about the disturbances and their causes. Very different perspectives from junior officers have been expressed in numerous articles and letters in the *Police Review,* the *Police* magazine and *The Job*. The accounts given by the officers who searched Mrs Jarrett's home are available to us from their evidence to the inquest. Finally, we have been able to have a number of informal personal conversations with police officers of different ranks.

**THE COST OF THE INQUIRY**

1.26 The London Borough of Haringey allocated £250,000 to the Inquiry. The discretion as to how that money should be spent has been ours entirely. A final account will be presented to the council, but on a provisional assessment, we estimate that we will have kept the Inquiry costs below £225,000.

The main items of expenditure have been the fees paid to the chair and other panel members (other than Bishop Harvey who has claimed no fee), provisionally assessed at £61,000; the fees and wages of the Inquiry staff, the counsel to the inquiry, and the researchers and interviewers (provisionally assessed at £49,000); the survey done by the Middlesex Polytechnic (£25,000) the Equinox study (£6,500); the overheads of the Inquiry office (provisionally £47,000); the cost of transcription services (£14,000); and the printing of the report and its summarised version (£20,000).



# Chapter 2

# THE ESTATE AND ITS PEOPLE

**THE CONFLICTING VIEWS.**

2.1 One of the most remarkable features of this Inquiry has been the extraordinary conflict of opinion about the estate itself and its community organisations. In the view of most witnesses from the estate and from the local authority, the estate had realised enormous achievements, benefitting young and old alike, principally because of the hard work and caring approach of the organisers of the Broadwater Farm Youth Association. Their achievement had been recognised by the personal support of Sir George Young, Minister of State at the Department of the Environment, and by the visit of the Princess of Wales in February 1985.

Tricia Zipfel, consultant to the Department of the Environment summed up this view:–

> "For the community to have achieved what they have achieved, over four years of hard, hard work, is highly significant and gives enormous hope to other people. We have brought tenants from all over Britain to look at Broadwater and talk to the Youth Association. I do not feel I would be honest if I undersold the achievement of what has happened there."

2.2 But a negative and condemnatory view has also been expressed. As we shall see, it has come from sections of the press and from people living in streets near the estate who rarely go there. It is also the view of a great many police officers, who, while recognising that this view of the estate existed, claimed that it was entirely false. As the leading article in *Police,* the monthly magazine of the Police Federation, put it in November 1985:—

> "The official picture of Broadwater Farm Estate as a beehive of flourishing rehabilitation and positive community involvement, which was fostered by skilful propaganda from the Department of the Environment and Haringey Council (and swallowed by TV and

the press) cloaked the ugly reality of criminal gangs ruling the estate, robbing and terrorising the inhabitants, and making daily war on any police officers who dared to venture near."

D.A.C. Richards, the officer in charge of Number 1 area, which includes Haringey, shared the view of the rank and file:—

"The estate has earned an unenviable reputation over recent years as one where normal policing methods are resisted by a vociferous minority and where unprovoked attacks on police are all too common."

2.3 We have no doubt that these conflicting perceptions of the estate were of central importance in the build up to the disturbances, and that they continue to have a divisive and dangerous effect on police/community relations. It has therefore become central to our Inquiry to trace the history of the Broadwater Farm Estate and its community, to assess how such extreme and opposite views have come to be formed.

**THE BUILDING OF THE ESTATE**

2.4 Broadwater Farm was built on open land which had been used for allotments. Local residents were angry at the plan, and hired a lawyer to fight against it. Running through the site was the Moselle river, which flooded at times of heavy rainfall – one of the reasons for building the blocks on stilts above ground level. Another reason was the stipulation by the council that there should be car parking for one car for every flat, plus a further 10% for visitors. Since the council also required a high density development, car parking could be provided at ground level with the blocks interconnected with walkways.

2.5 In 1965, when the brief was given to the Borough Architect, the new Labour Government was encouraging local authorities to achieve a target of one thousand new units a year. Scandinavian industrialised building schemes were in fashion. The contract for Broadwater Farm was won by Taylor Woodrow using the Larsen-Neilson method of system building. One consequence of using such systems is that the design of the estate is largely taken out of the hands of the council's architects. The head of the team of architects at the time was Salem El-Doori, who said:–

"Once the contractor is nominated and selected they have the ultimate say, because they are guaranteeing the constuction, it is





their system, it is their patent. You are aware that a great deal of the control is being taken out of your hands. But for local authorities such systems were very attractive because of the speed of building, economy of resources, and the difficulty of finding skilled building labour."

2.6 Contrary to widespread belief, the estate did not receive any architectural award. But it was built with the highest hopes. In the words of Roy Limb, Haringey's Chief Executive:–

"The chair of Planning in those days thought Broadwater Farm would be an everlasting memorial to him and his committee – that was a genuine belief. I have talked to him about it since then. What they were trying to do seemed the right thing at the time."

Most of the new residents were rehoused from slum clearance schemes. But 34 flats were made available to the ordinary waiting list, and lots were drawn to choose the people whom the local press described as "the lucky 34 who will be given tenancy of brand new flats in the Broadwater Farm Estate."

2.7 Construction started in the middle of 1967 but was held up for a time in 1968 after the Ronan Point disaster. Flats became available in successive blocks as they were completed, with the last block finished in February 1973.

The reactions of the early inhabitants were enthusiastic. As Ernie Large, chair of Housing until 1968, explained:–

"What we were doing was clearing slums in South Tottenham and other parts of the borough, so that people who actually went into the Broadwater flats originally found them palaces compared with what they were living in previously i.e. back to back slums."

2.8 The quality of the flats themselves has been stressed by many witnesses. They were spacious, peaceful, and above all warm. Sheila Ramdin, now chair of the Residents' Association, said:–

"I love this flat. There is no way I would go when this flat is so hot. You don't have to wear no jumper or no socks or anything in doors. You can just go about in your T–shirt. That's how warm these flats are."

Dolly Kiffin, founder of the Youth Association, described her feelings when she moved in:–

"There was a lot of peace there. The front room was quite big, and it was so warm for the kids. You did not have to bother with

heaters like paraffin heaters. It was all nice and clean. And especially at night when you sit on the patio and look all over, it's a beautiful sight."

2.9 When finally completed in February 1973, the Broadwater Farm Estate contained 1063 properties in 12 blocks, each of them built off the ground and connected by raised walkways. Ten of the blocks are low rise, having four or six storeys. Two (Northolt and Kenley) are high rise blocks of 18 storeys. The central block, Tangmere, was built in the form of a ziggurat, consisting of flats with balconies surrounding a shopping precinct. The estate also includes a small group of two storey houses on the higher ground close to The Avenue; otherwise the accommodation was in flats and maisonettes of one, two, and three bedrooms. The housing was built over 21 acres of land at a density of approximately 140 persons per acre.

2.10 What was lacking were the essentials for making the estate into a living community for over 3000 people. The original design provided for shops, pub, a launderette, and a doctor's and dentist's surgery. Only the shops survived. As Mr Murray of the council's Building Design Services explained:–

"What happens when tenders come in, is that the tenders are always high, things are cut out, and what is cut out is thought to be the froth or the icing on the cake. And these will always be things like pubs and community centres."

As a member of the panel observed, and Mr Murray agreed: "What we know now is that they are not the icing on the cake. They are the fruit itself."

2.11 In an unattractive location under one of the walkways on Willan Road, a small clubroom was built for the Tenants' Association. It was not part of the original design. The club cost £16,000 to build, and the council's decision in December 1972 to spend £8,000 in a grant to the Tenants' Association to fit it out as a bar was strongly opposed by the opposition party. **"DOWN THE HATCH – IT'S ON THE RATES"** was the headline in the local paper. For years the club was the only facility on the estate. It was used as a lunch club for pensioners and in the evening as a bar. We will return to consider the role which it played in the community.

2.12 The estate not only lacked amenities but was cut off from the





surrounding areas. Transport facilities were poor; the walk to the buses in Lordship Lane was inconvenient, particularly for older people. Attempts were made by the council as early as 1972 to persuade London Transport to run a bus service through the estate. But to this day no such service exists.

2.13 On the edge of the estate were built the Broadwater Farm Infants and Junior Schools, which conveniently served the families on the estate. (For secondary schooling, children go to almost all of the ten schools in Haringey). But in addition there were three buildings, constructed close to the estate which had no relationship to it; the William C. Harvey School for children with special educational needs arising from severe learning difficulties, and the Moselle School for children with moderate learning difficulties, both situated to the north of the estate; and a hostel for older children in care, situated on Willan Road near the entrance to the estate. Witnesses from the Education Department told us that the siting of these schools "doesn't make sense"; Roy Limb explained that these institutions had been put where they were in order to be "part of the community", but recognised that on Broadwater Farm "things got out of balance". No thought appears to have been given to the design of any of the schools to enable them to be available for general community use.

2.14 The estate does have access to the open space of the Lordship Recreation Ground – a facility which could have been put to far greater use than it has. The Haringey Sports Council, in a strong submission to us have pointed out that over the last few years the open air theatre on the recreation ground has been little used; the cricket pitches have become unusable; the boating lake and children's waterfall have disappeared; and the changing facilities and toilets have fallen into a disgusting condition. There was also the Lido swimming pool to the north of the estate, which was closed in 1983.

2.15 The residents in the nearby terraced streets had opposed the plans and disliked the reality. A nearby resident of 20 years standing described to us his view of the estate as "like a wart on one's hand, a monstrosity, out of character for the area". From the beginning, there began to emerge a dangerous polarisation between the estate and its neighbours.

**THE PROBLEMS OF THE 1970S**

2.16 The high hopes of the planners were confounded almost from

the start. The history of Broadwater Farm through the 1970s is a spiral of deterioration. Its reputation became so bad that virtually nobody accepted a offer of housing on the estate unless they were homeless and had no choice. In 1980, less than ten years after it had been built, the estate featured in a Department of the Environment report of an investigation into difficult to let housing. It described how "Lakeside Estate", a pseudonym for Broadwater Farm, had gone into a "catastrophic slide" in popularity. Its conclusions were pessimistic:–

> "At best the local authority can hope to make it tolerable for the next decade or so, but eventually, because the estate is so monolithic and comprises such a large portion of their total housing, the possibility of demolition is one that will have to be considered."

It is one of the features of our Inquiry that this forecast has been confounded, and that the bleak picture has radically changed. Before describing the change, we must assess the reasons for such a rapid decline.

2.17 In the first place, there were severe problems arising from structural defects and disrepair. Water penetration had affected some flats from the early 1970s. Cockroaches were found to take advantage of easy passages through the gaps between the industrialised building slabs. Above all the council's response to complaints about maintenance and disrepair was shoddy. The council's evidence to us describes a petition presented by tenants in 1981:–

> "(The Petition) complained of poor security and a major burglary problem, frequent lift breakdowns, graffiti, poor repairs service, a poor cleansing service, unfair allocation policies, water penetration and inadequate spending on estate improvements. Most of these complaints speak for themselves and were certainly justified by the situation existing on the estate at that time."

2.18. Many of those who have been closely involved with the estate recalled the situation which had developed by 1981.

Russell Simper, now the estate supervisor, was then a caretaker:–

> "The youths used to hang about, people used to break the windows, doors were hanging off, the wood frames were rotten and it generally started to become a run down place. In the end, tenants just get disheartened and they just want to move."

He said that there was a meeting in the late 1970s when tenants "threatened to lynch the council if the council didn't come down and





start doing some repairs on the estate and making people have somewhere decent to live in".

2.19 Joanne George, who has played an important role as chair of the Tenants' Association and is now a social services community worker on the estate, arrived in 1980 as a homeless parent:–

> "The first thing that actually hit me was the condition of the estate and the flat that I was first offered itself. The estate was dirty, there was lots of vandalism, lots of grass, the flat I was allocated was in a really bad state of repair. There was no kitchen sink, there was no kitchen cupboard, there was a hole in the floor. It was just horrendous. It looked to me like squatters had lived there. All the passages had graffiti and stains all over it. It was absolutely disgusting and I was told, 'sorry, no money for decorations'."

2.20 The problems became exacerbated in the mind of the public by sensational reporting in the local press. The tenants, who might have welcomed a serious inquiry into the real problems which existed, hit back against what they felt to be a smearing of the estate and its inhabitants. The first of a number of "shock reports" was published by the *Hornsey Journal* on 11th May 1973, under the headline:–

> **"MARRIAGES ON ROCKS AMONG THE CONCRETE SAYS REPORT ON HIGH RISE LIVING."**

The "report" had been written by a junior school teacher and leaked to the newspaper, which published it with many photographs and described it as painting a "scarifying picture". One quotation reads as a first example of the racist labelling which was to become more frequent:–

> "'Problem' families – many of them single parent families – were seen to be placed together," claimed the author. "The sight of unmarried West Indian mothers walking about the estate aggravated racial tension."

However tenants on the estate were reported by the newspaper as disagreeing vehemently with such a view of the estate.

2.21 On 30th April 1976 the *Tottenham Weekly Herald* published a "survey" carried out by two of its reporters under the headline:–

> **"'FAMILIES WHO LIVE IN THE SHADOW OF VIOLENCE'.**
>
> Fear haunts the gloomy passages, lifts and entrances of Broadwater Farm Estate."

Again the residents, led by the president of the Tenants' Association, protested at "total mis-representation of the facts".

2.22 On 6th October 1978 under the headline **"EXPERT RAPS TERROR FLATS"** the *Weekly Herald* reported:—

> "An explosive survey carried out by a sociologist appointed by Tottenham Liberals claims that the 1,063 tenants on Broadwater Farm Estate are living in a 'sub-culture of violence'. The sociologist says there is complete social disorganisation."

There was a strong reaction from residents who wrote to the paper, such as one who stated:—

> "I can speak from personal experience. I am a woman. I do not suffer from tension or depression and have many friends like myself and am extremely lucky to live on Broadwater Farm."

Others set up a "Broadwater Farm Council Tenants' Protection Action Group" in opposition to the Tenants' Association, but it was short-lived and seems to have attracted little support. The local home beat officer was reported in the press as expressing little anxiety about the situation:—

> "PC Stratton said that crime was no worse on the estate than anywhere else. 'And you are more likely to get mugged at Bruce Grove than here.' He added that Broadwater Farm is being adequately policed and most relations with the Tenants' Association are very good."

2.23 Thus we see as the contributory factors to the terrible image to the estate, a combination of on the one hand real grievances, such as the poor maintenance, unrectified structural defects and the inadequate facilities, and on the other hand an unjust labelling from outside, from the press and from neighbouring residents. The labelling became attached not just to the buildings but also to the people, as if they too were undesirable. Residents on the estate had severe problems with hire purchase or T.V. hire facilities, or obtaining goods from catalogues. Deposits were required for the installation of gas and electricity. There was even a kind of social ostracism, as illustrated by evidence from on the one hand Russell Simper:—

> "It gets blown out of proportion. People from outside read the paper, they say: 'Cor, what a flipping place, Broadwater Farm.' They've never been on Broadwater Farm, they've never lived on Broadwater Farm, but they get the wrong impression of Broadwater Farm. Then when people who live on Broadwater Farm go on a bus and someone says: 'Oh, hello,' and they start talking they say: 'Where do you live?' 'I live on Broadwater Farm'





> 'Oh, I wouldn't live over there for a pension'. This makes people disheartened. It's making out that I'm no good because I live on Broadwater Farm."

Then on the other hand we had the view of a nearby resident:—

> "I don't want to have friends on that estate. I wouldn't go there to make friends. I would like to see you go round the houses and say: 'What do you reckon should be done?' They would all say: 'Raze it to the ground'. That would be the answer."

2.24 The image of the estate inevitably affected the pattern of lettings. The numbers of those who wanted to transfer were double the borough average – 20% of all tenants by 1976. The numbers refusing an offer of a place on the estate was also far higher than the average. Borough Housing Officer Barry Simons made a comprehensive report on the situation in October 1976, which said:—

> "Since very few tenants wished to transfer to Broadwater, and many housing applicants refused accommodation there, dwellings tended to be left to those whose need was most urgent, and the estate has received up to now an unusually large share of homeless and single parent families. In all, 75% of acceptances on voids on Broadwater in 1975 were by homeless families, compared to 24% of voids elsewhere in Haringey."

In a thoughtful section on race relations the report discussed the dangers of such a trend, and the need for consultation about allocation policies:—

> "A policy which has the effect of dispersing an ethnic minority away from unpopular estates can be justified if it accords with that minority's issues and takes account of individual preferences."

2.25 The council adopted recommendations in the report designed to broaden the social mix on the estate. They resolved that no more homeless people or one parent families should be allocated to Broadwater for two years; only one void in three should be offered to furnished tenants (who were predominantly Black); and one void in seven would be offered to households outside the waiting list, such as key workers. But these policies did not last. In September 1979 the council reverted to a policy of allocating vacancies on Broadwater Farm in accordance with boroughwide housing policy. It was considered that it was not possible to alter the composition of an estate through allocation policies, and that the image of an estate

created by press publicity had more impact on the choices which people made.

2.26 Throughout these changes in policy a large proportion of new lettings were made to homeless families: 70% in 1980, decreasing to 48% in 1982. They went to Broadwater Farm because they had no choice; before November 1981, a homeless family was only given one offer. They had needs for themselves and their children for which the council failed to make provision. Dolly Kiffin described their situation:–

> "It was just young people with children, unemployed, that was coming onto the Broadwater Farm to live. They hadn't got any carpet, furniture, anything, and there is problems for social security to give them these things. So they struggle, and the struggle get harder and harder. You could see the frustration in the young people there."

2.27 We have tried to discover to what extent the lettings on the estate were being made to Black people. One Black resident from 1973 described the trend to us in direct terms:-

> "As the Black people came in, the Whites went out."

The difficulty is that the council's Housing Department has not carried out any ethnic monitoring of lettings to their housing stock. So they have deprived themselves of the information which would be essential to consider whether there were discriminatory practices in decisions being made by council officers about the estate. For as William Trant, speaking on behalf of the West Indian Standing Conference, said to us:-

> "I do not feel that there is anything that is horribly bad about having large concentrations of Black people in a particular area, because I believe that it provides the strength and support that we need. But at the same time what I am saying is that it ought not to be the case where the less desirable estates are allocated to Black people"

We agree. As we shall see, it was Black people on the estate who led the fight against the estate's decline.

2.28 The best information which we have about the numbers of Black and White people on the estate is that in the 1981 census, 42% of the residents of Broadwater Farm had heads of households who





were born in the new Commonwealth. Our own survey shows that the ethnic breakdown of adults is now as follows:—

| | |
|---|---|
| White | 49% |
| Afro-Caribbean | 42% |
| Indian subcontinent | 3% |
| Other | 6% |

2.29 The only community facility on the estate, the social club under the walkway, offered little welcome to Black people. It did provide a friendly environment for some residents of the estate, and we have heard from older people who enjoyed coming down for a regular evening drink. But it was dominated by a few individuals who did not operate it for the whole estate. As Malcolm Sargison, community worker on the estate from 1978 to 1981, said: "They saw themselves as a social club and not a community centre." Around 1981, serious financial irregularities had emerged. These were investigated by the Community Development Department and led to the sacking of staff. While some have claimed that there was no discrimination against Black people in the club, there was too much evidence to the contrary for us to accept that claim. The following quotations describe the real position:—

> "There were requests from within the Black community that for only one night a week they could have some kind of chance to do something pertaining to different cultures, and this request was always turned down. The social club actually became a pub. There were several occasions where Black people were assaulted and bodily beaten in there, badly beaten." (Stafford Scott).
>
> "I went for membership and I was turned away – I did not know why." (Clasford Sterling).
>
> "It's fair to say that in 1976-80 before the emergence of the Youth Association, the social club appeared to be predominantly White." (Ernie Large).
>
> "There was a social club downstairs – White people and the token Black. If you wasn't part of that token, you go in there, you soon get out of it. There were a couple of times you would get kicked out of there as well." (Black resident since 1973).
>
> "There were only a few Black people on the estate that used to go down there regularly and there were quite a few who lived off the estate. The main thing there was playing dominoes. I used to hear racist remarks about them slamming down their dominoes." (White woman resident).

2.30 So the estate before 1981 offered nothing to young Black people except a home. They were effectively excluded from the social club. They had no other facilities on the estate. The young men, many of them unemployed, had nothing to do. The old people were afraid of them, the police suspected them. The young women with children were isolated and lonely. The teenagers had the use of a flat in Hawkinge block which operated on three evenings a week, but nothing more. The physical appearance of the estate was run down and ill maintained. In 1981 a new organisation – the Broadwater Farm Youth Association – was formed in order to face these massive problems.

**THE YOUTH ASSOCIATION**

2.31 Having noticed that many people at the Youth Association were young adult men, we asked, who is a youth? Stafford Scott gave a reply which reveals much about being unemployed in Britain today:–

"When we say youth, this is funny because most of them are not really youths in the conventional use of the term. They are actually young men, some of them well into adulthood, but because they are not in employment, because they don't have total control of their future, they don't really see themselves as being men in the conventional use of the term. They allow themselves to be called youth because they believe they are in a kind of transitional period."

The Youth Association, he explained, had catered for people from eight years old right up to 30.

2.32 The events which sparked off the Youth Association started with a meeting called by the Tenants' Association to discuss the increased number of burglaries on the estate. About 20 people were there. Only one or two of them were Black. Councillor Bernie Grant was in the chair. People were complaining about the time which it took to get the police in. Community worker Malcolm Sargison suggested that if there were a small police sub-office on the estate, the police could come straight in when needed, and be accountable to the community. The proposal was well supported by the tenants, although the police did not think it would be helpful.Councillor Grant recalled his reaction from the chair:–

"I said that the meeting was not representative, and I wanted to





hear the views of the Black residents on the estate, before I could agree to such a move."

Malcolm Sargison wrote up a minute suggesting that the council would support the mini police station idea. *The Tottenham Herald* picked up the story, and stated that Councillor Grant was in favour.

2.33 Dolly Kiffin recalled her response:–

"My son bought a newspaper article saying 'Mini police station for Broadwater Farm' And that was when I talked to the youths. It wasn't very hard to talk to youths because they were always in the corridors and on the precinct in Tangmere, hanging about there from day to day . I called a meeting in my front room....You have to go around to ask how would they feel, would they be happy with it or not? Or would they rather to have a centre where they can play a part, and to see if life could be changed on the Broadwater Farm? And that was when they said they rather to get together and start up a centre of themselves and work together on it."

Clasford Sterling, Vice President of the Youth Association, described the spirit of the early meetings:–

"The concerned people in the community came together and said: 'What you really need is some resources and facilities'. And that is how the Youth Association actually started. It came about to prove the point, that if the community were involved in the decision making around their lives, they would actually have a better community to live in."

2.34 Barry Simons, then Director of the Mid-Tottenham Housing Office, recalls the first meeting with the new association:—

"There must have been 30. Dolly was there, but they were largely youths and all Black. They really went for the council. I got a significant lot of heat put on me. They talked about not having access to the social club, the Tenants' Association being a White association, and the police station. And their need for youth facilities on the estate. And they said to me: 'We want the fish and chip shop'."

2.35 The fish and chip shop was an unused shop on the Tangmere precinct. Barry Simons had decided in his own mind that it was essential to meet the aspirations which the youths had expressed. He was able to get the necessary approval from the committee chairs and cut through the bureaucratic red tape. The shop was open for use by

the Youth Association within three weeks.

2.36 There was no heating in the shop and it was filthy. The youths got together and scrubbed it out. Dolly Kiffin went around and begged for things to put into it. Malcolm Sargison helped to find them some chairs, a cooker, fridge and typewriter. For Christmas 1981, Dolly Kiffin cooked a meal in her flat and brought it downstairs:–

"It was so cold some of the youths caught cold in that little place. But the atmosphere was good and you could see the determination in them."

2.37 In the view of Howard Simmons, who was then Principal Community Development Officer, the opening of the Youth Association premises was "a major symbolic base of achievement". The youth could see that their influence was actually delivering the goods, that the council were responding. But in some quarters there was discontent. Malcolm Sargison felt that the decision had been railroaded:–

"For years the Tenants' Association and other people on the estate had negotiated with the council in various guises, and they had never been forthcoming with anything. Suddenly the chip shop was turned over in a fortnight. No tenants on the estate had been consulted. For me that really harmed relationships on the estate."

2.38 Within a short time the Youth Association had taken an initiative which demonstrated their desire to make links across the whole community. They began serving meals and arranging outings for pensioners on the estate, and have continued ever since. Today, 60–70 pensioners are involved, some getting meals in their homes, some coming to the Youth Association for lunch. Dolly Kiffin explained how it started:–

"The older pensioners was afraid of the youths. They would hold their bags underneath their arms and you could see they were frightened. So we called a meeting and we said, it's time that with the little money that we was making, we have outings for them, parties to take them out of their home. And that built up closer links and more understanding between the pensioners and the youths. And that was the greatest achievement, I think, for us on the Broadwater Farm."

2.39 Many people on the estate paid tribute to this work. For





Russell Simper, the estate supervisor:–

"It's a thing I never thought I would see, the elderly people going into the youth club in Tangmere. But they do and they enjoy it, and there are always compliments regarding their meals."

Andy Sansom, a caretaker on the estate for seven years, said:–

"Before the club you had the youth doing their thing and you had old age pensioners going down to the social club for their dinners, and they never mixed. They wouldn't know each other if they fell over. Now some of the older people are going into the club, they can see the youths. They can be boisterous, but they will hold the chair for them. And they get to know that they are not yobbos, they are just people."

A lady whom we interviewed, well into her 80's, who had been knocked unconscious on the estate some years ago by an unknown attacker, happily goes to the Youth Association for lunch every day. She looks forward to it very much because she meets so many of her friends. She spoke warmly about the Christmas functions. Even in the week after 6th October, when the Youth Association was ringed with police officers, the pensioners still came in.

2.40 When it started, the leaders of the Youth Association had no idea how to deal with the council system or apply for grants and keep detailed accounts. There was little enough money – a £300 grant from the council at the beginning, and contributions from the pockets of the members. Gradually they became aware of the various funding sources and how to deal with them – the council, the Urban Aid programme and the Greater London Council. The fish and chip shop was far too small, and an application was made for Urban Aid funding to convert a derelict shop in the corner of the precinct. Sir George Young gave personal support to this initiative, and the new premises were opened in 1984.

2.41 In 1982 the Youth Association was pressed for space for a day nursery for young children. They had been looking at the hostel in Willan Road run by Social Services, for older children in care. It was under used, with only three or four teenagers living in it. The Chief Executive, Roy Limb recalls how he was approached by Dolly Kiffin and her colleagues. They wanted it for single women who had children and could not get out:–

"They were quite determined about it. My little bit in it was to try and create a climate of opinion to overcome the resistance that

obviously existed within the bureaucracy. It was not the normal thing to do in those days, handing over this professional institution to unpaid volunteers. I told some minor white lies like saying, well it was only a temporary thing. I knew damned well that once Dolly Kiffin got her hands on it we would never get it back."

2.42 The Willan Road premises became a day nursery on the ground floor providing for 25 children on the estate. In 1984 the mothers' project started on the upper floor, (funded by the Greater London Council), providing a shopping centre for women, a library, activity rooms for women's groups, and a range of activities including keep fit sessions, crafts, English classes, advice sessions, and a Turkish women's group. Joanne George worked with the team which set up the Willan Road nursery, recruiting staff, getting equipment etc:–

"In general a lot of women were very isolated, just fed up, because of many reasons, because of poverty, because of unemployment, because of bad housing conditions, because of having nowhere to go. The general feeling was: 'We are fed up now, this is the last straw, we want something better for us and for our children.' Becoming involved changed the lives of many young people."

As the Youth Association premises on Tangmere were frequented mainly by men, the Willan Road building was very necessary for the needs of women. By October 1985 about 50 women came to the mothers' project everyday, both from the estate and surrounding streets.

2.43 The other valuable new facility for children, and thus for parents also, is the play centre, located to the north of the Kenley block. It was opened in 1984 and caters for children from five to 11 after school and during school holidays. Children are picked up from school and stay at the centre until they can be collected by their parents around 5.30 pm. Around 40 children attend – up to 100 in the holidays. It is financed by the council as another response to the demands which were being voiced for proper facilities for families on the estate.

2.44 Every summer the Youth Association has organised a festival on the Lordship Recreation Ground – a mixture of music, dance, fashion, stalls, sports and side shows, all with an African/Caribbean flavour. It has become a major local event with a carnival





atmosphere. The Youth Association organised a number of stewards with special T–shirts to ensure that nothing went wrong, and persuaded the police to keep in the background. The press reported it with headlines such as **'FUN DAY DOWN AT THE FARM'.** Many witnesses spoke of the good feelings which the festival had generated:

"It's a time to enjoy, a time to reflect on the whole work we have done over the year." (Clasford Sterling)

"It is a festival that is aimed at bringing together the community, and allowing the community to understand each other's culture." (Stafford Scott)

2.45 The formation of the Youth Association led to major changes in the composition of the Tenants' Association. A new committee was voted in with an equal number of Black and White members. A new constitution was adopted, with a system of representatives on each block on the estate.

2.46 Finally, the Youth Association set up a number of co-operative enterprises; a community launderette, a food and vegetable co-operative, a hairdressing salon, a photographic workshop, and a sewing workshop. In late 1985 a co-operative development worker was appointed with funds from the GLC, now taken over by the Haringey Council. All of the co-operative's projects continue to function, although some are in difficulty. We return at the end of the report to the needs for the future in this field.

2.47 The achievements of the Youth Association in under five years have been remarkable. They have succeeded against all the odds. They lived in a depressed and divided estate, and they brought to it co-operation and real benefits. They faced the massive unemployment of young people on the estate, and provided for them activity and a number of real jobs. They have been true to their motto "Success Through Caring". Their efforts were deservedly recognised when in February 1985, they were rung directly from Buckingham Palace and asked if they would welcome the Princess of Wales.

**THE COUNCIL RESPONDS**

2.48 The Youth Association had been formed at the right time. The council was already moving towards policies of real consultation with local people. Its Community Affairs Department was formed in 1982, in order to make the council's services more community orientated

and responsive, more accessible to the wide range of interests and needs within the borough. The Housing Department was moving its services into more accessible local offices. The revival of Broadwater Farm has therefore been a partnership of a community eager to work hard for change joined with a council which in many of its departments was changing also.

2.49 A number of concrete decisions were made in the 1980s to bring council services into a closer physical and co-operative relationship with the people of Broadwater Farm:–

(1) In 1981 the Mid-Tottenham Housing Office was set up, combining management and repair teams, and with a priority to respond to the complaints of tenants on the estate. We have described the prompt action of its senior officer over the Youth Association request for premises.

(2) In 1982 an estate based repairs team was established, which now completes 90% of its jobs within the targeted time limits – by far the best performance in the borough.

(3) In 1983 the Broadwater Farm neighbourhood office was opened on the Tangmere precinct. It provides for management and repair services and housing benefit claims. It is the base for the two community workers, and since October 1985 for a team of social workers. It will soon have a five person team from the Building Design Service to study building defects, consult over and plan a building strategy, and oversee new building projects.

(4) In 1984 the Broadwater Farm Panel was set up as a sub-committee of the council, chaired by Councillor Bernie Grant, to bring together the council, the Tenants' Association, the Youth Association, and other agencies into discussion and decision making on issues of concern to the estate.

2.50 Neale Coleman of the neighbourhood office, spoke of an atmosphere of co-operation between housing staff and tenants which astonished some visitors to the estate:–

"As you know, our office is completely open plan in its reception area, and we've often had people come from other boroughs who have been asking us: 'How do you manage without thick plate glass screens to hide you from the public?' We have never had problems of that nature in dealing with the public in the office."

But he stressed the difficulties of getting other council officers in other





departments who were accustomed to a rigid departmental hierarchy, to be accountable to local meetings as well as to their departmental superiors:–

"It was necessary for us to establish very firmly the principle that all services would report regularly at every meeting of the Broadwater Farm Panel. That was important because it provided a focus of accountability which people could key into. We are making more progress there, but it is still a difficult area."

2.51 To ease the problems of co-ordination, an Inter-Agency Working Party meets regularly under the chair of the neighbourhood officer. A meeting attended by one of the Inquiry panel, included representatives of eight local authority departments and several local groups.

The meeting dealt with a very large amount of material in two hours. People were clearly working with co-ordination, and were used to members of the local community being actively involved, both in criticising and supporting what they had to do and say.

2.52 Community leaders recognised that these changes were a real attempt to respond to community needs. As Dolly Kiffin put it:–

"Councillors must get off their backsides and come and see the community before they sign anything. Officers cannot just come and write a report to the council unless they now consult the community. That's what we do on Broadwater Farm and that's what we changed."

Leonardo Leon, Treasurer of the Tenants' Association, drew a distinction between the council as an institution and the neighbourhood office:

"We have a really good working relationship with the neighbourhood office. Most of the officers there have been working with us and helping us to develop our initiatives but at the same time we have met some difficulties when we go higher and have to deal with the chairs of committees, or whoever is involved at the higher level."

2.53 The new partnership between council and community produced a number of concrete results. In a million-pound maintenance programme all broken windows, woodwork and communal glazing were repaired or replaced, and the exterior redecorated. Major steps were taken to improve security and prevent crime. Entry phones were

installed in the two tower blocks: the flimsy front doors to the flats were renewed and strengthened with metal plates. The areas around the bottom of the blocks, where thieves used to hide, were opened up.

2.54 Neale Coleman described how the changes were made:–

"We talked to the local crime prevention officer. We talked to tenants in a number of blocks in an intensive way and the initial change that we made was to replace all the front doors with solid core doors. We strengthened the frames by lining the frames with steel and providing a mortice lock that locked into the steel-reinforced frame. And on the other side of the door, the new doors had metal hinge bolts. And our experience was that this made an immediate effect, a dramatic effect on burglaries."

However there was still a problem because the area around the lock was a point of weakness, and some burglars were able to push the lock through the door with a hard blow. Neale Coleman continued:–

"So again we talked to the police and we talked to tenants and we talked to community groups and we came up with the solution of fitting two steel plates bolted through to sandwich that part of the door together and give it extra strength. We carried out that work again across all the flats on the estate. And since then the burglary rate has again been very, very low indeed, as is accepted by the police. It is far lower than for the rest of Tottenham."

2.55 Tricia Zipfel, who had studied the estate for some years on behalf of the Department of the Environment, summed up the achievements in a report to the Department in October 1985:–

"(The Estate) had become a training model for the Priority Estates Project, hosting visitors from estates all over the country. The neighbourhood office was dealing with over 900 queries from tenants each month, the refusal rate had been halved, more tenants were choosing to live on the estate, repairs were being done faster than in the rest of the borough. Voids had dropped from around 60 to 15, and the atmosphere and quality of service in the neighbourhood office was excellent. The estate was clean, there was very little graffiti or vandalism. Also, and perhaps most significantly, crime on the estate had plummeted. The police have acknowledged that burglaries on Broadwater Farm were lower than in the rest of Y district. Visits to the estate by Princess Diana and





Sir George Young boosted the confidence and morale of workers and tenants alike."

In the evidence to us she provided a graphic illustration of the change:–

"When the D.O.E. investigators went on to the estate in 1978, there wasn't a single pane of communal glass intact. The whole place was littered with broken glass. By 1983 – 84 when I was on the estate, there wasn't a single pane of communal glass that was not intact. There was no broken glass on the estate anywhere."

2.56 Council officers give credit to the Youth Association, and to Dolly Kiffin in particular, for the turnaround that has taken place. The Chief Executive Roy Limb said:–

"The dynamism and enthusiasm of Dolly Kiffin has had everything to do with the way in which progress has been made on Broadwater Farm Estate."

An elderly resident echoed his words:-

"Well I don't know who this Miss Dolly is, but she has worked wonders for this estate."

We too praise Dolly Kiffin, but we would emphasise that she was not alone. Many people have made a wrong assumption that Dolly Kiffin was the only leader of the Youth Association – an assumption which led to serious consequences in the summer of 1985, as we shall describe. In reality there has been an extremely able and dedicated team of young people, both men and women, Black people and White, working for the Youth Association from the start.

2.57 In the 1980s the pattern of press reporting began to change. There were still a number of negative reports; but people in the community were now more organised, and able to insist that reporters from the local newspapers came down and reported in full on the positive achievements of the estate. On 14th October 1982 the *'Weekly Herald'* had on its front page published an article headed **"CALL FOR SLUM CLEARANCE SCHEME"**, in which a councillor was reported as saying that Broadwater Farm and some other estates should be pulled down. In the following week the newspaper printed a full page "news probe" headed **"BROADWATER FARM – WHAT IS ITS FUTURE? TENANTS INJECT NEW LIFE."** The report featured the projects of the Youth Association and also about the tensions between youths and the police. There was a similar sequence of articles in November 1984. After a leaked report by a social services

officer had been published in which it was claimed that home helps were scared to go on the estate, Dolly Kiffin contacted the paper expressing anger at the report. The result was a full page report about the Youth Association and in particular its work for old people. A leading article said:-

> "Broadwater now offers a community life to old and young alike, especially to the unemployed with time on their hands. Not only that: those who are housebound get hot dinners delivered by young volunteers."

2.58 While the success has been remarkable, it is important to recognise that the Youth Association has many obstacles still to overcome. As we show from the analysis of the survey in Chapter 7, the estate is not a fully integrated community. Many people praised the work of the Youth Association and other new organisations, but few are actually involved in them. There are sections of the estate that do not feel that the Youth Association caters for their needs. There have been considerable improvements in the housing field, but in other areas, such as education and economic development, the participation of the community has scarcely begun. We return in Chapter 9 to consider various ways forward for the future. We now turn to consider how the various ranks of the Metropolitan Police responded to the community of Broadwater Farm.



# Chapter 3

# THE POLICE AND THE COMMUNITY

## THE BACKGROUND OF INJUSTICE

3.1 Black people who settled in Britain in the 1950s and early 1960s were strongly supportive of the police. But over the 1970s, as a generation of Black people born in Britain grew up, the attitudes of their parents to the police changed dramatically. The change came about because they saw what was happening to their sons and daughters. They saw them picked on in stop-and-search operations and arrests under "Sus". When they complained to the police, whom they believed to be the protectors of the law, they were rebuffed and sometimes mistreated. And when they complained they were not taken seriously.

Mrs Scott, the mother of five children, told us how her experience changed:–

> "In the sixties I was quite friendly with the police. We had a club on the Bruce Grove Road. I can't remember the name – there is a hairdresser's there now. And we used to gamble there and the police officers from Tottenham used to be there. We used to know and call each other by our first names. And sometimes when I'd get broke I would turn to one and say: 'I'm skint, have you got any money?' And they would turn to me the same way. It suddenly changed in the early seventies. It seemed as if all the decent police officers had left the area and there were all different people coming in. And you couldn't go to the police and make a complaint without being harassed. Although you are making a complaint, you are being harassed by the police."

Mr Jarrett described to us an incident in 1977 when he asked for the help of the police to deal with a boy breaking his windows, and ended up being arrested himself. He concluded:–

> "These are all things which you have to look into. How much can you trust the police when you need help? There are several West Indian families who have gone to the police for help and been turned down flat."