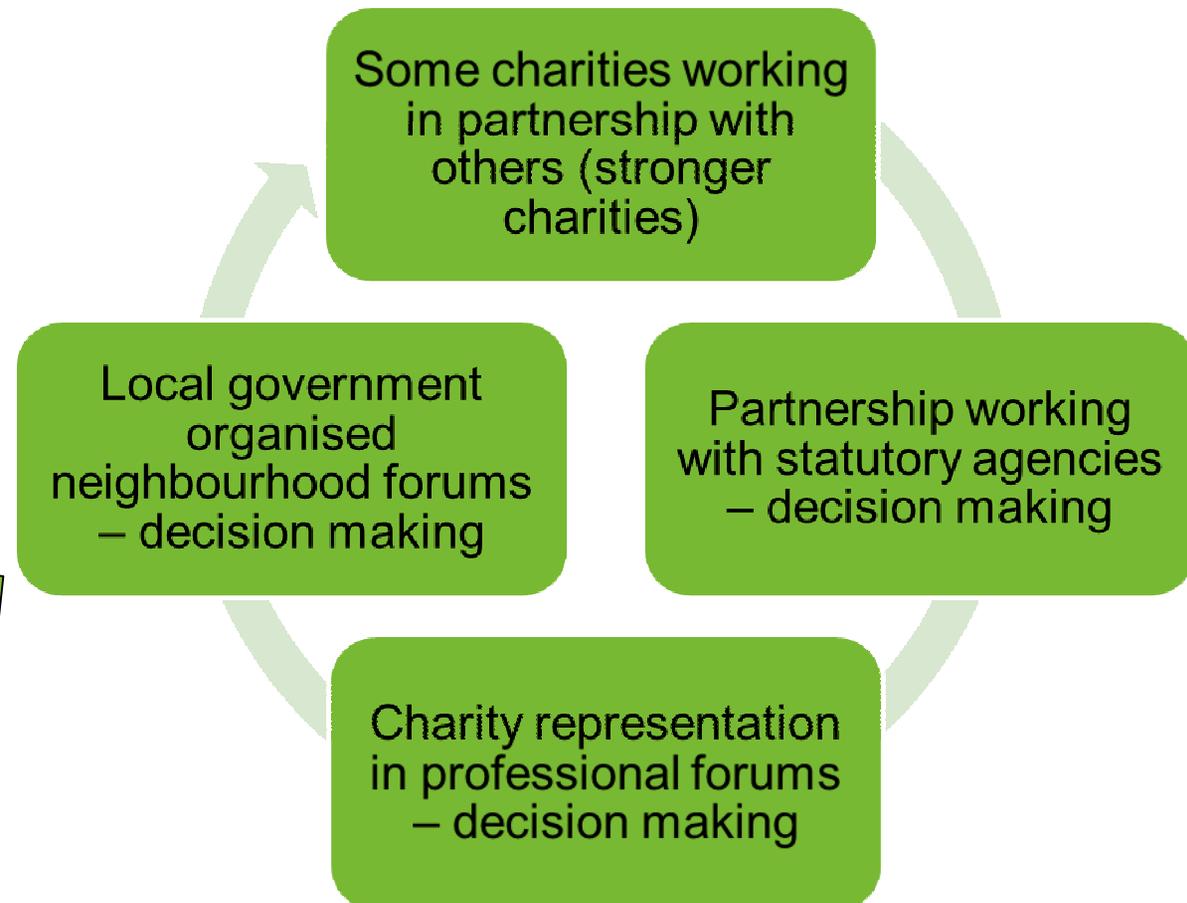
**Village residents' use of weak social ties (excludes 2 small areas of deprivation)**



## The charitable ecology of The Estate

**The Estate –  
professional  
charitable  
organisations –  
use of voluntary  
and statutory  
partnerships**

Residents  
invited to be  
involved –  
little take-up



## Case-study areas: difference rather than inequality?

- Identified a range of differences between areas, this includes: numbers of charities; levels of sustainability; capacity for voluntarism; and the flow of resources within these two communities.
- Difference relates to the **type** of needs being met. Needs reflect the relative levels of deprivation of both communities, (except for the 2 small housing estates in The Village – this represents an inequality)
- ‘High’ culture is very evident in the formal and informal engagement practices of The Village, although in 2011, the arts charity in The Estate was arguing for the cultural entitlement of the residents as part of aspiration for the area. Does ‘high’ culture survive in deprived areas during austerity?

## Capacity to take up Big Society and Localism agendas?

Austerity measures accompany new localist policies in reducing public spending, and bringing about the withdrawal of state, with communities being expected to provide for themselves.

### **If funding is withdrawn?**

- The Village charities are self-financing and the community would continue to make decisions for itself.
- The Estate charities would fold, removing the voices of these charities, and the residents they represent. These voices would be lost from local decision making processes.
- Faith organisations may take up some of the gaps?

## Future work?

- Further qualitative and quantitative work on sustainability of organisations in deprived communities since the economic crisis of 2008
- Case-studies of bridging of social divides. A research study that looks for communities and organisations where there is bridging, and how and why this is successful.

# Relevant papers

Lindsey R. (2012) 'Exploring local hotspots and deserts: investigating the local distribution of charitable resources' CGAP working paper: <http://www.cgap.org.uk/research/working-papers.html>

Lindsey R. (2013) 'Exploring local hotspots and deserts: investigating the local distribution of charitable resources' *Voluntary Sector Review* 4 (1) 1-22

Mohan J. & Lindsey R.,(2012) 'Local charitable ecologies? Tracking flows of charitable resources into contrasting communities in South-East England' (submitted for publication)

ESRC 'The contrasting world of charities' in *ESRC evidence briefing February 2013*: <http://www.esrc.ac.uk/publications/evidence-briefings/index.aspx>

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