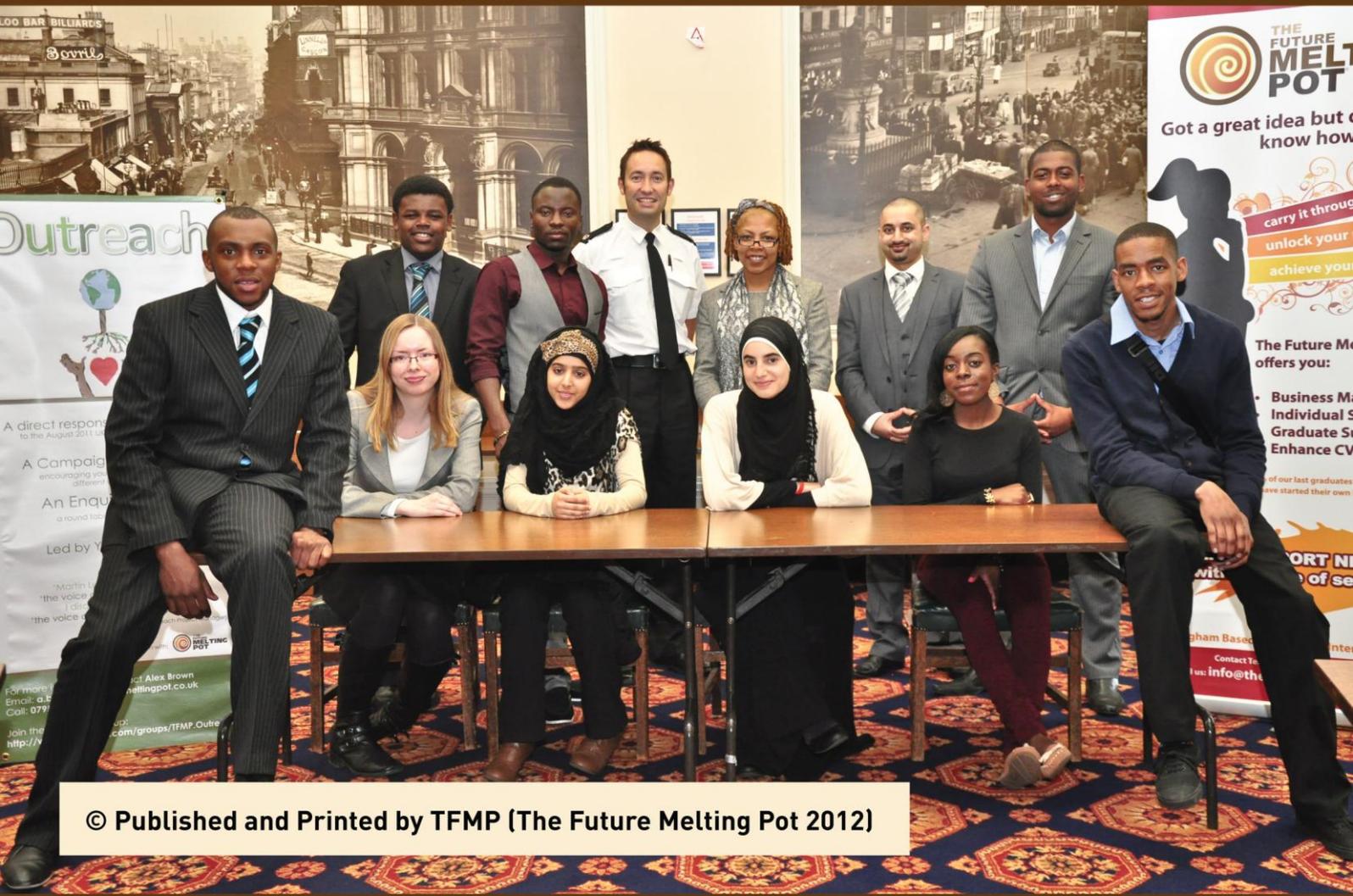


# POST RIOTS

# ONE YEAR ON

Creating a Social Impact Market Place



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## **1. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Researchers in the Future Melting Pot team of staff and volunteers undertook this work; undertaking the task of reviewing reports on the riots covering the entire UK

## 2. Introduction

### **Olinga Ta'eed PhD FIoD FRSA**

Professor in Social Enterprise, University of Northampton  
Impact Investment Advisor, Big Society Network  
Visiting Professor of Capacity Development, Birmingham City University

### **Post Riot – a year on**

The Future Melting Pot is an innovative and imaginative engagement process that blends public, private, third and community sectors to arrive at lasting solutions in society, with a particular focus on young people. At the heart of the organisation is an evidence based research methodology that has previously delivered successful programmes for youth, long term unemployed, graduates and leaders.

More recently TFMP has focussed on a 360° exercise of mapping, foundation building, evidencing and reporting on exclusion stemming from the 2011 disturbances – the so called 'riots' - specifically in Birmingham. This culminated in a much publicised Leveson type enquiry, where young people questioned local leaders, and published an insightful report which was well received by local government, the public sector and businesses alike.

Now, they have commissioned a 'report of reports' covering the entire UK, designed to expand the scope beyond the West Midlands which is due to be released on 28th September 2012 at a conference jointly hosted by the London Fire Brigade and the Asian Fire Service Association.

The report categorises the causes into six key areas:

1. Disaffected young people
2. Poverty, Deprivation and Unemployment
3. Inequality
4. Greed, Opportunism and Materialistic Culture
5. Poor relationship with police and;
6. The role of traditional and social media.

Unlike many other 'riot reports', this report goes on to articulate a call for action to ensure a legacy and provides some coherent solutions in the creation of a social impact market place. The basis of the response is informed by the current 'social enterprise' and 'mutuals' agenda, embedded in the government's Social Value Bill (2012) and Localism Act (2011).

TFMP is currently piloting the first of many such projects across the UK – a high profile regeneration building project which has already attracted central government interests - in a leading local authority involving strategic corporates. They are now looking for more cases to tackle using what appears to be a very successful set of developed tools.

It would be easy to assume that 'rioting' is largely a historic issue but one can think of many scenarios in the future, such as the introduction of Universal Credits in October 2013 with its attending social pressures, that has the potential to evoke a similar reaction unless we move from a reporting and agonising rhetoric, to a pro-active set of interventions.

### 3. Review of the riot reports

#### Tom Embury

Researcher – The Future Melting Pot

The riots of August 2011 were almost unprecedented in their extent and nature. Dozens of towns and cities were affected, and police struggled to control looting in multiple locations as rioting took on a more fluid nature. Shops were ransacked, buildings torched and tragically, five people were killed. Although the rioting had been sparked by the shooting by police of Mark Duggan in Tottenham, the rioting that followed in many areas was soon characterised by more by opportunistic looting than directed anger towards the police.

Shortly after the riots ended, government, public services, the media and the public at large sought to understand the reasons behind the riots, why they were so damaging and how they could be prevented from happening again. To this end a wide array of studies, surveys and reports were commissioned and produced. They took different perspectives and often formed some different conclusions. It is also clear that the conclusions vary from city to city.

This short analysis attempts to bring together some of the common themes of these many reports, the issues they identified and some of their suggestions and recommendations. It has sought to analyse a diverse range of studies, including the official independent report commissioned by government, to the police's own reactions. It then makes some suggestions for how The Future Melting Pot, and other organisations like it, can act on these issues, borne out of the TFMP's own research and the lessons learned from the combined recommendations of these reports.

There are a number of common conclusions drawn by all the reports, which have been grouped into six main areas for the sake of clarity. All these factors are almost certainly interrelated, but can be distinguished in their own right as partial causes;

1. Disaffected young people
2. Poverty, Deprivation and Unemployment
3. Inequality
4. Greed, Opportunism and Materialistic Culture
5. Poor relationship with police
6. The role of traditional and social media

The document then looks to offer blended solutions to some of the issues identified within each of these areas, before ending with a call to action, outlining some of the ways in which TFMP believes real progress can be made.

## 4. Disaffected Young People

All the reports covered by this review recognised that it was mostly young people under the age of 25 that took part in the rioting and looting that occurred, in all areas of the country. Questions were therefore asked as to why young people felt compelled to take part, and a common theme was of disaffection, a lack of direction and anger about a lack of prospects or opportunities in life.

According to the Riots Communities and Victims Panel (RCVP), **“many young people the Panel met following the riots spoke of a lack of hopes and dreams for the future”**<sup>1</sup>, and this was a common theme – from their interviews, the Guardian/LSE found that many rioters **“complained about perceived social and economic injustices”**.<sup>2</sup> As Peter Latchford in *They Moved Like Fish* summarised; **“If we need to fix on an image of the standard Birmingham rioter, he was under 25 with a vague sense of grievance against the system”**.<sup>3</sup>

This grievance against the “system” can be interpreted as a lack of involvement in society. The Guardian/LSE report found that **“When asked if they felt “part of British society”, only 51% said they agreed with the statement, against 92% of the population as a whole.”**<sup>4</sup> Factors such as disengagement with national and local politics, anger at police (discussed later) and with institutions such as the banks were all cited as reasons to take part by those that did and those that didn't. Factors such as the removal of EMA or the introduction of tuition fees was seen as further evidence of young people getting an unfair deal (even from those that had never had EMA or were not students).

This estrangement was specifically noted at a local level; young people did not feel a part of their local community and society in their local area. In National Centre for Social Research's (NatCen) study, it found that the feeling amongst both young people and the community at large was that youth people **“were not part of their community in any positive way”**.<sup>5</sup> The responses from both side made a **“distinction between young people who had a personal stake in society and a sense of something to lose from any involvement in the riots and those who did not”**.<sup>6</sup> A simple way to look at it is that people do not tend to damage or destroy the things they care about.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation cite examples of how strong community groups can help young people to feel a part of their local community, but also stress that this requires **“high levels of skill, commitment and persistence”**.<sup>7</sup> Due to the inherently difficult and sometimes even dangerous nature of the work, they emphasise the importance of helping young people from a young age and as an integral part of the education system. The Riots Communities and Victims Panel also drew this conclusion, emphasising that **“schools and youth services have an important part to play”**.<sup>8</sup> in helping young people build character and play an active part in their community.

1 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 59

2 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 5

3 Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 29

4 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 25

5 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 46

6 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 6-7

7 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *The riots: what are the lessons from JRF's work in communities?* (2011) pp 4

8 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 7

It was also noted that a disproportionate number of those involved in the riots came from a black or other minority ethnic background, which can be partly explained by the nature of the incident that started the riots in Tottenham, but also, as the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) noted, sustained **“negligence towards an effective Race and Equality strategy were also cited as [a] contributing factor”**.<sup>9</sup> However, there seemed to be strong consensus that this disaffection and resentment was more general and that it happens to be more acutely felt by BME people, as Peter Latchford points out when he states that there are **“persistent and deep sensitivities amongst some specific ethnic minority groups about the way they are perceived and the opportunities they are given by the ‘system’”**.<sup>10</sup> This does not mean that the riots were themselves racial conflicts – the RCVP were clear in stating that **“We do not believe that these were race riots”**.<sup>11</sup>

Opinion on the role of youth gangs was more mixed. Immediately following the riots, the Prime Minister called for **“a concerted, all-out war on gangs and gang culture”**<sup>12</sup>, and other commentators at the time were quick to bring up examples of gangs orchestrating and leading the rioting and looting. However, subsequent analysis by the Guardian/LSE team of arrest records showed that **“on the whole the role of gangs in the riots has been significantly overstated”**<sup>13</sup> and the RCVP concluded that **“Most convicted rioters were not gang members.”**<sup>10</sup> The Home Secretary, Theresa May would later admit that criminal gangs were not the main cause of the riots and the Home Office Select Committee, in its report, noted that **“There is a need for an agreed definition of a ‘gang’ in this context.”**<sup>14</sup> The grey area in public perception between any group of young people and a formalised “gang” clearly led people to jump to conclusions about those who took part in the rioting.

The negative perception of young people from the public in general was in evidence before the riots and can be seen as feeding into the feelings of resentment and detachment reported by many young people. As Peter Latchford notes, surveys show that;

**“Nearly half of people agree that children are an increasing danger to each other and to adults; more than a third agree that nowadays it feels like the streets are infested with children; and 45% agree that people refer to children as ‘feral’ because they behave this way. These opinions are completely at variance with the facts about crime and about the behaviour of the vast majority of young people.”**<sup>15</sup>

With around 15,000 people taking part in the disturbances, it is abundantly clear that most young people played no part in the rioting. Nonetheless, since the riots, there is real concern that this perception will remain and even increase, which will only serve to make the problem worse. The Children's Society, in its survey of young people under 18, found that **“Children and young people feel they will be perceived more negatively by adults”** they therefore conclude that **“It is vital that this is addressed as a matter of priority – children and young people often face a huge challenge in dealing with**

9 NCVO, *After the Riots: Evidence from the Voluntary and Community Sector* (2011) pp 7

10 Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 9

11 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 25

12 Telegraph Website, [www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/8701853/England-riots-David-Cameron-declares-war-on-gangs.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/8701853/England-riots-David-Cameron-declares-war-on-gangs.html) (accessed September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012)

13 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 4

14 Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 10

15 Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 24

**negative public perceptions”.**<sup>16</sup> The Home Office Select Committee was equally trenchant in its conclusion that **“The disorder should not be taken as a reflection on young people in general”.**<sup>17</sup>

Many of the reports concluded that more support was necessary to discourage children and young people from rioting, to give them a sense of attachment to their local communities and improve their prospects. This was a view shared by young people themselves and the public at large, as the Children's Charity found;

**“Respondents were asked whether they felt the government should be doing more to support young people since the riots. As shown in Table 3, more than half of adults (51%) and children (56%) said that the government should be providing more support.”**<sup>18</sup>

There were a great many suggestions as to what form this support should take. There was a focus particularly on a need to instil “character” and to “build personal resilience” in young people. There was also a belief that young people required better role models to help keep them from turning to criminal behaviour. The RCVP panel received advice that **“significant numbers of vulnerable children in some communities without any positive role model in their lives and particularly no male role models.”**<sup>19</sup> This is particularly associated with absent fathers, with psychologists and child behaviour experts linking male role models to a wide range of positive character traits such as increased empathy and more positive approach to relationships as well as better educational achievement.

Building trust with authority, be that Police (discussed later), government or older members of the community was identified as a key driver for successful engagement with young people. In Tottenham, the flashpoint for the riots, the views of many respondents to the Tottenham Citizen's study was that **“the riots were caused by the arrogance of people in authority, both in local and central government”**<sup>20</sup> Local youth leader Kawbena Oduro Ayiom stated that, **“Young people have to believe that change can occur from being involved.”**<sup>20</sup>

Many of the reports also felt that more could be done to build community relations and resilience so that young people can feel a part, with some placing the onus on central government for helping to support this. Indeed, in their report, Nottingham City Council concludes that the reason the riots were on a smaller scale in their city compared to other was because of **“the pre-existing cohesion within communities”.**<sup>21</sup> This is further reinforced by both the RCVP and Guardian/LSE studies, which also looked at those places which did not suffer riots, and concluded that these places had stronger community relations with young people who had a stake and felt involved.

<sup>16</sup> The Children's Society, *Behind the riots survey* (2011) pp 9

<sup>17</sup> Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 9

<sup>18</sup> The Children's Society, *Behind the riots survey* (2011) pp 6

<sup>19</sup> RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 45

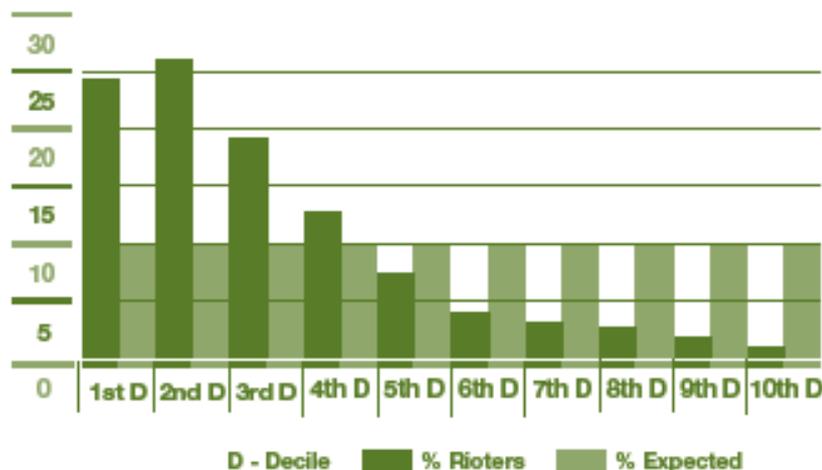
<sup>20</sup> North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 24

<sup>21</sup> Nottingham City Council, *Post Disorder Report: A Local Perspective on the Disturbances in Nottingham* (2011) pp 14

## 5. Deprivation, Poverty and Unemployment

A related but distinct area that was a common theme of the reports was economic influences. There is clear and irrefutable statistical evidence that deprivation played a part in both where and who was likely to take part in rioting. As the Guardian/LSE points out; **“The evidence suggests rioters were generally poorer than the country at large. Analysis of more than 1,000 court records suggests 59% of the England rioters come from the most deprived 20% of areas in the UK”.**<sup>22</sup> The graph below, taken from the RCVP report<sup>23</sup> spells it out even more clearly.

**Figure 4: Deprivation in the areas (LSOAs) where suspected rioters live**



Source: MoJ, DCLG

Note: LSOAs are Lower Super Output Areas

Deprivation contributes to a lack of hope and anger towards the government mentioned in the previous section, and there is strong evidence that those young people from poorer backgrounds are more likely to have significant family issues which suggests young people lack the support and guidance needed to make good decisions. Poverty also means young people cannot afford the things they desire, which makes it more likely that they would choose to loot expensive items when the chance arrives.

Poverty has its effects upon people's feeling about their community, even in areas where people want their community to succeed. In the Tottenham Citizen's report, researchers found that **“People named ‘unpleasant high street shops and unpleasant living conditions’ as a key cause of young people not respecting the community.”**<sup>24</sup> The riots themselves did a lot to damage both local residents and the wider British public's view of Tottenham, which lead to concerns about the future of the area. However, the report recognises the significance of the “I love Tottenham” regeneration campaign. This was a spontaneous action following the riots and the report recommends that partners in local business and local government work with the third sector to relaunch the campaign in 2012.<sup>25</sup>

While a great many deprived areas express a level of pride in their local area and a desire

<sup>22</sup> The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 5

<sup>23</sup> RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 18

<sup>24</sup> North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 21

<sup>25</sup> North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 23

for positive change, they struggle to bring this change about. The JRF have found that **“These communities often experience great difficulty in developing leadership, winning effective political representation and influence with the outside world”**. Issues which are the responsibility of Local Government, such as **“decaying buildings and abandoned homes had a severe effect on resident morale”**.<sup>26</sup> JRF recommend improved support – and they cite a great many ways in which local areas can be helped by local and central government to bring themselves out of poverty and deprivation. As they conclude; **“All hands are needed on deck to maintain this momentum”**.<sup>27</sup>

Closely related to this deprivation is a lack of job opportunities, particularly for young people, with the Guardian/LSE study finding that **“For many, the central issue was not having a job or any prospect of a job”**.<sup>28</sup> There is clear evidence that those without a job were over-represented in the riots – in Nottingham **“Of those arrested [for riot related offences] over 85% were without jobs”**.<sup>29</sup> The RCVF found that in riot areas **“71 per cent of residents feel that there are insufficient employment opportunities for young people”**.<sup>30</sup> In Tottenham, **“53.1% of people said unemployment was the key cause of the Tottenham Riot”**.<sup>31</sup>

Being unemployed was cited as a factor in why young people chose to become involved for two different reasons. NatCen's study found that **“Young people talked about the difficulty of managing on the money they received when out of work or in training”**<sup>32</sup> - looting offered an opportunity to get things they would otherwise not afford. However, NatCen also point out that **“Improved employment opportunities were not just felt to be significant for giving young people more “hope” but also as a way to reduce the effect of peer pressure to get involved in crime”**.<sup>33</sup> As mentioned in the previous section, a key cause was disaffection and anger with society at large, and it seems being unemployed served to make these feelings worse.

Although youth unemployment is partly an unfortunate consequence of the current economic crisis, there was a feeling from some of the reports that government was not doing enough to support jobs creation for young people. In its list of factors, Nottingham City Council pointed out that **“Much of the support to engage young people in employment has been removed over the last year”**.<sup>34</sup> Conversely, the RCVF report suggested efforts were being made, and congratulated the government for projects such as the;

**“£1 billion Youth Contract [that] will provide £2,275 to employers to take on a total of 160,000 young people aged 18 to 24 year-olds for six months. The Government has also committed to providing different support for those who have been on the Work Programme for two years”**.<sup>35</sup>

Nonetheless, it was concluded by most that more could be done to help young people, particularly deprived young people and help them get into work. This could be through

26 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *The riots: what are the lessons from JRF's work in communities?* (2011) pp 2

27 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *The riots: what are the lessons from JRF's work in communities?* (2011) pp 7

28 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 25

29 Nottingham City Council, *Post Disorder Report: A Local Perspective on the Disturbances in Nottingham* (2011) pp 10

30 RCVF, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 9

31 North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 16

32 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 7

33 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 48

34 Nottingham City Council, *Post Disorder Report: A Local Perspective on the Disturbances in Nottingham* (2011) pp 8

35 RCVF, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 68

improved education generally, tailored training and work programmes. In Tottenham, **“73% of people identified employment or local investment as the key solution for Tottenham to rebuild post-riots”**.<sup>36</sup> They particularly recommend that local businesses can play part in providing these new opportunities; **“Businesses operating in Tottenham and across London [...] commit to offering jobs and work opportunities to young people in Tottenham”**.<sup>37</sup>

However, not all the reports came to the same conclusion about the role of deprivation and poverty or even unemployment, indeed the NCVO state that **“We rarely encountered arguments that such conditions are either a cause or an excuse for the riots”**.<sup>38</sup> It has been pointed out, in a similar vein to the argument around “disaffected youth” that there were many deprived areas where no rioting took place. The RCVP point out that they **“met many people who had suffered considerable disadvantage, who made a choice not to get involved in the riots”**.<sup>39</sup> They use Lozells in Birmingham<sup>40</sup> as an example of somewhere with a history of rioting, serious deprivation and other issues that would make it a prime location for unrest yet no unrest took place.

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36 North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 16

37 North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 18

38 NCVO, *After the Riots: Evidence from the Voluntary and Community Sector* (2011) pp 7

39 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 7

40 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 23

## 6. Inequality

While economic deprivation and its related factors certainly correlate with those areas where rioting took place, it has been noted that this was not a uniform relationship – in fact many of the UK’s poorest areas reported no disturbances at all. Clearly poverty alone was not enough – disaffection has been discussed as another cause above. However, there is another economic and social element that has been recognised in many of the reports; inequality.

In those areas where rioting took place, over half of those questioned by the RCVP said that they **“believe there is a growing gap between rich and poor in their local area”**.<sup>41</sup> The Guardian/LSE study found that things went beyond simply the basic economic situation someone found themselves in. The reason they rioted was **“not just the absence of material things, but how they felt they were treated compared with others”**.<sup>42</sup> There is strong evidence to back this up, as the RCVP points out, **“income inequality has risen faster in the UK than in any other OECD country since 1975”**.<sup>33</sup>

The government was partly blamed for creating this feeling of inequality, both on a local and national level. There is a feeling that the economic crisis and the austerity programme it has brought about are being allowed to impact on the poorest the most. As already discussed, these disadvantaged young people feel marginalised within society already and any perception of unfairness serves to further this. Amongst the people it interviewed, the Guardian/LSE reported **“disillusionment with a wide set of social changes – changes collectively that may be further marginalising those who already felt socially disadvantaged and peripheral”**.<sup>43</sup> As a result, the NCVO report call **“for spending cuts, where absolutely necessary, to be introduced sensitively and strategically”**.<sup>44</sup>

The JRF recognised that this is a problem in local government as well as in Westminster. Their research shows that **“only half the authorities had adopted ‘protecting the needs of the most vulnerable clients or communities’ as a principle to guide decision-making”**.<sup>45</sup> Local councils face a tough challenge when a huge and growing proportion of their costs, such as adult social care, have to remain ring-fenced, which leaves less and less for youth programmes and other areas. However, by making sure that cuts appear to be fair through proper communication channels, and are prevented from impacting on the poor the most the feelings of injustice and inequality can be reduced.

The RCVP placed emphasis on the importance of “responsible capitalism” which they believed was the responsibility of both the Government and also local and national businesses. They state that they believe **“businesses have a clear role giving something back to society and making progressive steps to sharing wealth and providing opportunities”**.<sup>46</sup> They call for more mutuals and social enterprises, and welcome the new Social Value Bill which will require government contracts to take account of improving the social well-being of a local area.

NatCen's surveys found a marked contrast in feelings of inequality in areas where rioting

41 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 80

42 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 24

43 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 25

44 NCVO, *After the Riots: Evidence from the Voluntary and Community Sector* (2011) pp 20

45 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *The riots: what are the lessons from JRF's work in communities?* (2011) pp 6

46 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 9

took place, such as Salford in Manchester, and those where it did not, such as Sheffield (despite both areas having areas of severe deprivation). In Salford **“young people voiced criticism of the facilities in the area, contrasting what was available to them with those in neighbouring Manchester”**.<sup>47</sup> By comparison, young people in Sheffield said that many of the same contextual factors were in place such as opportunity, **“but, crucially, some key facilitators (such as less obvious inequality in Sheffield) were missing”**.<sup>48</sup> They also note that there was stronger resistance from the community as a whole to rioting in these areas (see disaffected young people above). Clearly, deprivation was not a factor that caused rioting alone; rather it was a consequence of the contrast between wealthy areas and poor areas and the feelings of resentment these caused.

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47 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 19

48 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 53

## 7. Greed, Opportunism and Materialistic Culture

One factor that all reports agree on to a greater or lesser degree was opportunism and the feeling that there were no consequences to be suffered by rioting (however untrue this proved to be). The Guardian/LSE found that **“amid the sense that the rule of law was suspended, many felt they were taking part in a free-for-all with no consequences”**<sup>49</sup>, while the RCVP **“identified that rioters’ motivations included the perception that they could loot without consequence”**.<sup>50</sup>

Linked to this was a feeling that greed and a desire for free things was a strong motivator, particularly amongst those from a more deprived background. When asked by The Children's Society to list a single main reason for the riots, just over a third of both young people and adults **“said the main reason was to get goods and possessions they could not afford to buy”**.<sup>51</sup> The pattern of looting certainly reflects this – most places that were targeted sold high-end and desirable goods such as electronics or branded clothing. Paul Vallely, writing in the Independent at the time of the riots, summarises the feeling well:

**“This is rioting-meets-shopping. It does not, as one eye-witness put it, feel like an “appeal from the heart of the ghetto” so much as an opportunity “to get a nice new pair of trainers.” Not so much desperate as decadent.”**<sup>52</sup>

Greed alone was not the only factor cited. According to NatCen **“a materialistic culture was cited as having contributed to looting by both young people and community stakeholders”**.<sup>53</sup> The belief that materialism has become an issue in recent years have been supported by 67% of those surveyed by the RCVP. They offer a particularly tragic example of the effect this materialistic culture is having from a very young age: **“By the age of three, almost 70 per cent of children recognise the McDonald’s logo but less than half know their surname”**.<sup>54</sup>

Coupled with the concern about materialism was a more general concern amongst communities about a degradation of values. The JRF in its studies both before and after the riots have shown that communities fear the growth of “social evils”<sup>55</sup> such as individualism, greed and apathy and want to maintain common positive values. However, national events seem to indicate a lack of these qualities amongst even our national institutions. Peter Latchford describes this trend as a **“21<sup>st</sup> Century Moral Relativism”** and concludes that;

**“The old moral certainties have been eroded. This is not wholly a bad thing – but considers bankers’ pay, the financial crisis, MPs’ expenses, and the general attitude in society that everyone’s view, however ill-informed or self-serving, is valid”**.<sup>56</sup>

49 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 28

50 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 25

51 The Children's Society, *Behind the riots survey* (2011) pp 5

52 Independent Website: [www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/paul-vallely-shades-of-1980s-riots-but-there-have-been-big-changes-since-then-2334137.html?origin=internalSearch](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/paul-vallely-shades-of-1980s-riots-but-there-have-been-big-changes-since-then-2334137.html?origin=internalSearch) (Accessed September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012)

53 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 7

54 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 82

55 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *The riots: what are the lessons from JRF's work in communities?* (2011) pp 3

56 Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 61

Opportunism and greed were seen as being the predominant cause in some areas, particularly those places to which rioting only spread some time after the violence began in Tottenham. In Nottingham, the council and the Police conclude that **“With national events so clearly in focus and with disorder having already spread beyond its initial trigger in Tottenham it is thought to be reasonable to identify ‘copycat’ behaviour as the sparking trigger in Nottingham rather than any Nottingham specific trigger.”**<sup>57</sup> Interviews by the Guardian/LSE and others have found that while some outside of Tottenham gave either the shooting of Mark Duggan or similar causal factors (such as general anger at police) as an excuse, they seemed unconvinced of their own arguments.

Many of the reports concluded that materialism and greed needed to be combated, and that local businesses and national brands had a role to play in this. There were calls to restrict advertising to young people. The RCVP point to **“the importance of attributes which, together, comprise character. These attributes include self-discipline, application, the ability to defer gratification and resilience in recovering from setbacks”**.<sup>58</sup> Improving young people's attitude to money and how to manage it and programmes which instil responsibility were recommended.

There was also an acceptance that the police could have done more to clamp down on the feeling that there were no consequences and that they were not in control. But, as the Home Office Select Committee, the HMIC and the Police Forces themselves emphasise: **“in almost all places the police were facing circumstances that had not been expected or anticipated”**. The riots were not typical of those experienced before and **“The police cannot be blamed for failing to anticipate something that no one else anticipated either”**.<sup>59</sup>

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57 Nottingham City Council, *Post Disorder Report: A Local Perspective on the Disturbances in Nottingham* (2011) pp 7

58 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 49

59 Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 14

## 8. Relationship with the police

While it was certainly recognised that the Police's response to the riots, particularly in the early stages, left a lot to be desired, there was also a feeling that the Police themselves were one of the reasons for the riots. The Guardian/LSE report certainly concludes that **“Widespread anger and frustration at people’s every day treatment at the hands of police was a significant factor in the summer riots in every major city where disorder took place”**.<sup>60</sup>

For young people in particular the police were an issue, evidenced by the fact that NatCen found that **“young people cited previous negative experiences of the police as a significant “nudge” factor to get involved in the riots”**.<sup>61</sup> Often, and particularly amongst young people, it was a perception of the way the police acted. As the RCVP point out; **“One in three people think that the police are corrupt, and one in five think that they are dishonest. While not suggesting this is in any way accurate, this perception must be damaging to the police’s relationship with the communities they serve”**.<sup>62</sup>

That is not to say people do not have bad experiences with the police. This is particularly an issue in those areas where rioting occurred. The Neighbourhood Survey carried out by the RCVP found that **“one in four who had recent contact with the police were unhappy at the way they were treated. In some areas it was as high as one in three”**.<sup>55</sup>

In fact, when considering relationships with police, race does seem to be a factor – relationships between police and particularly the black community were recognised as being very poor in some places. As the Guardian/LSE study found **“Race is never far from the surface of the first-person accounts of rioters. The most acute sense of a long-standing mistrust was among black interviewees”**.<sup>63</sup> Particular actions by the police caused acute anger. The NCVO found that **“some participants at the event felt that the stop and search techniques used by the police often alienated young people”**.<sup>64</sup> It is well documented that stop and search powers are used disproportionately on young black males, so it is no surprise that this causes tension. As the Tottenham Report identified; **“Black people constitute 11% of London’s population, between 2009/2010, 28% of those stopped and searched were black.”**<sup>65</sup>

There were significant regional differences. In London, there was significant recognition from the Met itself that improvements in its relationship with community engagement were needed, particularly in the way in the force responded to the shooting of Mark Duggan that sparked the riots in the first place. For example, they are clear that **“the MPS is aware of perceptions that stop and search is a major source of discontent with the police”**.<sup>66</sup> In recognition of this, they are **“fundamentally reviewing the structure and process of its community engagement model. [We are] looking at its effectiveness in penetrating communities and reaching key groups, including young people”**.<sup>67</sup>

60 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 4

61 National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 6

62 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 102

63 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 19

64 NCVO, *After the Riots: Evidence from the Voluntary and Community Sector* (2011) pp 6

65 North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 12

66 Metropolitan Police, *4 Days in August* (2011) pp 7

67 Metropolitan Police, *4 Days in August* (2011) pp 6

In Tottenham more than anywhere else it seemed that the poor relationship with Police, worsened by their response to the fatal shooting of Mark Duggan, was responsible for the violence that would eventually go on to spread across the country. The commissioners of the Tottenham report heard from residents that **“there has been a long-term deterioration of the relationship between people in our community and the police, in particular young people”**.<sup>68</sup>

Conversely, in Birmingham and elsewhere, the Police were less specifically identified as a cause. West Midlands Police believe that the fact that very few of their officers suffered injuries, despite the widespread disturbances in the city centre and elsewhere, **“underline's the notion that this was not, primarily, anti-police disorder”**.<sup>69</sup>

Improving relationships with police was seen as a key way of reducing the likelihood of future riots: the NCVO report states this clearly;

**“Relationships with the police are crucial to help communities function. Community groups play a vital role in helping to build and facilitate relationships between the police and the community. Where good relationships with the police exist, then disorder is less likely and is also easier to minimise and contain where it does occur”**.<sup>70</sup>

Broadly speaking, the reports wanted to see improved relationships between police and communities, and in particular between young people and the police. The Home Office Select Committee recognised that **“projects that have as one of their aims the improvement of relations between the police and young people are to be encouraged”**.<sup>71</sup>

The Tottenham Citizen's report suggested a number of solutions, such as recruiting a greater number of police officers from ethnic minority backgrounds, involving local community leaders in training and developing safe zones for young people

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68 North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 13

69 West Midlands Police, *Interim Report following public disorder in August 2011* (2011) pp 71

70 NCVO, *After the Riots: Evidence from the Voluntary and Community Sector* (2011) pp 21

71 Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 34

## 9. The role of media

Television and print media had a significant role to play in the development of the riots, as did Social Media, but in a number of different ways.

'Mainstream' media such as Television and newspapers receive significant criticism in the reports for their role in sensationalising what was happening. As Peter Latchford summarises; **“ In the early stages of the national riots, the national (and international) news channels were filled with multiple images from different angles of a limited number of dramatic incidents in Tottenham and Croydon. This gave the impression of much greater damage, loss of control by the Police and much greater crowd involvement”**.<sup>72</sup> They were also criticised for the way in which they portrayed the streets as lawless, which may have encouraged more people to become involved in the rioting.

Not only did the mainstream media over inflate the disorder in the early stages there was criticism of the way it subsequently portrayed young people: According to the NVCO **“It was argued that the mainstream media attention focused almost exclusively on those who participated in the riots and took no notice of those who did not get involved”**.<sup>73</sup>

This was reflective of what was reported by some as a generally negative media view of young people and children, which was referenced in an earlier section in relation to the negative perceptions held by the population at large. The RCVF found that **“Only 14 per cent of people in the Panel’s Neighbourhood Survey feel that the media is positive about young people. This feeling was also widespread among the young people we spoke to”**.<sup>74</sup> Peter Latchford chooses to attack what he describes as **“Lazy Language”** which is used by both the media and also the public at large, such as **“gang member meaning any young person with friends; street culture meaning black; youth meaning anyone under the age of 25 that scares me”**.<sup>75</sup> These, he argues, stoke up prejudices and resentment. It can be argued that the resentment felt by young people contributes to the anger that is cited as a cause of the rioting. The RCVF report in particular recommended that a more positive image of young people needed to be portrayed.

During the riot and in its immediate aftermath social media was heavily criticised as the source or organising medium for the rioting and particularly the seemingly well organised looting. NatCen references the fact that **“news and social media speeded up the exchange of information. Young people talked about watching events unfold in real time showing “people getting away with it”**.<sup>76</sup> Updates on sites such as Twitter could be seen as spurs for others to join in.

However, most of the reports disagree with this conclusion. As the Guardian/LSE team point out **“the social media sites Facebook and Twitter were not used in any significant way by rioters. While the government debated whether to shut down Twitter, or prosecute Facebook users, it was BBM that was actually playing a**

<sup>72</sup> Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 30

<sup>73</sup> NVCO, *After the Riots: Evidence from the Voluntary and Community Sector* (2011) pp 9

<sup>74</sup> RCVF, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 84

<sup>75</sup> Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 61

<sup>76</sup> National Centre for Social Research, *The August Riots in England* (2011) pp 36

**substantive role in the riots**".<sup>77</sup> Direct communication between groups of rioters by phone was much more critical in the spread and organisation of the rioting, and as the Home Office Select committee rightly points out "**people who made an active decision to join in the disorder could equally well have learned about it on the television as on social media**".<sup>78</sup>

In reality, most of the reports conclude that social media had in fact a positive influence. According to the select committee report, "**Social media was also used by members of the public to keep each other informed about the spread of the disorder in order to stay safe and avoid the trouble**".<sup>79</sup> Members of the public, particularly young people, who tend to be the most avid users of social media, were quick to attack those that referenced rioting in a positive light. It is arguable that far from being a spur to rioters, Twitter and Facebook played a role in preventing people from joining in.

Furthermore, it was recognised by some such as Peter Latchford that in the West Midlands at least. "**Public sector agencies used Twitter, Facebook and text messaging to good effect as a means of informing the general public**".<sup>80</sup> This was a two way flow – social media acted as a medium for others to provide information to those dealing with the riots, such as in Nottingham, where "**Neighbourhood Managers worked with local partners, including voluntary groups to coordinate and target local activity and ensure information flowed from communities into Silver command as well as disseminating key messages**".<sup>81</sup>

In their recommendations it was broadly accepted that social media should be more widely used by the emergency services and local government to communicate in times of crisis. As the RCVP point out, "**The police have acknowledged the need to improve their capability around social media communication**".<sup>82</sup> Such is the recognition that social media has a positive role to play that plans at the time to "shut down" Twitter and Facebook have subsequently met with criticism. The Home Office Select Committee concluded that "**It would be actively unhelpful to switch off social media during times of widespread and serious disorder and we strongly recommend that this does not happen**".<sup>83</sup>

77 The Guardian/LSE, *Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Riots* (2011) pp 4

78 Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 36

79 Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 29

80 Peter Latchford, *They Moved Like Fish* (2012) pp 31

81 Nottingham City Council, *Post Disorder Report: A Local Perspective on the Disturbances in Nottingham* (2011) pp 15

82 RCVP, *After the riots: The final report of the Riots Communities and Victims Panel* (2011) pp 12

83 Home Affairs Select Committee, *Policing Large Scale Disorder: Lessons from the disturbances of August 2011* (2011) pp 37

## 10. Solutions

While all the varied reports into the riots, including our own, offer their own perspectives, it is clear that there are some common themes between them. It is equally important to point out that all the reports recognised that there was more than one reason that people took part and that areas of the country experienced rioting very differently. Lastly, it cannot be forgotten that only a tiny minority of people of any age took part and that the vast majority of the country was unaffected. Clearly the issues that caused rioting were more sophisticated than simply that riots were a result of poverty, bad community relations and opportunism. This means it is difficult to make any sweeping statement about the causes, and Julia Unwin, Chief Executive of the JRF in their review of the riots even goes so far as to say that **“it is dangerous to connect poverty, bad housing, poor life chances or weak parenting with these shocking events, without researching the links thoroughly”**.<sup>84</sup>

Despite these limitations it would be fair to say that the six areas identified and discussed above played their part. Even when they did not lead to rioting in an area, it is clear that there are issues that should be addressed. It would be a poor decision to focus attention exclusively on those areas where riots occurred – if there are wider underlying social causes that can be found elsewhere, they should be addressed before a repeat occurrence. All these problems are interlinked and it is clear that a well informed, inclusive and rounded approach will offer the best solutions.

The Future Melting Pot believes that engagement of young people is crucial to reduce the likelihood of future public disturbances. When young people feel they have no hope or no voice, then the chances of engaging in anti social behaviour increases. The Future Melting Pot plays a key role in identifying, supporting and encouraging young people who are at risk of being further excluded or marginalised.

As an inclusive organisation, TFMP believes a multi-faceted approach is needed to engaging and supporting the young people within our communities. Through a locally driven, blended approach incorporating public/private and third sector stakeholders, as well as young people, the opportunities for intervention are significantly improved. The Future Melting Pot provides young people with the skills to articulate concerns in a proactive and constructive way, but it also gives young people the opportunity to develop skills to enhance their career prospects. The Future Melting Pot is bridging the gap between young people and public or corporate organisations in order to support their development and growth. Through mentoring, supporting, developing and within a tight governance structure, TFMP are able to work with young people in a positive way.

However, whilst these sorts of projects reach some young people, TFMP are under no illusions on the difficulties in engaging a wider population and because of this, TFMP has developed outreach projects to encourage wider participation. This has meant that young people have a voice and the TFMP has enabled young people to create campaigns and lead them within a supportive environment. Having a voice is one component, but ensuring that someone is listening is vital. Through the work facilitated by TFMP young people were able to raise their concerns and more importantly share their solutions with various civic leaders. Going forward this approach is going to be imperative for the engagement and development of young people.

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84 Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *The riots: what are the lessons from JRF's work in communities?* (2011) pp 1

Clearly TFMP use a variety of approaches in engaging young people and the key to this developing further is in the young people being empowered within their local communities. When people feel they have influence over the decisions within their communities then they are less likely to respond in a way that damages that community.

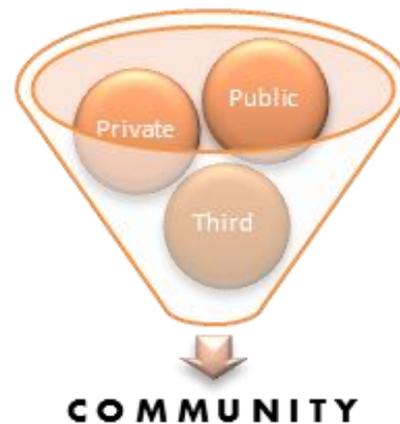
These are precisely the sort of actions that many of the reports recommend. The Tottenham Citizen's Inquiry, perhaps above all others, recognises the need for local solutions involving a broad range of partners in order to tackle the issues. For example, to deal with youth unemployment, they state that; **“starting with our own schools, and faith communities, we are going to offer work opportunities to local young people. We want to build a partnership between North London Citizens, Haringey Council, small and big businesses, and set ourselves the ambitious target of 1,000 opportunities for young people in Tottenham”**.<sup>85</sup> This is exactly the sort of solution that TFMP seeks to create. There are examples of this sort of solution in many cities, often driven by the charity and voluntary sector, but there is clearly scope for much, much more.

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85 North London Citizens, *Citizens Inquiry into the Tottenham Riots* (2012) pp 17

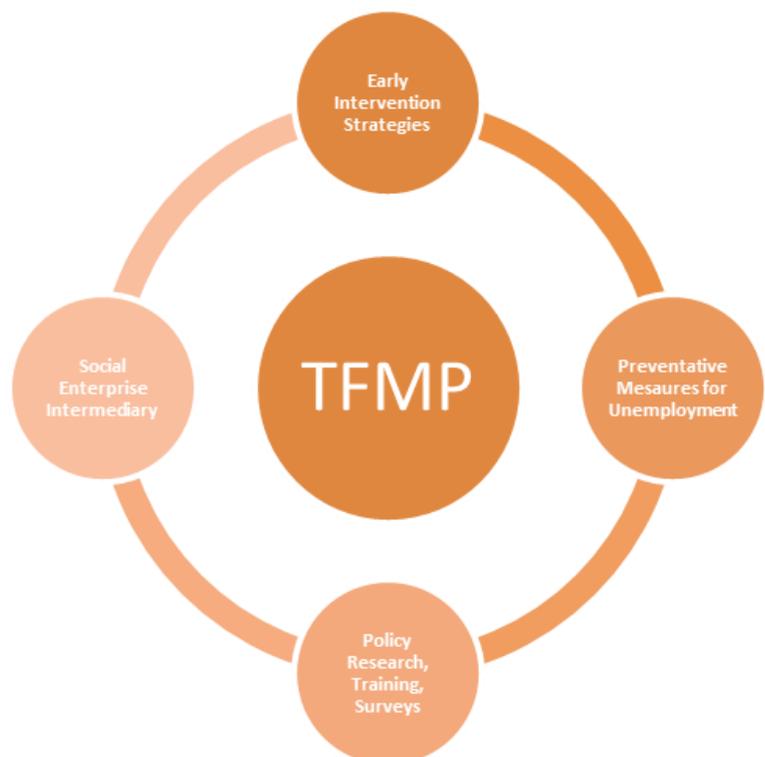
## 11. Creating a Market Place for Social Impact

The Future Melting Pot (TFMP) is a “start to finish” organisation, aiming for long term sustainable solutions to social problems, particularly amongst disadvantaged young people. We act as a focal point and facilitator for a diverse range of partners, initially in the Midlands but now across the UK. Projects are broken down into components which organisations get involved at whatever level they feel comfortable or at an agreed appropriate level that will ensure the delivery of outcomes, targets and goals.



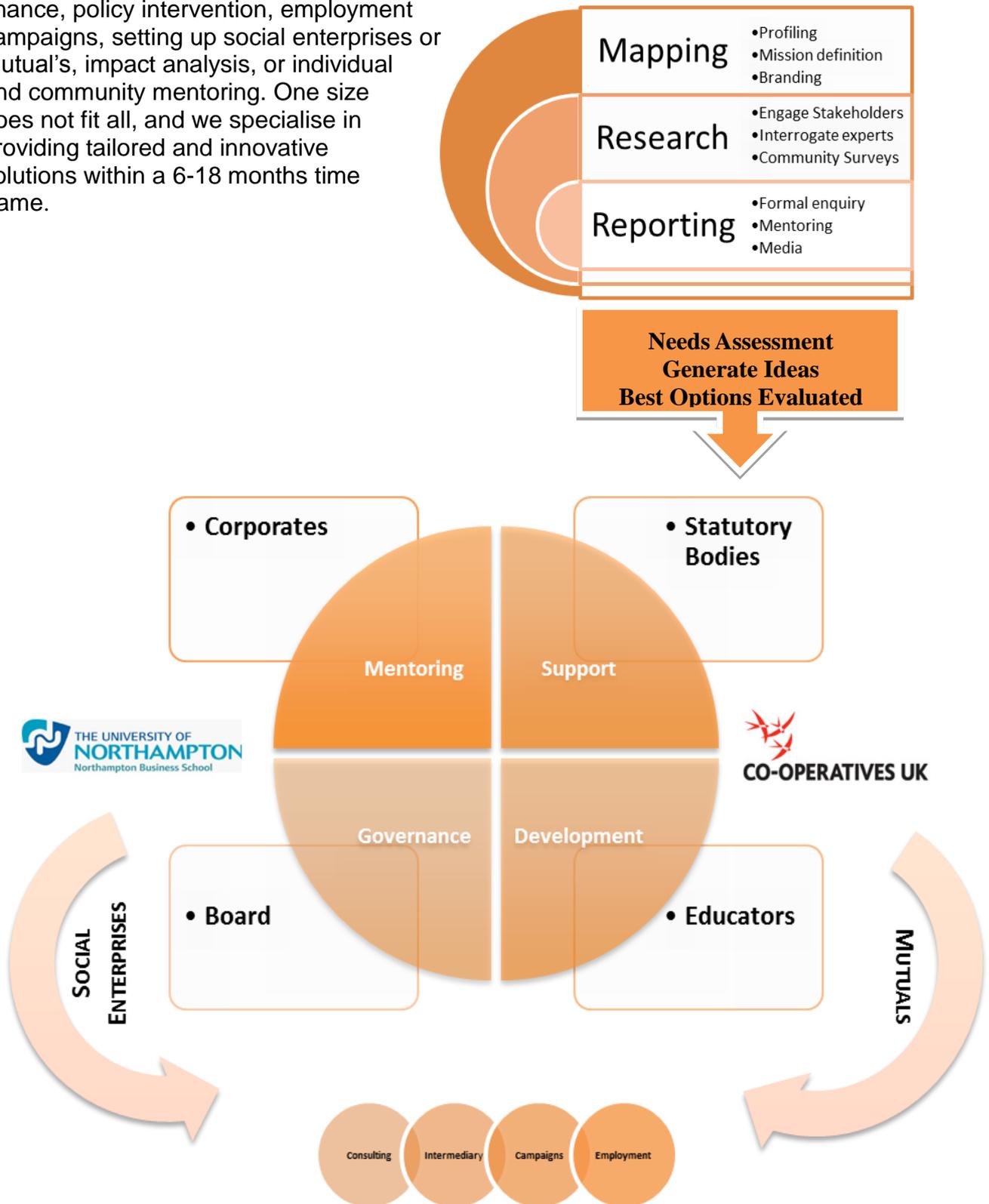
TFMP has developed a well established and inclusive process of resolution of intractable problems within the community. The heart of the approach is that only a blended solution of public/private/third sector stakeholders – and shareholders – can lead to long term success and throughout this evolution. TFMP provides multiple opportunities of intervention by corporates, local authorities, consultants, government, individuals, educationalists, visionaries, foundations and statutory bodies.

The process starts with a well tried mapping, research and reporting of the community landscape initiated by any stakeholder ending in a Leveson type enquiry widely covered by local media. This produces a report which provides a cohesive manifesto for stakeholders to move forward; thus providing initial opportunities for organisations to align their brand with the findings and also assists their future planning in line with local needs and finance initiatives.



## 12. Our process

Following a 3 month engagement period of landscape mapping, TFMP filters out and evaluates the best ideas in partnership with local and national organisations who wish to have a stake in the future of that community and want to be aligned with the outcomes. Through a regulated and formal process, TFMP is resourced using well established organisations to develop the local solution to fruition whether that requires raising social finance, policy intervention, employment campaigns, setting up social enterprises or mutual's, impact analysis, or individual and community mentoring. One size does not fit all, and we specialise in providing tailored and innovative solutions within a 6-18 months time frame.



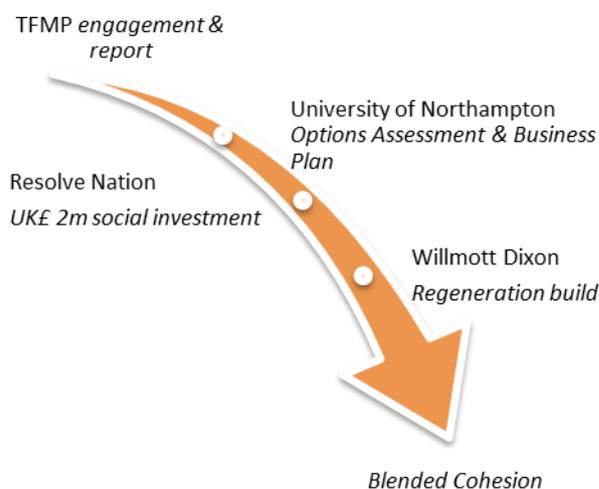
### 13. The call for action

**Birmingham** young people have had their chance to have a say on the disorder that took place during two nights in August 2011 where 770 arrests were made, 507 offences recorded including the death of Haroon Jahan, 21, and brothers Shahzad Ali, 30, and Abdul Musavir, aged 31. The Future Melting Pot's Outreach Young Citizens' Inquiry took place on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at Birmingham City Council House. The event was watched by public officials, other professionals and members of the public, and it featured six different officials questioned by the young panel. First on the witness stand was Shabana Mahmood, MP for Birmingham Ladywood.



**In Nottingham**, like many inner cities, youth exclusion issues in the city is of major concern to local statutory bodies. TFMP has been engaged to provide a regeneration solution through our tried and tested mapping, evaluation and investment framework alongside senior partners like Willmott Dixon and the Co-Operative Group.

The framework that funds these major programmes stems from the recently received Social Value Act 2012 which requires “public authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being in connection with public services contracts”. This aligns corporate agendas with those of local authorities using social impact as the currency for tendering. The challenge has been to articulate a common language to ensure Social



return on investment metrics such as the SE Ratio can demonstrate the social value of corporate output in what they traditionally called “CSR” and “Sustainability”. Furthermore, the Localism Act 2011 provides a platform to utilize new social finance instruments to fund social interventions. Social venture capital, social investment bonds, right to request, payment by results, Op-Prop investments, etc are all defining the future. The Future Melting Pot has partnered with leading advisors and funders to provide a complete solution to the problems we face in civil society.

## 14. Contact

**The Future Melting Pot is now initiating a call for prospective partners to come forward with an expression of interest in becoming involved in future projects. In particular those whose interests are closely aligned to the process and opportunities involved in rebuilding a broken Britain, or the specific pilot project, are encouraged to contact the organisation at the earliest.**

ESTELLA EDWARDS (CEO)

E.EDWARDS@THEFUTUREMELTINGPOT.CO.UK

07970 650364

