The Urban Renaissance of Leeds: Provincial Gentrification, a Sustainable and Equitable Urban Future?

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Abstract

A central tenet of the Urban Renaissance agenda is to encourage people back into cities and widen the socio-economic base and tenure mix of declining inner-city neighbourhoods. This paper identifies the process of ‘gentrification’ taking place in Leeds in West Yorkshire and considers the policy challenges and opportunities presented by the development of ‘city living’ and ‘gentrification’ in inner areas of Leeds. The policy context and economic and social dimensions of neighbourhood change taking place in three residential areas of Leeds is explored. Quantitative and qualitative data collated from ‘gentrifiers’ of two Victorian neighbourhoods and residents of ‘The Calls’ area of inner-city Leeds, offer socio-economic attributes and demographic characteristics of these residents of Leeds. The paper also explores the policy challenges and opportunities presented by processes of ‘provincial gentrification’ in British provincial cities.

‘The quality of life for this and future generations depends not just on how we live and work together, but also on the state of our towns and cities. An urban renaissance is vital.’

‘An urban renaissance will not be achieved and sustained without the direct engagement of local people’

Foreword by John Prescott - Our towns and Cities (DETR 2000).

Introduction

This paper seeks to examine the process of gentrification in the city of Leeds and to consider its role in the urban renaissance of Leeds. A second aim is to offer an evaluation of the policy challenges and opportunities the outcome of gentrification presents in the context of this and other British provincial cities.
Context

Since the late 1950s, there has been an increasing number of recorded incidences of the in-movement of higher-income groups and private sector re-investment and renewal of previously run-down residential neighbourhoods and redundant spaces in inner-urban areas of major cities.

Early manifestations of the process involved the construction of high-rise luxury apartments in the centre of Boston in the USA during the 1950s (Lipton 1977, Ley 1983) occurring at the peak of suburban development in the USA. At the same time, Hoover and Vernon observed the influx of higher income groups and the revitalisation of pockets of run-down inner-city neighbourhoods in New York City (Lipton 1977), known specifically to New Yorkers as ‘Brownstowning’ (Ley 1983). The sociologist Ruth Glass first coined the word ‘gentrification’ to describe residential changes taking place in the inner city neighbourhoods of London in the 1960’s (Glass 1963), whereby working class neighbourhoods underwent a process of physical improvement and social change with such properties purchased and renovated by better-off middle class groups.

These forms of neighbourhood change - ‘brownstowning’, householder-led gentrification and ‘developer-led’ (Warde 1991) revitalisation as identified in Boston - will all be classified as forms of gentrification. The term gentrification rather than revitalisation or renewal will be used because it highlights the social dimension of this form of neighbourhood change1.

The early incidences of gentrification in Boston, New York and London contradicted the prevailing urban trends of suburbanisation and inner-city

1Offering such a broad definition of gentrification, which incorporates ‘developer-led’ renewal as a form of gentrification, has been criticised (Bourne 1993). However, the outcomes of these forms of neighbourhood change are the same: the creation of higher status and high value residential areas in the inner city areas of large urban centres.
neighbourhood decline experienced by large British and U.S. cities during the middle decades of the 20th century.


The transformation of the consumption landscape following the influx of middle class gentrifiers in inner city neighbourhoods such as London has been well documented – evident in the clothes and food shops, cafes, bars and restaurants (Carpenter & Lees 1995, Munt 1987, Zukin 1982).

The regeneration of the inner-city neighbourhood is central to government policy, and the process of gentrification witnessed in high order cities such as London offers prescience of an urban renaissance for provincial towns and cities across the U.K., -suggesting an economic, social and cultural regeneration of declining inner city neighbourhoods. The ‘urban pioneers’ who have ‘the potential to contribute disproportionately to urban renaissance’ are identified as ‘Recent Graduates’, Family Builders’ and ‘Mobile Householders’- these being the ‘younger, renters, and highly qualified’ ()

However, some are sceptical of a policy agenda that encourages urban renaissance through gentrification. For example, Atkinson (2004, 2002, 200) using evidence collated in high order cities argues gentrification is an exclusionary process.

‘Though the aims of urban renaissance are bound up with a wider agenda of diminishing social exclusion, fears have been expressed that the sub-text of its ‘urban pioneers’ and inner city revitalization is the promotion of gentrification by the back door. There is a fear that this will lead to displacement and a largely affluent vision of the emerging ‘good city’ with its high density and emphasis on ‘social mix’ in areas of social rented housing’ (Atkinson 2004 p 122).
However, a systematic literature review of research published between 1964 and 2000 (Atkinson 2002) shows that of the 35 empirical research papers and documents which considered the process of gentrification in the UK, 27 were undertaken in London.

The neighbourhood impact and policy challenges and opportunities presented by the occurrence of gentrification in British provincial cities require further consideration.

A growing body of contemporary research has developed our understanding of gentrification in a number of British provincial cities including Glasgow (Bailey and Robertson 1997), Liverpool, Manchester (Crouch 1999, Jones and Watkins 1996, Wynne and O’Connor 1998), Leeds (Dutton 1998, 2003, 2005a, 2005b), Newcastle (Cameron 1994, 2002), Edinburgh (Bondi 1999), Bristol (Bridge 2003, 2006, Boddy 2006, Tallon 2007) and Swansea (Tallon et al. 2005). A similar growth of research activity into provincial gentrification has taken place in cities across Europe (Atkinson and Bridge 2005), including Bilbao in Spain (Vicario and Monje 2003) and Bologna in Italy (Buzar et al. 2007).

For Power and Mumford (1999), policy led gentrification is central to an urban renaissance agenda for failing de-industrialising cities in the north of England. Attracting higher-income groups back to declining inner-city neighbourhoods is the panacea for local neighbourhood regeneration initiatives in the northern industrial cities of Newcastle and Manchester.

‘Regeneration can work only in the context of winning back more people in work and with higher skills - they are essential to neighbourhood vitality, entrepreneurship and investment. The need for local services to meet their aspirations in turn generates mixed uses. Work then begins to find its way into the pattern of neighbourhood recovery’ (Power and Mumford 1999 p93).
In the scenario offered by Power and Mumford (ibid), the actions and activities of better-off groups in the housing market would filter down in beneficial ways to existing lower-income residents, improving their economic and social wellbeing. Encouraging gentrification in such contexts would provide opportunities to attract private investment activity and population back to the inner-city and widen its social base and tenure mix, thus countering years of decline.

What policy challenges and opportunities does the occurrence of gentrification present within historical and contemporary urban and neighbourhood change in British provincial cities the UK? Are the deleterious and corrosive effects of gentrification found in London and other international high order cities an inevitable outcome for provincial cities in the North of England? Would an urban renaissance agenda, in cities such as Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, and Bradford seeking to attract ‘Recent Graduates’, ‘Family Builders’ and ‘Mobile Householders’ to inner residential areas, necessarily bring about exclusionary urban processes and the displacement of the urban poor?

Section 3 offers research findings from a case study of gentrification in Leeds which has experienced a rapid expansion of private residential housing developments in the core of Leeds over the past decade, together with a longer history of householder-led gentrification, taking place in early Victorian suburbs of Chapel Allerton and Far Headingley some two miles from the core of Leeds. Quantitative and qualitative data collated from ‘gentrifiers’ of these three neighbourhoods of inner city Leeds, offer socio-economic attributes and demographic characteristics of these residents of Leeds.

In light of the urban renaissance agenda the Section 4 offers an evaluation of the policy challenges and opportunities gentrification presents in British provincial cities.
**Research Design and Findings**

Analysis of the 1981 and 1991 Census, using data collated at the Enumeration District Level identified The Calls, Chapel Allerton and The Claremonts experienced gentrification. Social upgrading was identified; all three areas witnessed rapid increases in the proportions of S.E.G. Class I (Professional and Managerial SEG’s: 1,2,3,4 and 13) and Class II (Intermediate non-manual SEG’s: 5 and 6) relative to both Ward and City level. While direct comparisons for all classes were not possible for the 2001 Census owing to the abandonment of the Socio-Economic Groupings as a classification, and the re-classification of occupations, continuity with Class I and Class II between 1981, 1991 and 2001 census dates were possible, allowing trends across the three decades. Results indicated a continuing trend in the growth of high status Class I and II groupings in the three Gentrified Areas (GA’s) and relative to both City and Ward Levels. Residents of the three GA’s within one of these class groupings are now the majority of the economically active enumerated population.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Enumerated Economically Active Residents: Area Comparisons**

As a set of physical variables –relating to lack of amenities- were identified to indicate the process of physical upgrading and investment taking place in the two piecemeal GA’s. Data from 1971 Census suggest low levels of investment in both The Claremont’s and Chapel Allerton relative to their Wards and the
By 1991 the percentage of housing stock lacking one or more basic amenity had reduced at a far higher percentage rate than comparator ward and city. While the rapid increase in house building activity in The Calls offered indication of market activity. In all three GA’s such data offers strong evidence of an investment upturn in these areas.

**Figure 2: Percentage of Properties lacking one or more basic amenity**

The value of offering additional comparator units of analysis ‘in order to explore the nature of gentrification relative to other forms of urban Change’ (Bondi 1999, p266) is an often-missed opportunity in gentrification research. Therefore in addition to collating data from the three GA’s a fourth suburban neighbourhood was selected. The Moseleys consisted of 1950’s semi detached houses located on the edge of the built up areas of the City of Leeds.

Additional data were collated during the spring of 2001 by questionnaire (262 households in the three areas and a further 55 households from the suburban neighbourhood). In addition in-depth interviews of residents in the three gentrified areas were undertaken (30 households) together with estate agents, property developers, domestic and corporate lending managers and local officials.

Using the Register General classification of occupations (SOC 2000) to classify respondents stated occupation indicated in comparison to the
suburban neighbourhood all three gentrified areas had high incidences of respondents in higher status occupations. In The Moseley’s despite a high incidence of respondent being retirees or not stating their occupation, relatively high proportions of occupations were situated in the skilled trades and in other manual occupations.

The Calls residents were predominantly in Professional (30%) and Managerial (31%) occupations, with a further 17% Associate Professional or Technical Occupations. For The Claremonts respondents in higher occupations clustered in professional occupations (48% of all respondents) with only 8% of all respondents were classified as managers and senior officials, with a further 23% in the associate professional and technical occupations. Chapel Allerton mirrored the proportions found in The Claremont’s with 45% of respondents classified as Professional, a further 21% associate professional and technical while only 5% could be classified as managers and senior officials categories.

Figure 3: Occupation of all respondents: Area Comparisons

While house price inflation for Leeds, for all types of property was 105% between 1995 and 2003 (£51,830-£106,164), the postcode sectors of the three gentrified areas by comparison, witnessed far higher price inflation. The Claremont’s witnessed 133% inflation (£45,379 to £105,772), The Calls increased by 177% (£52,575 to £145,527), and Chapel Allerton by 171%
(£51,892 to £140,586). House price inflation in the suburban area of the Moseley's was lower than the three GA’s at 123% (£68,631 to £153,028). This data indicated changing and increased housing demand- relative to both the city as a whole and the suburban area- taking place in the three gentrified areas.

**Map 1**

In relation to education credentials, the generalisation of the well-educated gentrifier holds in Leeds, and contrasts with characteristics of residents in the suburban neighbourhood of Leeds. In the Calls 82% of respondents were graduates with 41% of graduates receiving their degrees from either red brick or Oxbridge Universities. A majority of The Claremonts respondents had been educated at Redbrick or Oxbridge Universities, the two largest cohorts of respondents were either educated at grammar schools then graduated at Redbrick Universities or received comprehensive schooling and attended Redbrick Universities. None of the Oxbridge graduates in The Claremonts attended Comprehensive schools. In Chapel Allerton 59% of respondents
stated they attended University (although unfortunately over 15% did not state the university they attended), with ‘Redbrick’ graduates from comprehensive schools the most prevalent amongst respondents. Those from comprehensive schools who attended Poly-universities were the second largest cohort.

**Gentrification in Leeds: A Housing Strategy Amongst Young First Time Buyers?**

Findings from the neighbourhood survey suggest gentrification was not the sole preserve of the young and first time buyers. Over 75% of respondents in The Claremonts were homeowners, either owning outright or with a mortgage. Similarly, in Chapel Allerton, a high proportion of respondents (80%) classed themselves as owner-occupiers. Higher proportions of respondents in The Claremonts (45%) indicated they previously resided in a home they owned (either out-right or with a mortgage) in comparison to Chapel Allerton respondents (35%).

In The Calls, 75% of respondents stated they reside in private rented accommodation including company lets. Amongst this group however, many stated their previous address as owner occupied (Figure 4), with 36% of all respondents in The Calls stated the tenure of their previous address as owner occupied.
In conclusion, all gentrified areas provided opportunities for first time buyers, however, the variety of age profiles, previous tenures, and length of stay at current address, suggested a diversity of housing careers amongst residents of the three gentrified areas.

**Age Structure and Tenure: Neighbourhood Profiles**

Comparisons between the age profiles of respondents in the three GA’s and the suburban comparator neighbourhood (see Figure), offered marked disparities between the suburban neighbourhood and the GA’s, but also between the gentrified areas. The Moseleys contained higher proportions of older age groups with a majority of households over sixty than the three GA’s. There were also differences of age profiles between the GA’s. The Claremonts had the highest proportion of people in older age categories than both Chapel Allerton and The Calls.

57% of respondents from The Moseleys indicated the tenure of their previous address as owner-occupied. This suggests the suburban area offered less attractions for first time buyers. Smaller proportions of The Moseley
respondents identified the tenures of their previous address as not owner occupied, with 20% previously living in private rental accommodation and 15% living with parents. Conversely the higher proportions of Moseley respondents stating their previous address as ‘living with parents’ than both Chapel Allerton and The Claremonts respondents, offers indication of differing housing career trajectories between suburbanites and inner city residents.

The age range of respondents living in The Claremonts, were from a broader cross section of age groups than Chapel Allerton. The largest group of respondents being within the 50-59 age-range, and this cohort had the highest proportions of homeowners. The age structure of owner-occupiers in The Claremonts contrasts with a younger profile in Chapel Allerton and The Calls. Taking into consideration the earlier growth of owner-occupation in The Claremont suggest a more mature gentrified area than Chapel Allerton. The Calls had the youngest age profile amongst owner-occupiers.

**Figure 5: Age Structure of Respondent Owner Occupiers**

![Age Structure of Respondent Owner Occupiers: Area Comparisons](image-url)
Householder-led and developer-led gentrification in Leeds does soak housing demand amongst young households (particularly for the rental market), but also attracts cohorts across a wide range of ages in both rental and owner-occupied sectors. Such diverse age profiles and households at later stages of their housing careers, suggest offering generalisations of a specific life cycle dimension to gentrification in Leeds is problematical. With regards to the age profile of respondents in the suburban neighbourhood, an aging population with over 50% of survey sample over 50 years old can be differentiated from the gentrified areas.

The influence of life course however, has greater purchase with gentrification in Leeds as findings in the following sub-section indicates, and represents a critical policy challenge for an urban renaissance agenda that seeks to attract households with dependent children.
Gentrification and Household Type

Figures 15 and 16 indicates a traditional household structure in The Mosleys, with married couples a large majority of respondents, with 80% married and 33% of households married with dependent children (classed as under 18). Single parent families made up only 2% of respondents while gentrified neighbourhoods contained higher proportions of both ‘urban singles’ and ‘empty nesters’.

Two-parent families with dependent children represented only 1 in 5 of owner-occupiers in Chapel Allerton, with the largest cohort being couples without children. 27% living alone, while single parents represented 7% of respondents and were all owner-occupiers. There were equal proportions of renters living alone as living with another. Owner-occupiers were less likely to live alone than private renters in Chapel Allerton.

All private renters in The Claremonts classed themselves as single but tended to live with another as a couple or shared their accommodation with a friend or a flatmate/s. None of the responses from private renters were undergraduate students. Analysis of The Claremonts suggest a young cohort.
of private renters sharing accommodation - who were not students - with 1 in 10 of private renter classed as a single parent family. While the older profile of homeowners in the area none of them shared with adults other than husband / wife or cohabitee.

However, there are differences between the three gentrified neighbourhoods, the disparities between the age profile of renters and owner-occupiers in The Claremonts is also evident in household type. The Claremonts contains higher proportions of two parent families than both Chapel Allerton and The Calls, with over a third of these households’ being owner-occupiers with dependent children.

However, an important caveat is included in this generalising statement of life course and gentrification in Leeds. The divergent household characteristics and household forms between tenures in The Claremonts reflects the dynamics and conflicts taking place in the housing sub-market of Headingley. The mature gentrified area consisting of older households many with dependant children, living in substantial Victorian Terraces, contrasts with a cohort of students (these were purposefully excluded from the neighbourhood survey, but shows up in the census data) and young working people renting with friends in private rented accommodation.

There was a much greater likelihood of households in the private rented sector not to contain dependent children and were more likely to be in a multi-person household. This is evident (see Figure 8) from the census returns for 2001, in both householder-led gentrified areas, with higher proportions (to all other comparator units) of the population are living in multi person households.
Source: ONS

The demographic profile of The Calls respondents suggests a profile across all age groups, although young households are more prevalent in The Calls than other areas. The Calls contain the highest proportions of single households, however, such a household type does not comprise solely of young persons. Also smaller proportions of residents are living in multi-person households. Although ‘city living’ in The Calls is not a practice of a specific age group it is certainly the preserve of childless households. Apart from one single parent family, all respondents were single and either lived alone or with a partner.
The divisions of responses to the neighbourhood survey between GA’s and suburban area is reinforced by data sets from the Census returns of 2001 (Figure 14), which shows relatively low incidences of households with dependant children in the three gentrified areas, relative to respective wards, city and suburban neighbourhood. The life course of households is an important characteristic of gentrification in Leeds, with adults of a variety of age profiles with relatively high incidence of households without dependant children.
These findings support those of Bondi (1999) from research undertaken in the city of Edinburgh. Bridge (2002), argues both Bondi’s evidence and his own evidence (from Bristol) suggests life course characteristics start to disaggregate gentrified neighbourhoods into more diverse assemblages of professionals, and indicates differences in profile of household type between London and the two ‘provincial’ cities of Leeds and Edinburgh.

Evidence drawn from interviews with parents of young children who moved out of Far Headingley, suggest that the perceived poor educational performance of the state secondary schools, were important push factors driving better off families with dependant children out of inner areas of the city.

**Geographical Mobility and Gentrification in Leeds**

Geographical mobility was higher amongst respondents in the three gentrified areas than the suburban area. Census data from 2001 which identifies migrants – those who had a different address one year prior to Census day, and further differentiates between those who had an address outside the Local Authority (moved from area within the UK) supports this pattern (see
Figure 11), and also suggests migration is higher in these areas than their respective wards and for Leeds.

A distinction can be made between the characteristics of residents involved in householder-led forms of gentrification from those consuming developer-led gentrification. This distinction supports Bondi’s (1999) findings in Edinburgh. The residents in Chapel Allerton and The Claremonts neighbourhoods tended to have stronger residential connections with the city of Leeds. While residents in The Calls bore the “classic markings of the characteristic “global city” gentrifier, ‘geographically footloose…and relatively new to the city’ (Bondi 1999 p 276). Census 2001 data reveals the high percentage of both migrants in The Calls and of the high percentage of migrants coming from outside Leeds Local Authority area.

**Figure 11: Migrants (Census 2001): Area Comparisons**

![Migrants (Census 2001): Area Comparisons](image)

Source: ONS

In Chapel Allerton over 70% of respondents moved from a previous address located within the built-up area of the city, while 51% of all respondents having moved from within inner areas of Leeds, which was most likely to have been Headingley.
While relatively high residential mobility by certain groups of respondents in The Claremonts was apparent, only a small proportion stated their last previous address as being outside the Yorkshire area. Mobility tended to be ‘local’ to Yorkshire, Leeds and indeed Headingley. 46% of respondents in The Claremonts had one of the last three previous residences located in Headingley.

In Chapel Allerton, from those respondents who had undertaken long distant moves in one of their last three previous addresses, from outside the county of Yorkshire, a number of patterns can be identified. Firstly, many respondents stated their last previous address as local, but this was often preceded by a long distance move. Whilst only 12% of respondents stated their last address as outside the Yorkshire region, this figure increased to 46% of respondents who stated a third previous address. Secondly, the largest cohorts of long distance movers were from the South East, whilst 4% stated their last address was in the South East region, this figure increased to over 20% of respondents who stated their third previous address. Respondents who were currently private renters, and stated a third previous address, 60% gave an address as either in the north east or the South East of England.

Source: ONS
There is strong evidence to support the geographically footloose characteristics of residents in The Calls. Some 57% of respondents indicated that at least one of their two previous addresses was outside the Yorkshire region. Responses from interviews with estate agents and letting agents suggests residents of The Calls often live in these properties during the week or for short periods of time during contract work. Alternatively residents have recently moved into the city of Leeds and have rented a flat while considering purchasing.

The Calls provides a residence – often for short periods - for highly mobile professionals and managers servicing the growth of a major regional financial service centre, and is also reflected in the new forms of spaces being created in the centre of Leeds.

‘A proportion of apartments are owned by companies who see this as a better option than putting up staff in hotels. As a result, the market is starting to provide new kinds of ‘crash pads’ or ‘smart pads’: hybrid spaces that combine the services of a hotel with the independence of an apartment. Some international serviced apartment providers are also interested in regional cities, including Leeds (Showhouse, June 2003)’ (City Living in Leeds 2003).
**Figure 14: Household Type (Census 2001): Households with dependent child/ren: Area Comparisons**

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Source: ONS

**The Policy Challenges of Gentrification**

A central tenet of the Department of Local Government and Communities is to encourage a mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes, ages and incomes.

Research activity carried out at the neighbourhood level, considered the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of gentrifiers in Leeds. The findings suggest that, regardless of the position of a city in the urban hierarchy, generalisations of a common differentiated nature of the occupational, educational and consumption practices between householder-led and developer-led forms of gentrification hold. The similarities and differences found in Leeds between these two forms of gentrification resonate with research in higher-order cities such as London. The ‘community’ / ‘corporate’ gentrifier provides a useful conceptual heuristic to capture these divergent practices. Differing migratory frameworks were also found to exist between these two ideal types of gentrifier. Such findings support research...
which seeks to discover the connections between migration dynamics and gentrification (Lyons 1994, D. Smith 2002c).

Evidence from the gentrified areas of Leeds suggests that urban living is not only the sole preserve of the young, and also attracts older age groups. However the household characteristics from the three gentrified areas do suggest a specific life course amongst gentrifiers, particularly in The Calls and Chapel Allerton.

These demographic characteristics are notable deviations of gentrification in Leeds from London and are also a characteristic of manifestations in the provincial cities of Bristol (Bridge 2003) and Edinburgh (Bondi 1999) where there is also a greater sustained socio-demographic diversity within the gentrified neighbourhoods. Whereas life course changes can be accommodated in different kinds of gentrified neighbourhoods, in the large metropolis where there is a strong gentrification habitus, the same requirements necessitate a move out of smaller provincial cities (Bridge 2003).

Evidence in Leeds suggests these divergent characteristics are not the outcome of inherent conditions peculiar to provincial cities, rather they were contingent upon local conditions. For example, improvements to the schooling system in Leeds, as well as stronger planning law and guidance under PPS6 to encourage developers to build more family homes (and fewer one- and two-bedroomed apartments) may well enhance and encourage a sustained and deeper gentrification process in inner-city neighbourhoods, and the continuation of a more mature form of gentrification, once evident in The Claremonts.

What is striking about the characteristics of many residents in The Calls are their ‘loose’ historic connections with the City of Leeds, being a highly transient group of professional and managerial workers who service the expansion of the financial and business service sectors of Leeds. Their connections with Leeds are temporary, and their inner-city location is partly
engendered by the nature of their work. The nascent inner-city housing market, with high levels of rental units, reflects these labour market dynamics.

Does gentrification enhance or hinder the government’s urban renaissance and neighbourhood renewal agendas?

Gentrification is an important facet of the urban renaissance of Leeds. It has seen successful urban renaissance involving economic regeneration, rebranding as a Corporate 21st Century City, with increased leisure, retail and cultural activities, attracting both visitors and residents. The redevelopment and renovation of derelict land and buildings in and around The Calls and the repopulation of the city centre can be rightly claimed as fulfilling urban renaissance policy goals. The benefits of gentrification include an increase in cultural and leisure facilities in the city centre, and the ‘liveability’ of that city centre.

The gentrification of the Victorian suburbs of Chapel Allerton and Far Headingley, which had up until the later 1970’s and early 1980’s experienced the out-migration of better-off groups to outlying areas and declining condition of the urban fabric, has brought about an increase in cultural and leisure facilities and the influx of higher-income groups into these areas. The physical fabric and built environment of these areas have witnessed investment and upgrading. Far Headingley, once an area of rundown poor quality rental accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation, has seen the in-movement of professional households and increased private developer activity. Over the past twenty five years, many substantial Victorian terraced properties have undergone extensive restoration and improvement, being returned to their former glory by their owners or landlords. Other terraces have been divided up into ‘professional lets’ by developers.

Gentrification in Chapel Allerton has also demonstrated that the once defiled ‘back-to-back’ is a most suitable house type for many young professional households in Leeds, and offers models of regeneration in working class
areas with particular high density ‘industrial’ house types for other urban authorities.

Gentrification in Leeds has involved a rise of property values, relative to the city as a whole, and has seen private investment returning to rundown or derelict areas of the city. However, Census data suggests that the social transformation of gentrification in Leeds has involved a loss of residents with manual occupations and lower-status occupations. The consequence of gentrification is one of class-cleansing rather than building balanced communities.

Urban renaissance has required entrepreneurial and risk-taking activities by the state. High levels of public investment have gone into the creation of a private residential housing market and a consumption landscape at the heart of Leeds. However, research undertaken in Leeds suggests a universal consequence of the gentrification process - regardless of place and time - is the socio-spatial inequalities and social inequities it produces.

Policy dilemmas arise between regeneration and social policy goals as demonstrated by the renovation and conversion of Victoria Quays (previously warehousing units) in The Calls. Policy conflicts arise between the urban renaissance agenda, which seeks regeneration of ‘place’ to attract better-off households to inner areas of large cities, and neighbourhood renewal agendas which seek to ‘regenerate’ the social and economic conditions of intrinsic and established local communities. This dilemma remains an important housing and planning policy challenge for future developments in The Calls and Chapel Allerton.

In Chapel Allerton, both positive and negative consequences of gentrification for lower-income groups can be identified. Lower-income council tenants have locked-in equity gains from increased housing demand in the area by exercising their ‘right to buy’. The incidence of council tenants purchasing their houses has been high, and has led to a depleted stock of affordable public housing, whilst applications for council accommodation and transfer
requests to the area are amongst the highest in Leeds (Cole et al 2003). The needs of the poorest residents of Leeds will be met elsewhere in the city, away from The Calls and Chapel Allerton. Housing policy initiatives must do more than assist a relatively small number of lower-income households to meet their housing aspirations and become homeowners. To ensure balanced communities are sustained in gentrifying areas (rather than allow the process of class-cleansing to be the inevitable outcome), any policy initiatives must guarantee that the housing needs of future generations of low-income and poor households are met within these areas. For planners, ensuring that affordable housing is delivered within new housing schemes in gentrifying areas rather than allowing commuted sums to be used anywhere within the district is an important requirement of delivering sustainable communities. Furthermore, consideration should also be given to including residential accommodation issues in the final PPS6 which covers planning for towns and city centres. Planning authorities should also use development controls to ensure a range of dwelling sizes to allow for a greater mix of household types provided by developers within gentrifying areas.

As private investment capital has flowed into The Calls, so further social costs have become manifest. A regional house builder has applied for planning permission to demolish The Chandlers and build 124 luxury apartments along with offices, a restaurant, and car parking. The spectre of direct displacement of any remaining lower-income residents in the inner-city of Leeds becomes a distinct reality, and indicates a universal and inevitable deleterious consequence of gentrification, regardless of urban context.

The benefits of urban renaissance have fallen unevenly upon the local populace (Dutton 2003), and the residents of gentrified neighbourhoods of Leeds, in certain ways represent the ‘denizens’ of the City of Leeds, indulged for their economic value as consumers and residents. Irrespective of urban context and local contingencies, unmitigated gentrification offers a market model of a particular type of urban renaissance, but it is intrinsically an exclusionary process, counter to the social goals inherent within the neighbourhood renewal agenda, which seeks to deliver balanced, inclusive and sustainable communities. The transitory nature of residents and the high
levels of churning in The Calls also raise policy concerns over the sustainability of this new housing sub-market in Leeds. Research by ‘Inside Housing’ (15th December 2006) magazine found ‘up to 50 per cent of new flats were empty in Leeds’. Huw Jones the strategy and information Director for Re’New, a joint venture company set up to combat housing problems in Leeds, said that

‘The investment market posed a significant challenge for the city. There is certainly the view that it has aided the economic growth of Leeds and confidence in Leeds. But the housing people among us are saying “yes, but they’re empty. It is not supposed to be like this, they’re supposed to be lived in”’ (Inside Housing 15th December 2006).