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Living in new contexts of superdiversity: Lessons from the UK

Panel 3 (710): (Im)mobilities in the urban context

New and old migrations and diversities in UK and Japan, NODE
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RURAL REGENERATION IN THE UK

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The paradox of mobility for older people in the rural-urban fringe

Adam Peacock, Simon Pemberton*



The Challenges of Contemporary Rural Living for EU8 migrants: English Countryside as ‘Anchor’?

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New representations of rural space: Eastern European migrants and the denial of poverty and deprivation in the English countryside



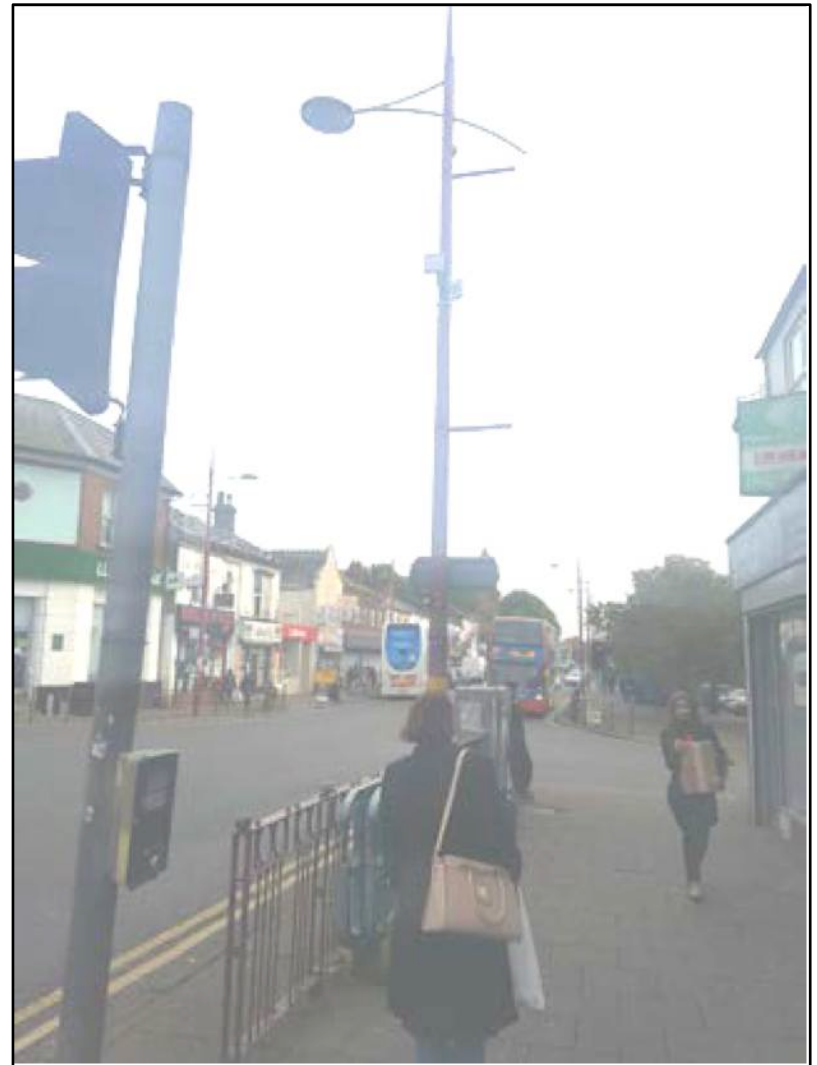
Context – Bringing ‘staying’ and immobility to the fore



A clear research agenda

- *“Whilst the relationship between mobility and place have been subject to considerable discussion in respect of ethnic minority populations, the everyday lives and experiences of stayers have yet to be adequately researched, nor the different aspects of place and their role in the staying process” (Stockdale and Haartsen, 2018).*

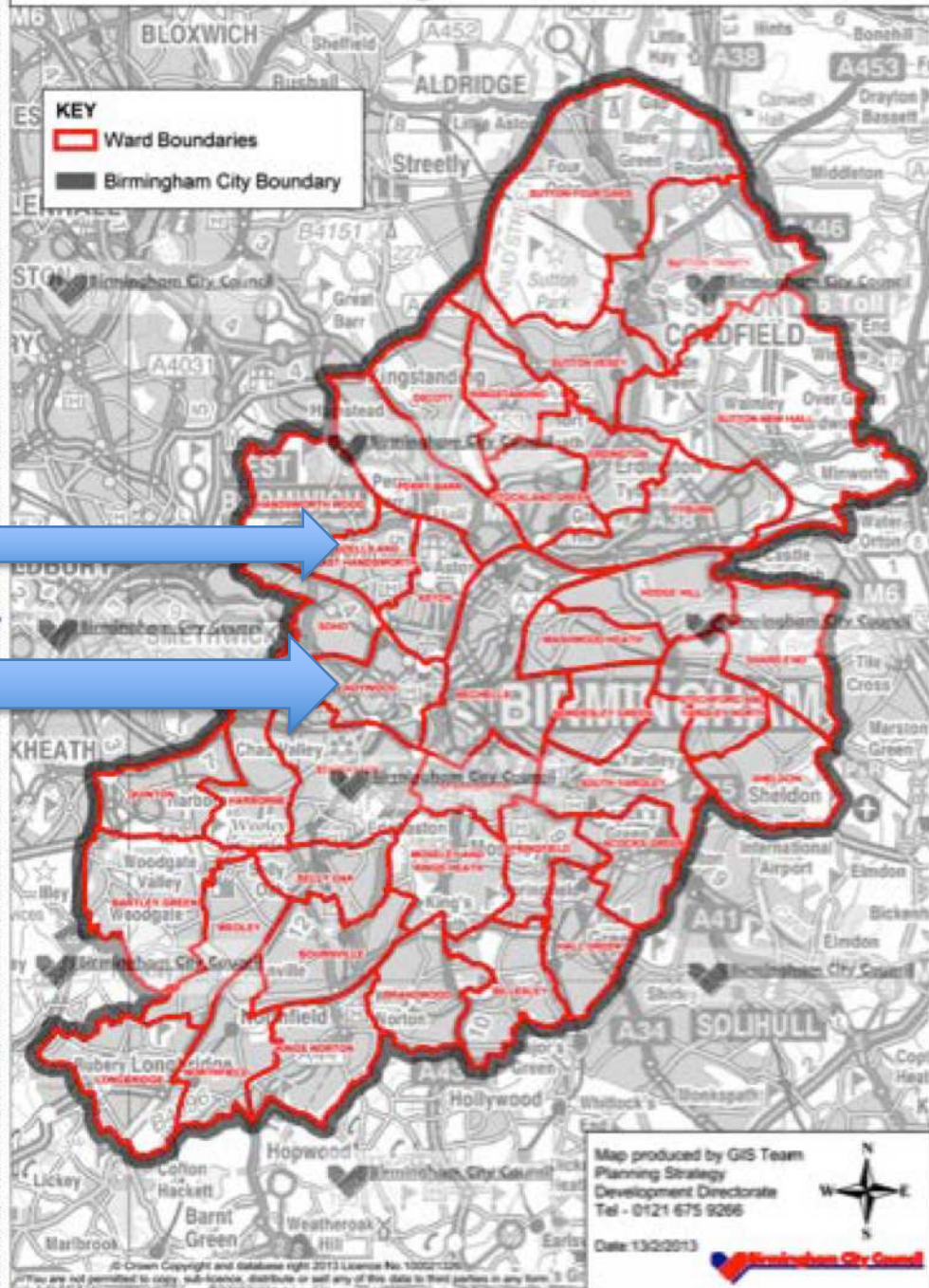
Staying and immobility in superdiverse neighbourhoods



Place-specific residential histories?



Birmingham Wards



Handsworth



Ladywood



Sample profile

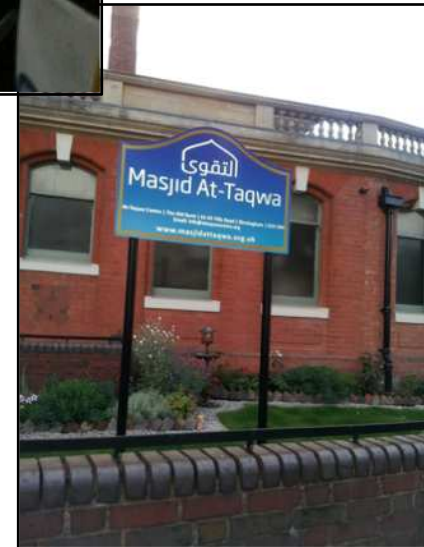
- Aged between 18 and 71 (the majority were aged 30-44).
- 50% female and 50% male.
- Employed (67.5%)
- Handsworth respondents = 10 different countries.
- Ladywood interviewees = 15 different countries.
- One-third (33%) of the sample born in the UK.
- Christian most frequent (47.5%) followed by No Religion (25%) and Muslim (25%)
- 33% had arrived in the five years prior to interviewing.

1. Staying as an active process

- Some evidence of structural constraints.
- Economic resources / dependency on social housing allocations.
- But active process for many.
- Similar proportions of migrants, minorities and non-migrants wishing to stay.
- Interview material corroborated findings from questionnaire.

2. Staying and place-based influences

- *“It is like being in Turkey, I can get anything from my country...in Handsworth, there is everything I need and want (Interviewee 17, Kurdish migrant, Handsworth)*
- *“I’m Black it’s pointless going to live anywhere else. I live in Handsworth for a reason, you just have to live where you feel more comfortable. I like seeing people that I’m familiar with, with my own kind and I like it here and that’s why I stay.... I tried living in Kings Norton, that’s one of the most racist places on earth, so why would I leave Handsworth? (Interviewee 5, UK-born Black Caribbean, Handsworth).*



Staying as *pragmatic diversity attraction?*

- **‘Whole community’ approach.**
- White British interviewees (60%) , Staying due to:
 - i. Services
 - ii. Diversity
- Less diverse areas previously.

- *“Before I moved to Handsworth I was living in Selly Park. But I did not like that area; there were not any good shops anywhere it wasn’t as diverse or interesting (Interviewee 1, White British, Handsworth).*

Staying as *pragmatic diversity attraction?*



- *“I wouldn't want to live somewhere like York again where the demographic is quite limited....the little mini supermarkets and the shops you can get are also limited, because the level of diversity isn't there (Interviewee 11 White British, Handsworth).”*

Staying *because of* population churn?

- “*Ladywood is just like a travelling through bit.....it’s not tied to anywhere enough*” (Interviewee 21, UK-born Indian, Ladywood).
- “Keep themselves to themselves’.
- To avoid others: “*as Eastern European's we don't especially create places like community centres or whatever*” (Interviewee 36, Lithuanian migrant, Ladywood).



Staying *because of* visible diversity

1. Intra-migrant tensions elsewhere for those less visibly different.

- *“We moved away from Erdington because it is known as ‘Pole-ington’ because of the number of Poles that live there. But it is not very safe and it is not very pleasant”* (Interviewee 16, Polish migrant, Ladywood).
- *“The old people from the east when communism was prevalent have a totally different state of mind”* (Interviewee 20, Polish migrant, Ladywood).

2. Tensions with White British population elsewhere in city.

- *“Because it is so diverse. I do not have to worry that I will be picked on for being foreign. I have had friends who have decided to leave to move to perhaps cleaner neighbourhoods where there are only English, only White people living there and now they live in fear that maybe they are going to break their windows or shout at them that they are from Poland* (Interviewee 10, Polish migrant, Handsworth).



Staying informed by *experiences in previous neighbourhoods of residence*

‘Invisible white majority’:

- *“Very often Polish people said that they were here to help but they did not help. They just said nasty things and all they wanted was to make money out of us”* (Interviewee 10, Polish migrant, Handsworth).

‘Visible minorities’:

- *“Before, I was living in Quinton..... one time I opened my post and there was a spray inside because they said they hated (it) when I was cooking, ...big discrimination”* (Interviewee 22, Portuguese migrant, Ladywood).



3. Staying informed by *public, private and relational spaces*

- On one hand:
- UK-born elderly minorities in Handsworth - public space within neighbourhood to generate place-based attachment.
- *“A lot of people come here and meet. They discuss things that are happening in the area...it is a meeting point for them to meet their friends or watch the world go by”* (Interviewee 2, UK-born Indian, Handsworth).
- But on other hand: Place belonging at the scale of the neighbourhood de-territorialised.
- I. Micro-scale of home: *“I mean, she absolutely loves it, loves the house and the garden but not the area. If you could pick up the whole house and move it...”* (Interviewee 7, UK-born Caribbean, Ladywood).
- ii. Home and Family: *“Its basically family, nobody wants to leave their relatives. I’m here for my relatives”* (Interviewee 4, Bangladeshi migrant, Handsworth).
- iii. Home and nostalgia (Savage, 2010): *“My memories are what’s shaped me...so if anyone moves in here and blows up the place, I’ll still remember it and I will still have that belonging”* (Interviewee 38, UK-born Indian, Ladywood).



Staying informed by *relational spaces elsewhere in the city*

- *“We are missing the attractions and the things to do for the family. For that we have to travel outside. But maybe that is because this place is dominated by the Asian culture and they do not need those things” (Interviewee 10, Polish migrant, Handsworth).*



Staying as relational – *the importance of city centre spaces*

1. **White British** - extend pragmatic attachment buy goods/services, meet friends, participate in festivals
2. **EU and EU8 migrants** – space where ‘authenticity’ was deemed to be more evident:
 - *“So as you're walking past the shop (in Ladywood) I do not necessarily think it is... pleasant, hygienic... If you go to the city centre nobody does that, right”* (Interviewee 12, Polish migrant, Ladywood).
 - *“In the city centre you can see much more the British people and stuff, nobody points at you but outside....well.....my sister came to visit and) and a few guys who were clearly not Westerners were pointing at her and staring?”* (Interviewee 25, Spanish migrant, Ladywood).



Staying as relational – *the importance of city centre spaces*

3. Migrants more visibly different – safe space?

“We can’t go out in Ladywood after 6 o’clock / 7 when it gets dark...its really not safe.....but in the city centre there are more cameras, it feels more safe” (Interviewee 6, Cameroonian migrant, Ladywood).

- But perspectives not universally held.
- Those in Birmingham for longer period reluctant to use such space.



Summary

- Superdiverse neighbourhoods can be areas of staying.
- Staying an active process - considerable agency (and rationalising).
- Key themes:
 - Importance of infrastructure and demographic diversity.
 - Pragmatic diversity attraction
 - Population churn for staying
 - Visible diversity for 'invisible'? Immigrants (EU8?)
 - Neighbourhood histories in 'destination' countries (decline in privileging of 'whiteness'?)
 - Public, private and and relational spaces (city centre esp).
- Material and psychological 'footholds' for staying and 'anchoring' (Kazlowska 2015; 2018) – e.g. using the city centre to generate feelings of authenticity, safety and security.