



The 2008 Partnership Survey
Evidence from the New Deal for Communities Programme



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October 2009
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The findings and recommendations in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department for Communities and Local Government.

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October 2009

Product Code: 09ACST05921

ISBN 978-1-4098-1435-1

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Key points

This Briefing Note provides an overview of returns from all 39 New Deal for Communities Partnerships (NDCs) to a survey of largely factual issues such as structure, operation, staffing, agency engagement, and exit/succession strategies. The survey is designed:

- to provide Communities and Local Government (CLG) and other partners with an overview of key factual information across the 39 NDC Partnerships
- where possible to identify changes through time
- to help inform the national evaluation team in exploring relationships between issues explored here (Board size, loss of a chief executive, etc) on the one hand, against outcome change and spend data, on the other.

Data collection

Evidence is drawn from a questionnaire sent to all 39 NDCs in 2008. Similar surveys of NDC Partnerships were carried out in 2004 and 2006. However, caution needs to be employed in comparing results through time from these three surveys:

- in 2004 questionnaires were completed by members of the national evaluation team drawing on evidence from a number of interviews with NDC staff, Board members and agency representatives
- whereas in 2006 and 2008 the questionnaire was completed by NDC staff teams and most often by chief executives; but it was not necessarily the same individual within an NDC Partnership who responded to the survey in both 2006 and then again two years later
- it is not always easy for respondents reliably to recall events which might have happened in the early days of the Programme
- it has not proved possible to get 39 responses to all questions.

The NDC Partnerships

Legal status

- in 2008 just over half of NDCs (21) were companies limited by guarantee, one less than in 2006
- there was a slight increase in the numbers of Community Development Trusts and Community Interest Companies
- since 2006 the number of NDCs registered as charities has almost doubled, reaching 11 in 2008.

Chairs and chief executives

- nine NDCs experienced a change in chair, and nine a change in chief executive, in the previous 12 months
- twelve NDCs have retained the same chair since the start of the Programme, but only eight have had a single chief executive.

NDC Boards

- the number of seats on NDC Boards ranges from 36 to 12; on average NDC Boards have a total of 21 seats, a reduction of two since 2006
- twenty-eight Boards have current vacancies, ranging from just one vacancy in eight cases up to nine vacancies in one NDC; on average there are 18 filled seats and three vacant seats on each Board
- on average 23 per cent of Board members are from black and minority ethnic communities, three percentage points higher than in 2004 and 2006
- twenty-five out of 37 Partnerships have less than 50 per cent female representation on their Board; the average proportion is 39 per cent, three percentage points lower than in 2006
- in 33 out of 35 NDCs, 50 per cent or more of Board members are aged 25 to 59; 15 have at least one member under 25; 34 have representation from the 60 and over group
- on 26 out of 37 NDC Boards (70 per cent) resident representatives constitute a majority, compared with 30 of 39 Boards (77 per cent) in 2006; however a further five Boards in 2008 have exactly 50 per cent of their members resident within the NDC area; in most NDCs, resident representatives are elected through open elections in which all residents are eligible to vote
- most NDC Boards are relatively stable; in 31 out of 37 cases 50 per cent or more of representatives have served for two years or more
- on average Boards have representatives from seven 'agencies'; those most frequently represented are local councillors (33 out of 37 NDCs), PCTs (29 NDCs), and the police (26 NDCs)
- when compared with 2006, in 2008 Board members were more likely to be happy with the time commitments required of them, but less likely to think they had the necessary skills to carry out their roles effectively.

Staffing

- the average number of staff employed directly through Management and Administration budgets fell slightly from 10 in 2006 to nine in 2008; 23 NDCs saw a decrease in staff numbers, 13 an increase and three no change
- sixty per cent of the 345 directly employed staff across the NDC Programme are women; 24 Partnerships employ more women than men, compared with only seven where the reverse is true; in six NDCs the proportion of female staff is 75 per cent or more

- thirty-five NDCs were able to provide data on the ethnicity of their staff members; nine of these do not employ any black and minority ethnic staff; in four London NDCs the proportion of black and minority ethnic staff is 50 per cent or more
- in 2008, 30 NDCs had maintained a full complement of staff over the previous year; three thought that turnover had been a problem, compared with seven in 2006
- only five Partnerships have had difficulty in recruiting staff with appropriate skills, compared with 14 in 2006 and 26 in 2004; this is likely to reflect a decline in recruitment rather than an improvement in the availability of skilled workers; difficulties include recruiting to specialist theme areas, finding staff for housing and capital projects and appointing experienced regeneration professionals
- twenty-five NDCs expect the composition of the staff team to change before the end of the Programme; 19 of these predict a decrease in staffing levels, a reflection of the downsizing of activity as the Programme draws to a close.

The wider context

Other ABIs

- all NDC areas contain at least one other overlapping ABI; the average number of ABIs in NDC areas is six, consistent with 2004 and 2006
- as in 2006, the five ABIs most frequently located in NDC areas are Drug Action Teams (DAT), European Structural Fund Programmes, Sure Start, Neighbourhood Wardens and Youth Inclusion Programmes (YiPs)
- also as in 2006, the three ABIs with which the highest number of Partnerships engage a 'great deal or a 'fair amount' are Drug Action Teams (DATs), Neighbourhood Wardens, and Youth Inclusion Programmes (YiPs).

Engagement with agencies

- on average NDCs have significant engagement with eight agencies, compared with nine in 2006; the four agencies with which most NDCs have significant engagement are the police, with whom 36 NDCs describe their engagement as 'significant', PCTs (33), local authority housing departments (29) and local authority environment and leisure departments (26)
- police authorities, PCTs and local authority environment and leisure services are the agencies perceived by NDCs as being most helpful in supporting delivery
- on average, NDCs have some sort of representation on the board or working groups of six other agencies; the agencies on which NDCs are most often represented are LSPs, the police and PCTs
- thirty-three NDCs consider they are involved with their Local Strategic Partnership, one less than in 2006; 35 are involved with the Local Area Agreement covering their area, three more than in 2006.

Delivery

Equalities and diversity

- NDCs most frequently place emphasis on equality issues in relation to staff training (37 NDCs), project appraisal (36), implementing racial equality policies/strategies (35) and training Board members (32)
- in general, fewer NDCs are monitoring equality and diversity impacts in 2008 than was the case in 2006 (other than in relation to age and sexual orientation); despite a decrease in the number of NDCs monitoring the impacts of their projects on race, the latter remains the most frequently monitored equalities issue (31 NDCs).

The delivery process

- as in 2006, revised delivery plans, community involvement, partnership working, NDC Boards and evaluation activities have most assisted delivery in the previous 12 months and human resource issues are viewed as being the least assisting/most constraining factor
- between 2006 and 2008 three factors saw a marked increase in assisting delivery: partnership working, internal management and financial systems, and the quality of data on local needs.

Exit/succession strategies

- all 39 NDCs have less than three years of NDC Programme funding remaining; 21 Partnerships have committed all of their funding until the end of the Programme; 25 expect one or more of their large scale capital projects to be continuing after the end of the Programme
- twenty-one NDCs currently have an exit or succession strategy in place, compared with only 10 in 2006; the remaining 18 are in the process of developing their strategy; of these, 12 think it will be in place in the next six months and four between six months and a year, while two did not specify
- all 39 NDCs were committed to continued community engagement in succession arrangements, while partnership working with the voluntary and community sector (38) and with mainstream agencies (37), mainstreaming of current projects (36) and the management of assets (35) were also mentioned by most as being key factors of succession strategies
- twenty-six NDCs currently own or manage assets on behalf of the local community.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The New Deal for Communities (NDC) Programme is one of the most important Area-Based Initiatives (ABIs) ever launched in England. Announced in 1998, the Programme's primary purpose is to reduce the gaps between 39 deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the country in relation to both 'people' (health, worklessness, education) and 'place' (housing and the physical environment, crime and community) based outcomes. In these 39 areas, each on average accommodating about 9,800 people, local NDC Partnerships are implementing approved 10 year Delivery Plans. Each Delivery Plan has attracted approximately £50m of NDC Programme investment.
- 1.2. This report provides an overview of responses to the 2008 NDC Partnership Survey designed to gather information about the organisational characteristics and operational features of NDC Partnerships. A questionnaire was sent out to all NDCs in July 2008 and all 39 responses had been received by November. The survey was completed by NDCs staff teams, most frequently by chief executives.
- 1.3. Comparison is sometimes possible with similar evidence obtained from NDCs in 2004 and 2006. However caution should be employed in comparing trends through time:
 - in 2004 returns to these questionnaires were made by members of the national evaluation team drawing on evidence gained from a series of interviews with NDC staff, Board members and agency representatives
 - responses to the 2006 and 2008 surveys were not necessarily completed by the same individuals
 - some questions are retrospective (for instance those which relate to turnover of Chair or chief executive); the NDC Programme is approaching its tenth year and there has been a degree of personnel change in all Partnerships: the 'institutional memory' is not always reliable.

Rationale

- 1.4. This report is designed:
 - to provide CLG and other partners with an overview of key factual information across the 39 NDC Partnerships
 - where possible to highlight trends through time
 - to help the national evaluation team explain how and why change occurs at the Partnership level; evidence is available regarding outcome change occurring, and spend, within each of the 39 areas; previous attempts to explain different rates of change between 2002 and 2006 across the 39 areas have identified relationships between, say, the degree to which each

of the 39 areas change and the number of overlapping ABIs within each of these areas; process issues examined in this report will again be used as potential variables in explaining change for the full period for which data is now available: 2002–08; findings will be contained in the final evaluation reports to be published in 2010.

2. The 39 Partnerships: legal status, Boards and staffing

Legal status

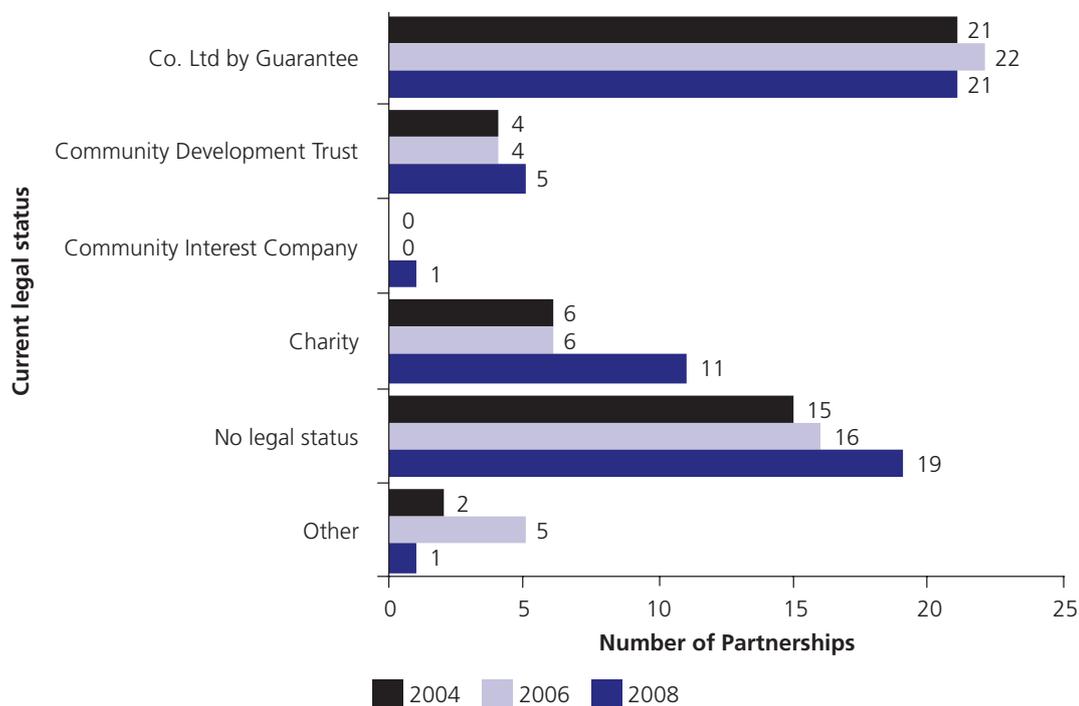
2.1. Respondents were asked to identify the Partnership's legal status (Figure 2.1). As in previous years, the most common legal form is company limited by guarantee. But there is also evidence of change: as NDCs move towards succession an increasing number are taking on new legal forms, including Community Development Trusts, Community Interest Companies and charities. Some are also in flux, perhaps in the process of transition from one organisational form to another, resulting in an increase in the number of Partnerships with no legal status. Note that these categories are not exclusive and many NDCs hold more than one status, for instance a Community Development Trust that is also a Company Limited by Guarantee. The key findings here are:

- in 2008 just over half of all NDCs (21) were companies limited by guarantee, one less than in 2006
- there was a slight increase in the numbers of Community Development Trusts and Community Interest Companies
- between 2006 and 2008 the number of NDCs registered as charities almost doubled, reaching 11 in 2008; of the five Partnerships securing charitable status in this period, four stated in 2006 that they were in the process of applying.

2.2. Further evidence with regard to the transitional state in which many NDCs find themselves is drawn from responses to a question about expected legal status after the end of the Programme (Figure 2.2). 31 Partnerships anticipated that this would differ from their current status:

- seventeen expected to be charities, six more than the actual number of charities in 2008; nine planned to become charities, while three would cease to have charitable status
- only two NDCs expected to have no legal status after the Programme finishes, compared with 19 having no legal status in 2008
- six Partnerships said they would cease to exist
- eight NDCs stated they would have some 'other' status, for five of which a decision on what that would be had still to be made.

Figure 2.1: Current legal status

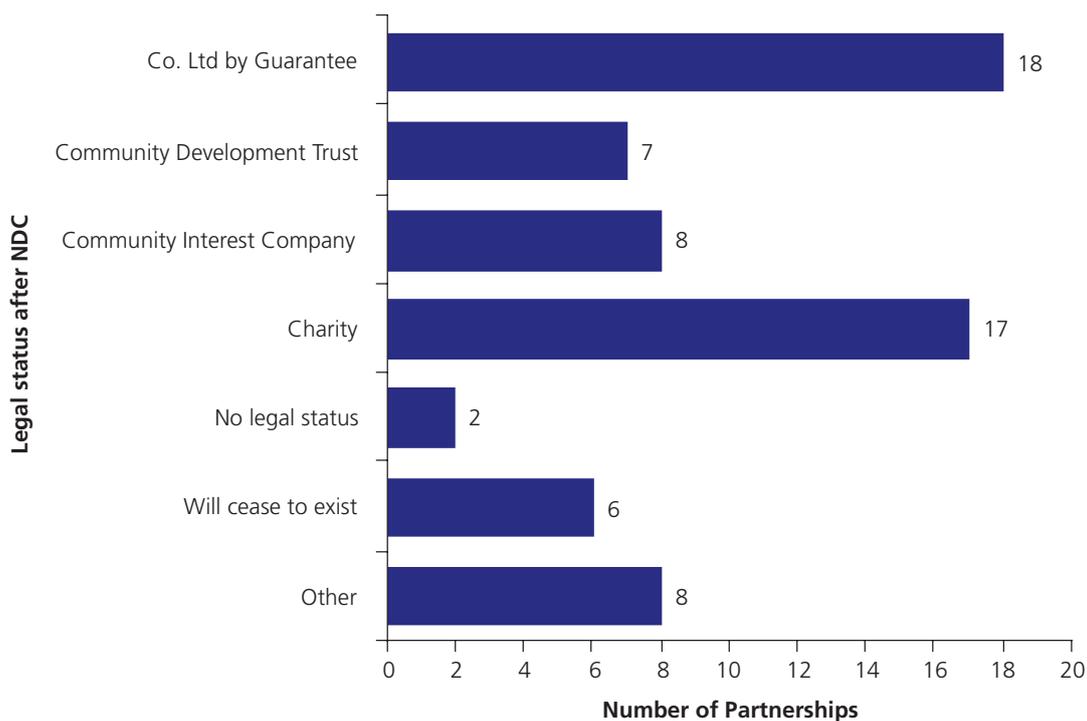


Base: All

Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey, 2006 NDC Partnership Survey and 2004/5 Templates

Note: Community Interest Company not given as an option in 2006 questionnaire, but not specified by any respondents as an 'other' legal status; Community Interest Companies did not exist in 2004

Figure 2.2: Planned legal status after the NDC Programme finishes



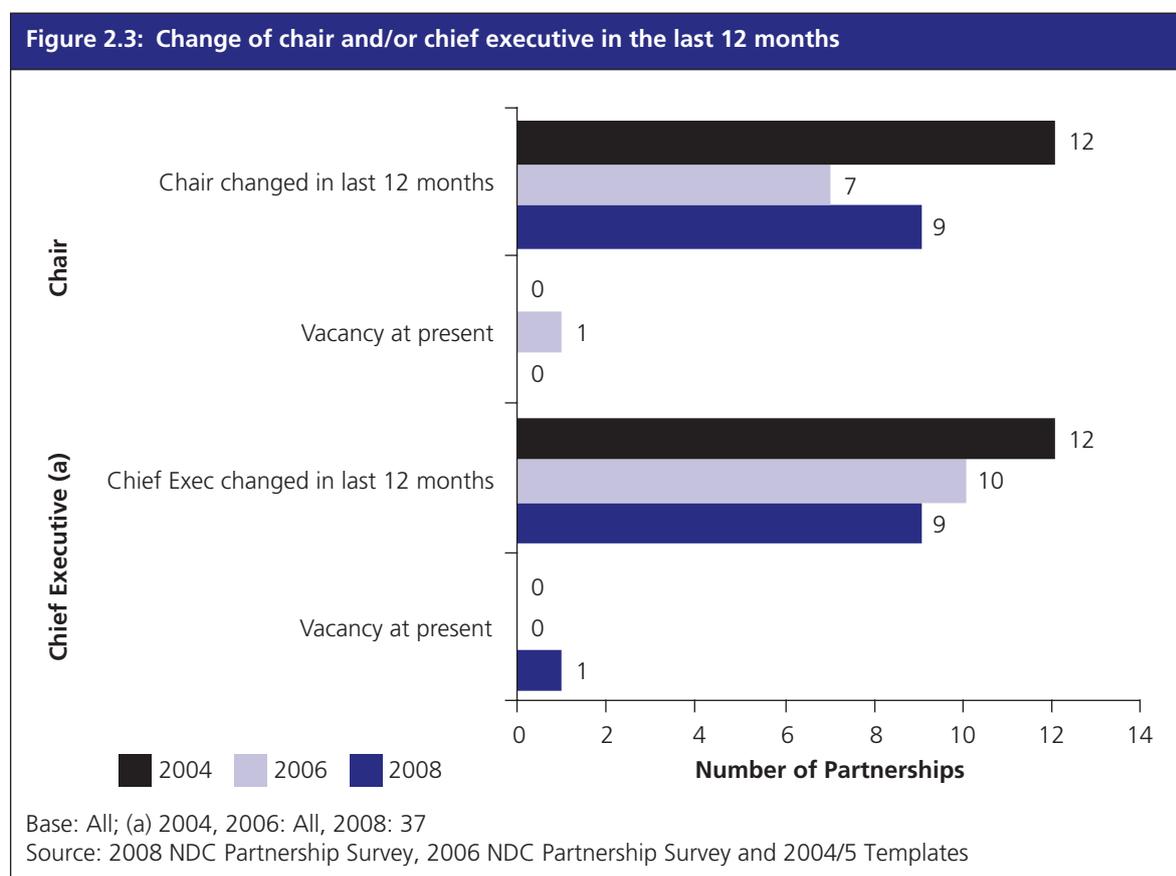
Base: All

Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey

Chairs and chief executives

2.3. After a more volatile period early in the Programme, Partnerships appear to have stabilised, with little change since 2006 in the numbers of NDCs experiencing either a change of chair or of chief executive in the preceding 12 months. Figure 2.3 identifies numbers of NDCs experiencing a change in either of these in the previous twelve months, and those with a vacancy in either position at time the survey was conducted:

- nine NDCs experienced a change in chair in the previous 12 months
- nine NDCs saw a change in chief executive and one had a vacancy at the time of the survey.



2.4. NDCs were also asked how many times chairs and chief executives had changed since inception. Partnerships have had very different experiences in relation to these leadership roles: some NDCs have experienced frequent changes in personnel; others have retained the same individuals for the duration of the Programme.

2.5. Of the 38 Partnerships which provided evidence in relation to chairs:

- twelve indicated that they had retained the same chair throughout¹
- whereas one NDC has seen six changes and two, five.

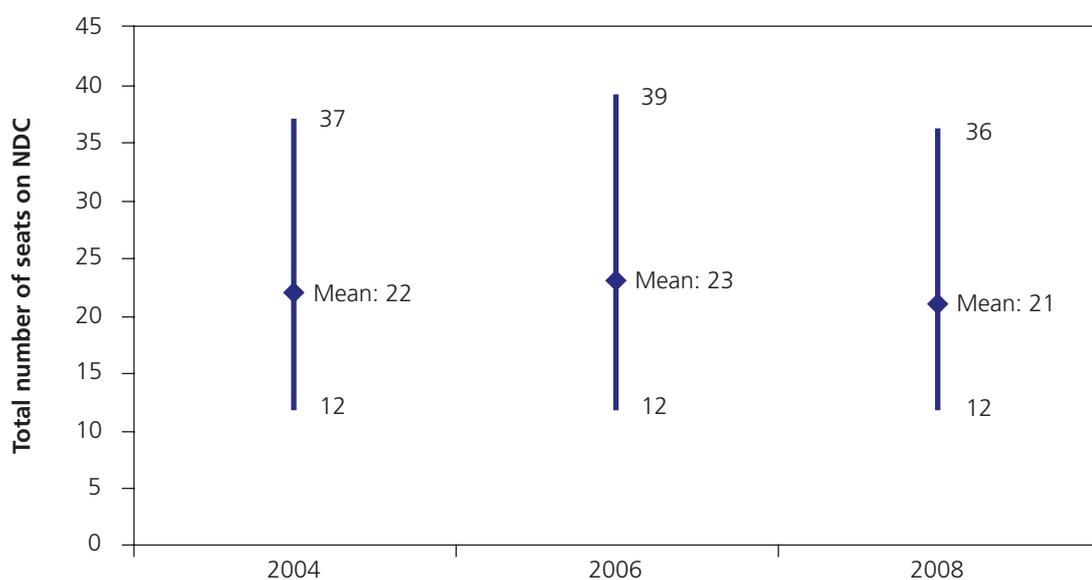
¹ One more than that indicated in responses to the 2006 survey

- 2.6. Thirty-seven NDCs provided information on changes to their chief executive:
- eight have not experienced any change and 10 only one
 - one NDC has seen six changes and another five; however, neither of these has seen any change since 2006.

NDC Boards

- 2.7. Figure 2.4 presents evidence in relation to the number of seats on NDC Boards. Again there is wide variation but there are some indications that overall the average size of NDC Boards is decreasing over time:
- on average, NDC Boards have a total of 21 seats, a reduction of two since 2006
 - of the 37 Partnerships providing Board data in 2008, nine saw an increase since 2006, 18 a decrease and 10 stayed the same
 - the largest Board has 36 seats, while three each have 12.

Figure 2.4: Number of seats on NDC Boards, total, 2004 to 2008



Base: 2004, 2006: All; 2008: 37

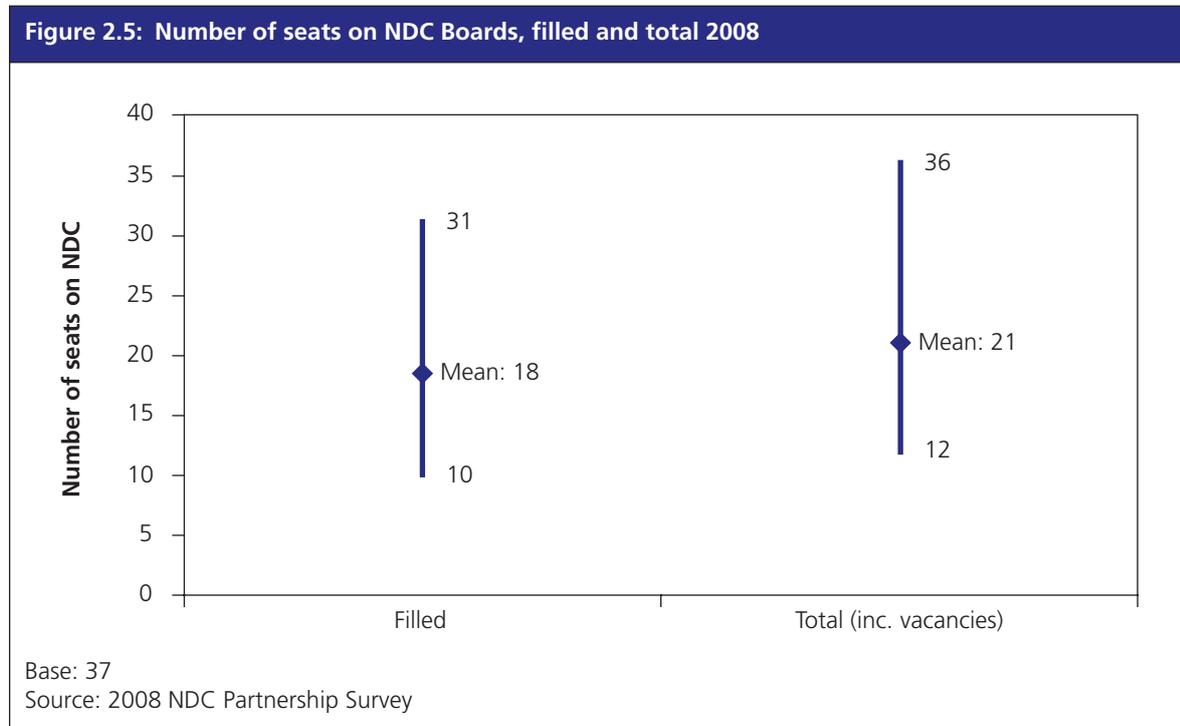
Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey, 2006 NDC Partnership Survey and 2004/5 Templates

Note: Total includes both filled and vacant seats

- 2.8. There are significant numbers of unfilled seats on NDC Boards² (Figure 2.5):
- on average, there are 18 filled seats and three vacant seats on each Board
 - twenty-eight Boards have vacancies, ranging from just one in eight cases up to nine in one instance.

² This question was not asked in the 2004 and 2006 surveys. However, in 2006, ten NDCs indicated (voluntarily) that they had vacancies on their Boards.

2.9. As the Programme comes to an end, and as Board functions move towards activities such as monitoring and succession rather than delivery, it may be that interest is waning on the part of both agency representatives and indeed local residents.



2.10. There has been an overall increase since 2004 in the average number of NDC Board members from black and minority ethnic communities (Figure 2.6). One third of NDC Partnerships report that numbers of black and minority ethnic community representatives increased between 2006 and 2008. Key findings include:

- on average 23 per cent of Board members are from black and minority ethnic communities, three percentage points higher than in 2004 and 2006
- five Boards have at least half black and minority ethnic membership
- eight Boards have no black and minority ethnic member
- of the 27 NDCs providing data for both 2006 and 2008, 13 saw an increase in the percentage of black and minority ethnic members, eight a decrease.

2.11. However, in all but eight of the 30 NDCs providing data on the ethnic composition of Boards in 2008, the proportion of black and minority ethnic Board members is less than the proportion of black and minority ethnic residents in the local population, according to the 2008 Ipsos MORI Household Survey (Figure 2.7).

Boards: gender and age profiles

2.12. Other equalities dimensions to Board membership include gender and age:

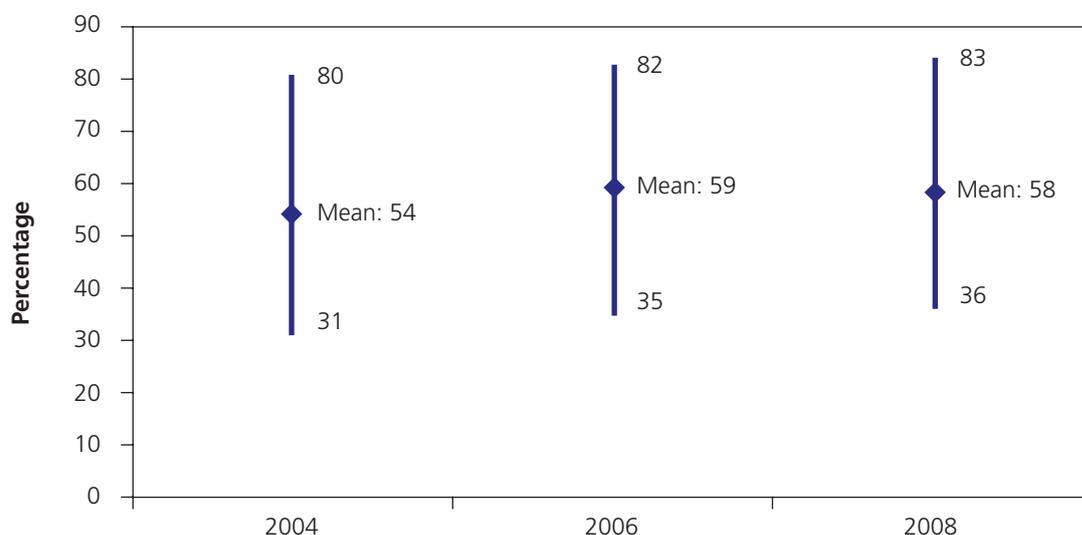
- twenty-five out of 37 Partnerships responding to the relevant question (68 per cent) have less than 50 per cent female representation on their Board; the average proportion of female members is 39 per cent, three percentage points less than in 2006; no Board is more than two thirds female, but 10 are more than two thirds male
- in 33 out of the 35 NDCs responding to the relevant question, 50 per cent or more of Board members are aged 25 to 59; 15 have at least one member under 25; 34 have representation from the 60 and over group.

Proportion of resident Board members

2.13. NDCs have placed a particular emphasis on resident representation on NDC Boards. All 37 providing relevant data have over one third resident members (this includes residents and also agency representatives living within NDC boundaries). Figure 2.8 outlines change in numbers of resident Board members between 2004 and 2008:

- the average proportion fell slightly from 59 per cent in 2006 to 58 per cent in 2008
- on 26 out of 37 Boards (70 per cent) residents constitute a majority, compared with 30 out of 39 Boards (77 per cent) in 2006; however a further five Boards have exactly 50 per cent of their members resident within the NDC area
- between 2006 and 2008, 17 NDCs saw an increase in the percentage of resident members, nine by 10 percentage points or more; 20 saw a decrease, but only five by 10 percentage points or more.

Figure 2.8: Percentage of resident Board members



Base: 2004, 2006: All; 2008: 37

Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey, 2006 NDC Partnership Survey and 2004/5 Templates

Length of time on Boards

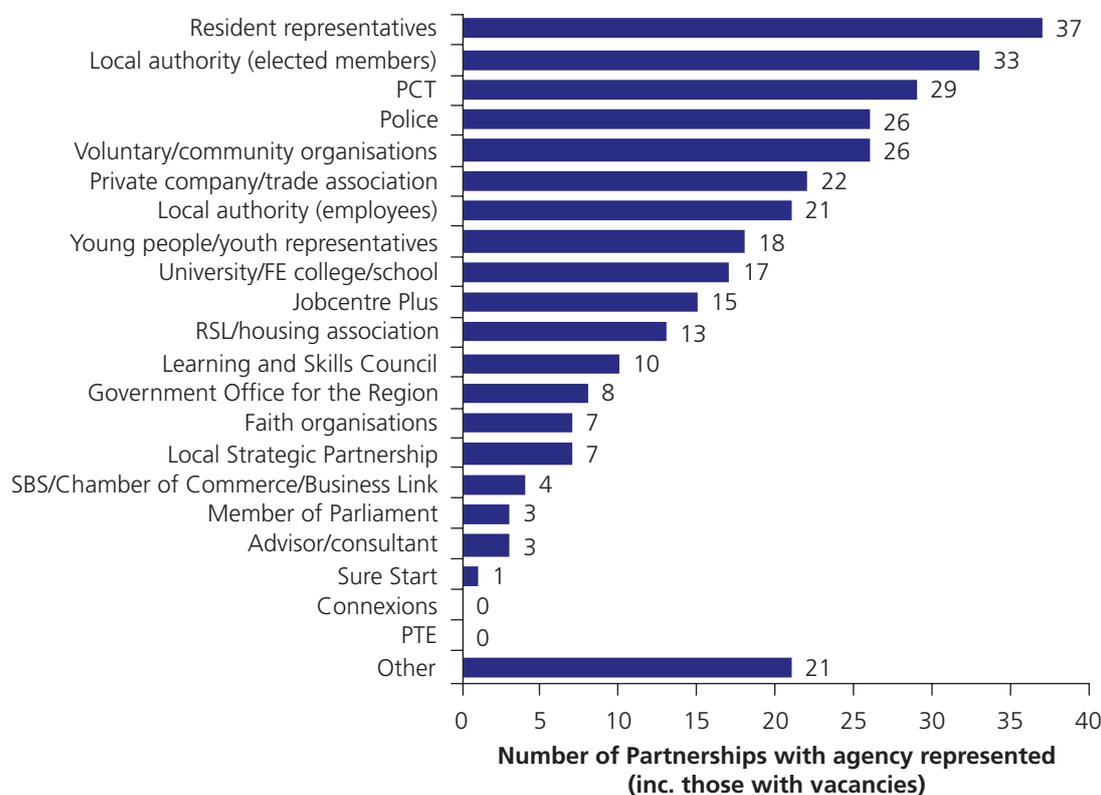
2.14. As in previous years, representation on most NDC Boards is relatively stable. In 31 out of 37 cases 50 per cent or more Board members have served for two years or more. In five NDCs this rises to 90 per cent or more and in two 100 per cent. In five instances over 40 per cent of members have served less than a year.

Agencies on Boards

2.15. 37 NDCs provided information on agency representation on NDC Boards (Figure 2.9):

- on average NDC Boards have representatives from seven agencies; three NDC have 11, while one has two
- agencies most frequently represented on NDC Boards are: local councillors (33 out of 37 NDCs), PCTs (29 NDCs), and the police (26 NDCs)
- no or low levels of membership are evident in relation to PTEs, Connexions and Sure Start schemes
- agency representation appears to be consistent over time, with the three most and three least represented agencies being the same in both 2006 and 2008.

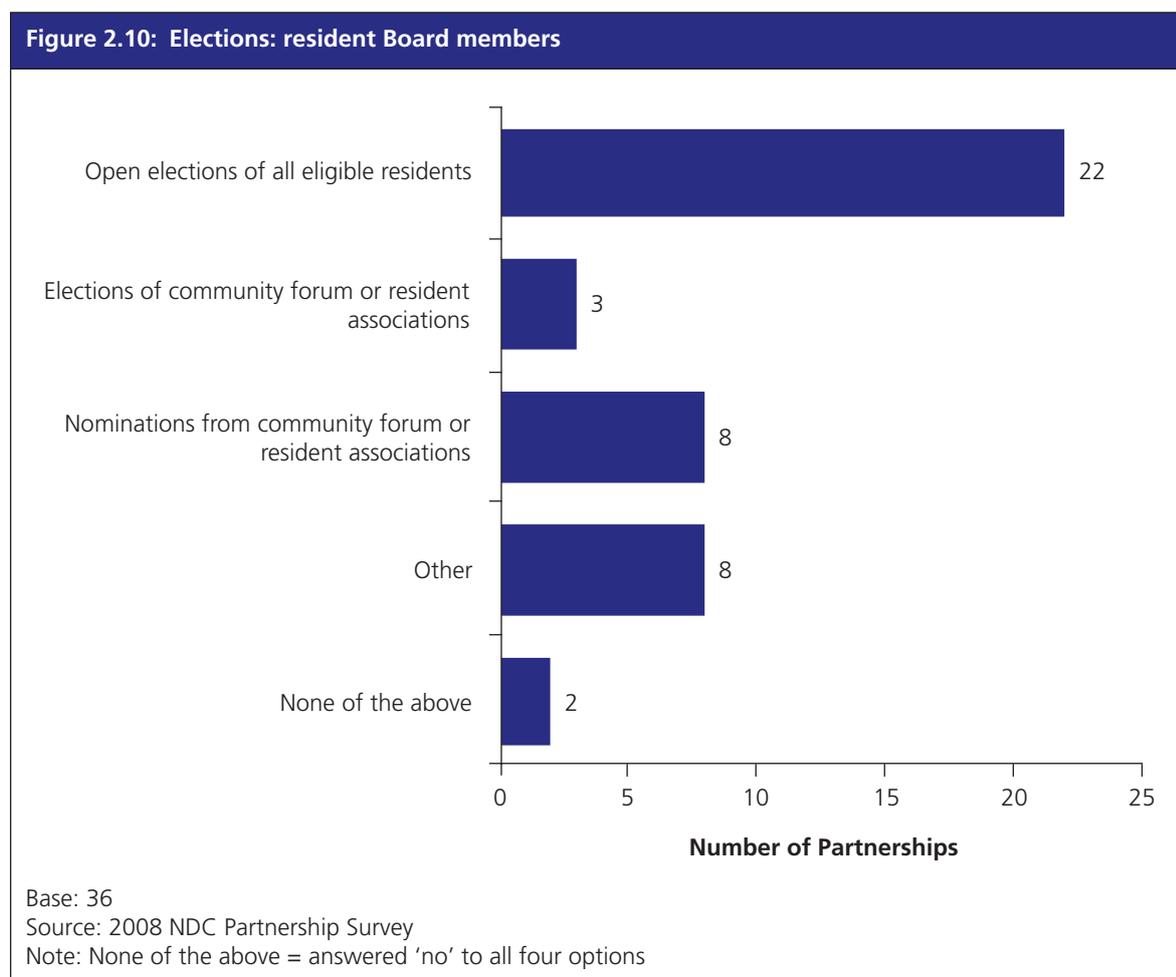
Figure 2.9: Agency representation on Boards



Base: 37
Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey

Board elections

- 2.16. Figure 2.10 identifies key mechanisms for the election of resident representatives onto NDC Boards. In most instances resident representatives are elected through open elections in which all residents are eligible to vote³.
- 2.17. Partnerships were asked how resident representative board members have been, or will be, selected:
- twenty-two out of 36 responding NDCs use open elections of all eligible residents
 - three use elections of community forum or resident associations
 - eight use nominations from community forum or resident associations
 - eight use or plan to use 'other' methods, most commonly open recruitment involving selection by interview.



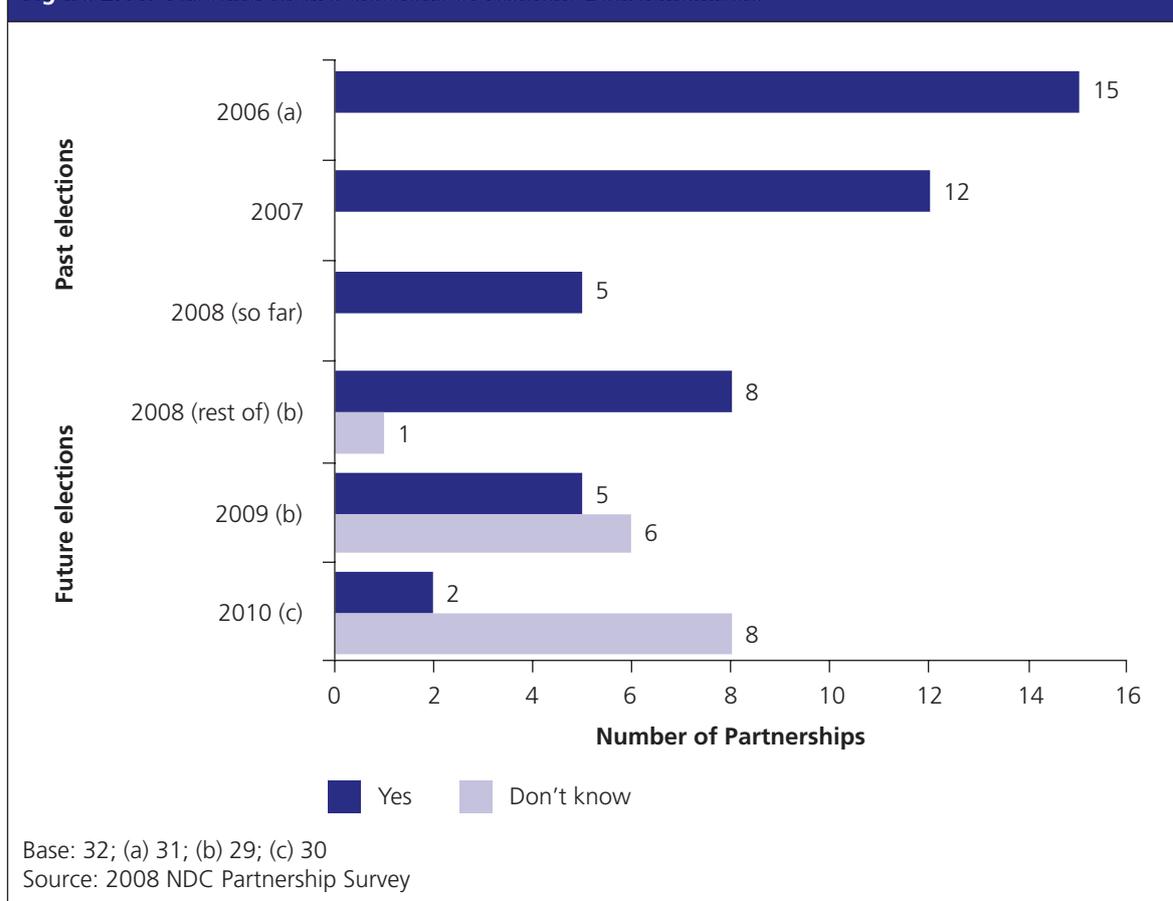
2.18. NDCs have different adopted different approaches to the frequency of elections. In 2006 18 NDCs indicated that they held elections every year, eight held them every two years and nine every three years. The 2008 survey did not ask about the frequency of elections, and it is likely that fewer NDCs

³ The operation of elections for NDC Boards is explored in detail in: *Neighbourhood Governance: making NDC elections a significant event for partnerships and communities? Some lessons from the NDC Programme*
http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/reports/neighbourhood_governance_ndc_elections.pdf

are holding elections as the programme draws to a close. However, when asked about their approach to elections through time (Figure 2.11):

- in 2006 15 NDCs held open elections; this had fallen to 12 in 2007
- at the time of the survey (summer 2008) five NDCs had held elections that year and eight planned them later in 2008
- five Partnerships said they would hold elections in 2009 and two in 2010; a further six said they did not know about elections in 2009 and eight about 2010
- even if all the NDCs who don't currently know about their future plans do in the event hold elections in 2009 and 2010, there is still evidence of a slight decrease through time
- only four NDCs said that elections for resident representatives will form part of the succession strategy; 15 said they will not, while 16 had not yet decided.

Figure 2.11: Past and future elections of resident Board members



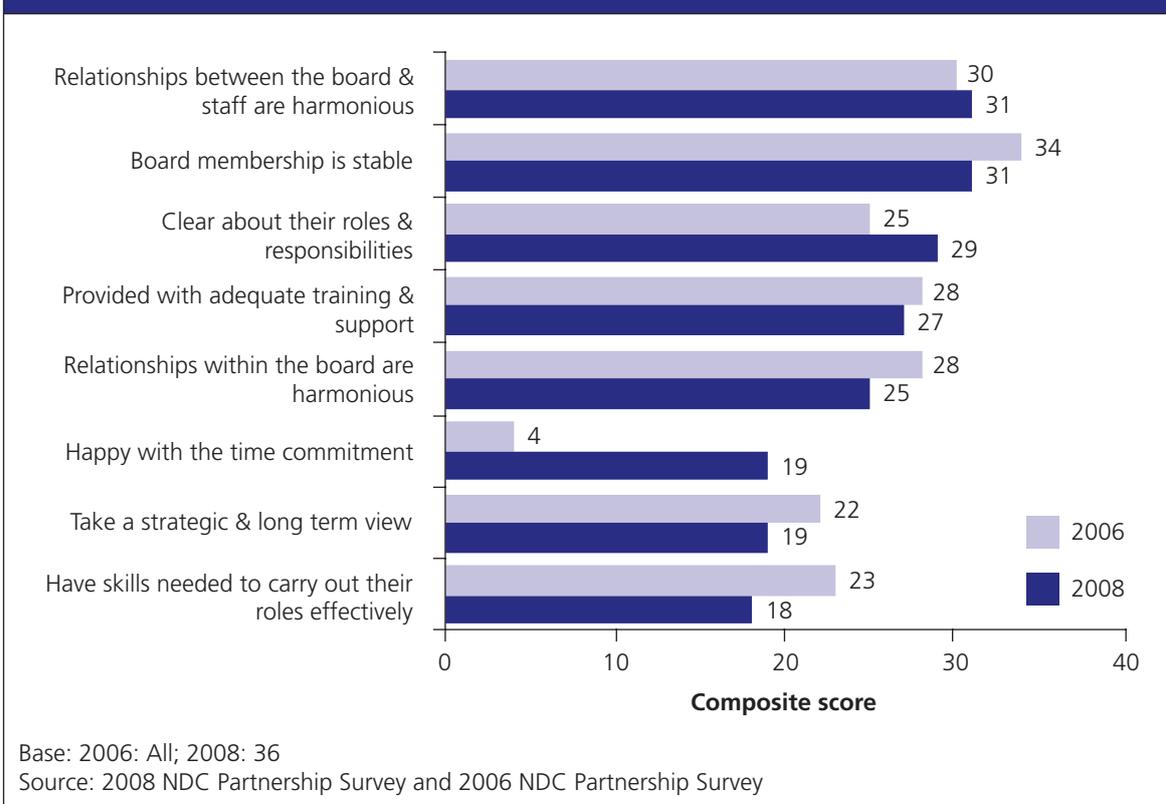
2.19. Other evidence in relation to elections indicates that:

- across all elections in the 2006 to 2008 period, turnout ranged from 4 per cent to 52 per cent of eligible residents; average turnout was 23 per cent
- in most cases (over 80 per cent each year) elections covered the whole NDC area rather than a specific part thereof.

Board operations

- 2.20. As in 2006, NDCs were asked about the extent to which they agreed with the following statements:
- Board members are clear about their roles and responsibilities
 - members have skills needed to carry out their roles effectively
 - adequate training and support are provided for members
 - Board members take a strategic and long term view
 - members are happy with time commitments required of them
 - membership is stable
 - relationships within the Board are harmonious
 - relationships between the Board and NDC staff are harmonious.
- 2.21. Using answers to these questions, a simple composite score has been created: one point for a 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed', and a minus one for a 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed'. Thus across the 36 Partnerships who responded to this part of the questionnaire, each of these eight statements is scored from minus 36 to plus 36⁴. Results are presented in Figure 2.12:
- for three of these eight statements there was an increase in the composite score between 2006 and 2008; the most marked of these was NDC Board members feeling happy with time commitments required of them, an increase from four in 2006 to 19 in 2008
 - for five statements there was a decrease in the score; the biggest decrease was in relation to NDC Board members thinking they have the skills needed to carry out their roles effectively.

⁴ Note in 2006 all 39 NDCs responded to this question, so scale for 2006 is -39 to +39

Figure 2.12: NDC Board operation (composite scores)

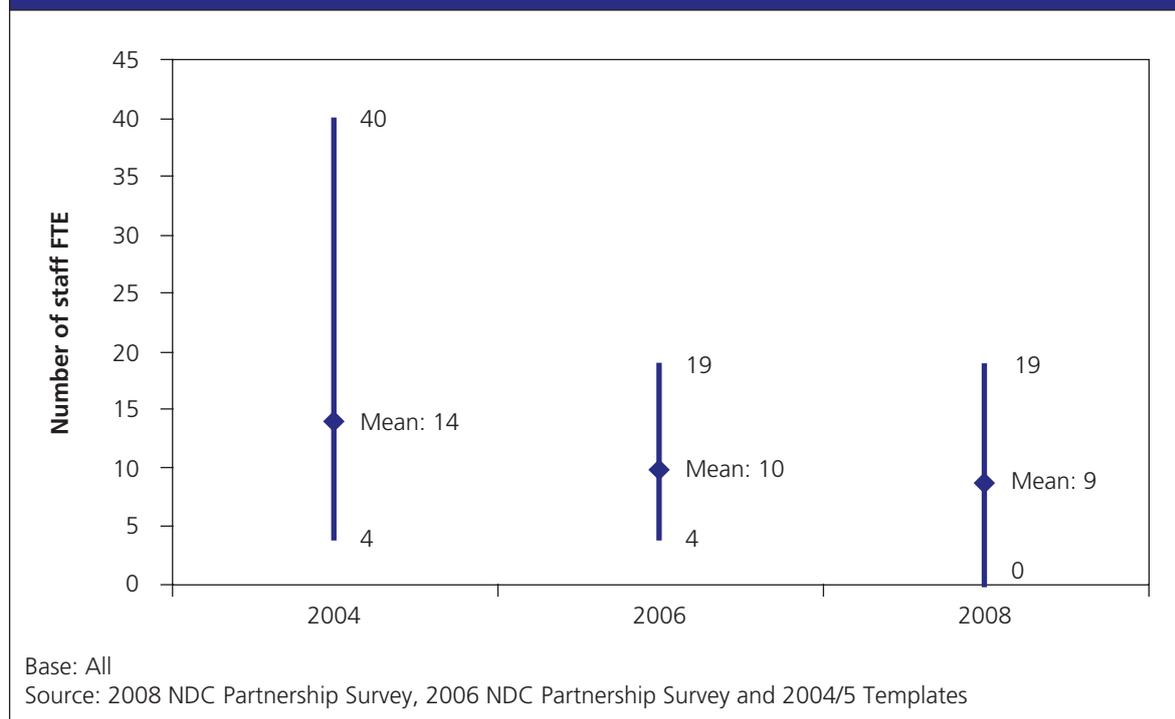
Staffing

Number of staff

2.22. Figure 2.13 identifies numbers of staff (FTE) employed by NDCs through Management and Administration (M and A) budgets in 2004, 2006 and 2008. As would be anticipated numbers of staff are falling as Partnerships approach the end of the NDC funding period. However, it is important to note that this data presents only a partial picture. In some Partnerships staff considered to be core team members are not always funded through Management and Administration budgets. The evidence suggests that:

- the average number of staff employed directly through M and A budgets fell slightly from 10 in 2006 to nine in 2008
- across 38 Partnerships directly employing staff, numbers ranged from 4 to 19 as was the case in 2006; however, one NDC no longer employs any staff through its M and A budget and is funding all staff through projects from April 2008 onwards
- twenty-three NDCs saw a decrease in staff numbers, 13 an increase and three no change.

Figure 2.13: FTE staff



Staff profiles: gender and ethnicity

2.23. Partnerships were also asked to identify the gender and ethnicity profiles of their staff teams:

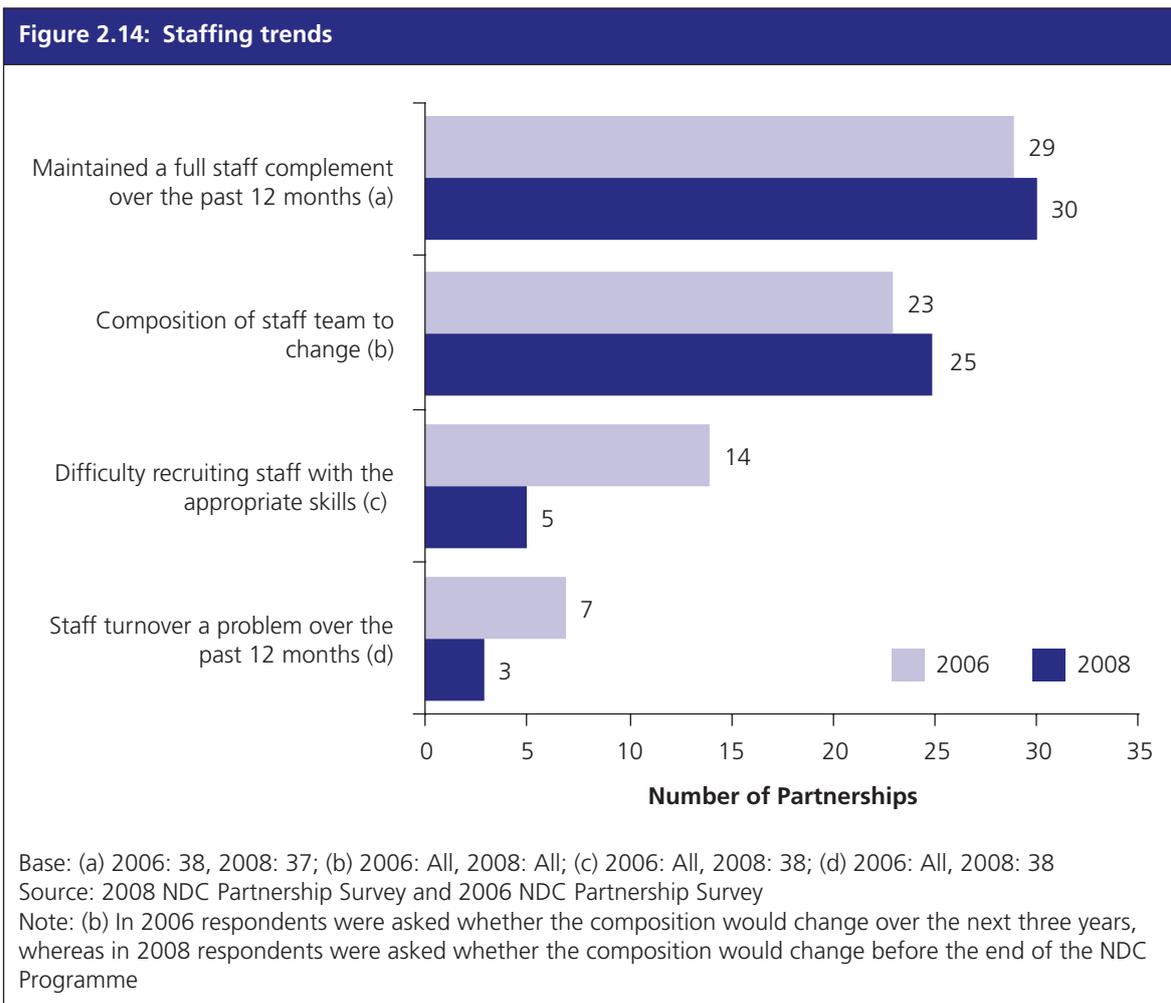
- of the 345 directly employed staff across the NDC Programme, 60 per cent are female
- twenty-four Partnerships employ more women than men, compared with only seven where the reverse is true; in six NDCs the proportion of female staff is 75 per cent or more
- thirty-five NDCs were able to provide data on the ethnicity of their staff members; nine of these do not employ any black and minority ethnic staff
- in four NDCs, all in London, the proportion of black and minority ethnic staff is 50 per cent or more.

Turnover and staffing issues

2.24. NDCs were asked about four staffing issues: staff complement; turnover; recruiting appropriately skilled staff; and planned changes in the next three years. Responses are presented in Figure 2.14:

- in 2008, 30 NDCs had maintained a full complement of staff over the previous year
- three thought that turnover had been a problem, compared with seven in 2006
- on average, NDCs experienced 15 per cent turnover in the year up to summer 2008; for six Partnerships, the figure was more than 30 per cent

- only five have had difficulty in recruiting staff with appropriate skills, compared with 14 in 2006 and 26 in 2004; this might reflect a decline in recruitment needs rather than necessarily an improvement in the availability of skilled workers; difficulties include recruiting to specialist theme areas, finding staff for housing and capital projects, and appointing experienced regeneration professionals
- twenty-five expect the composition of their staff team to change before the end of the Programme; 19 of these predict a decrease in staffing levels and seven refer to restructuring or organisational changes.



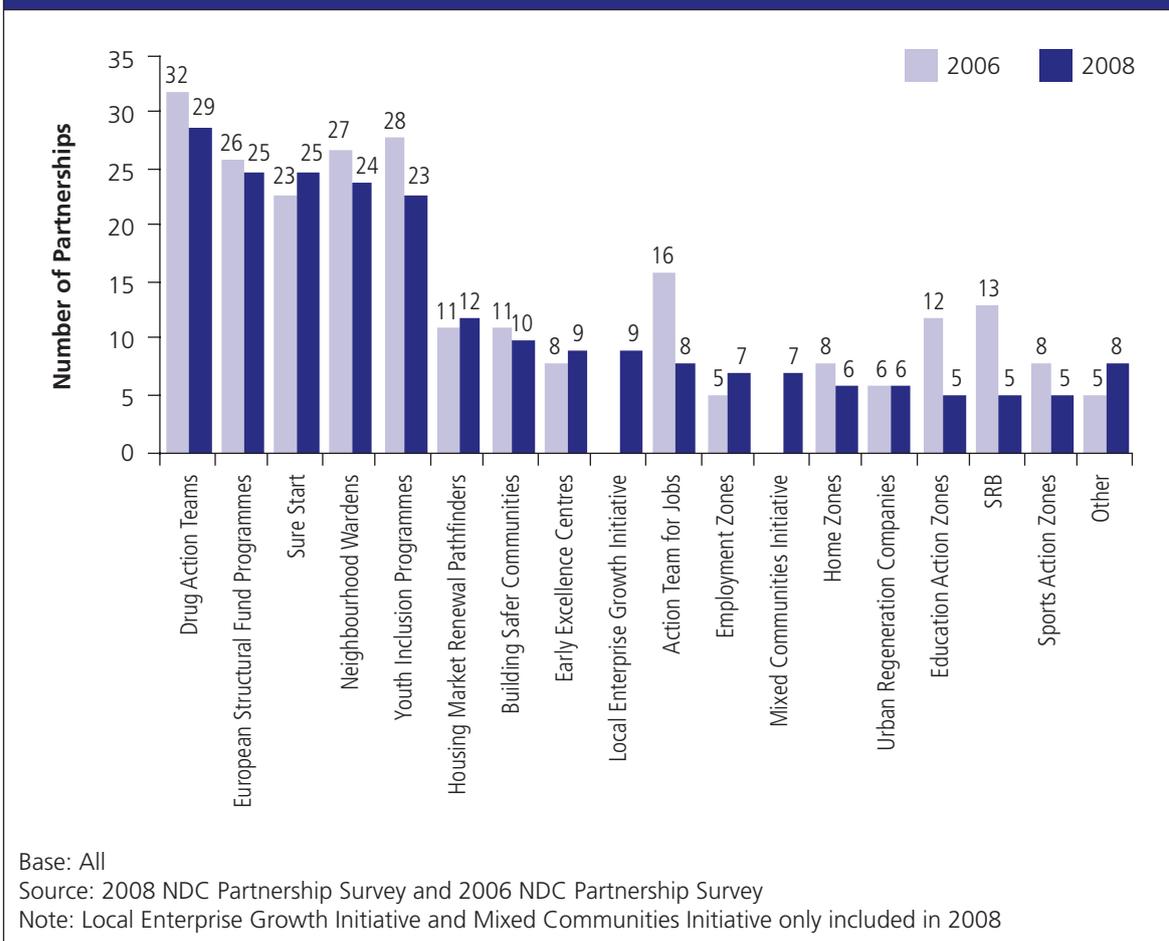
3. The wider context: other ABIs and agency engagement

Engagement with other Area Based Initiatives (ABIs)

3.1. Figure 3.1 identifies other ABIs located in NDC areas in 2006 and 2008:

- all NDC areas contain at least one other overlapping ABI
- in three cases only one other ABI is identified, whereas in 2006 all 39 NDCs reported at least two
- the average number of ABIs in NDC areas is six, consistent with 2004 and 2006
- one NDC has as many as 16 other ABIs operating within its boundaries
- 12 NDC areas saw an increase in the number of ABIs between 2006 and 2008, whereas 21 saw a decrease
- as in 2006, the five ABIs most frequently located in NDC areas are Drug Action Teams (DAT), European Structural Fund Programmes, Sure Start, Neighbourhood Wardens, and Youth Inclusion Programmes (YiPs)
- since 2006 the number of NDC areas containing DATs has decreased by three, European Structural Fund Programmes by one, Neighbourhood Wardens by three, and YiPs by five; the number of NDCs with a Sure Start in the area increased by two
- of 15 specific ABIs included in both the 2006 and 2008 questionnaires, in four instances there was an increase, and in 10 a decrease, in the numbers of NDCs reporting them as 'overlapping'.

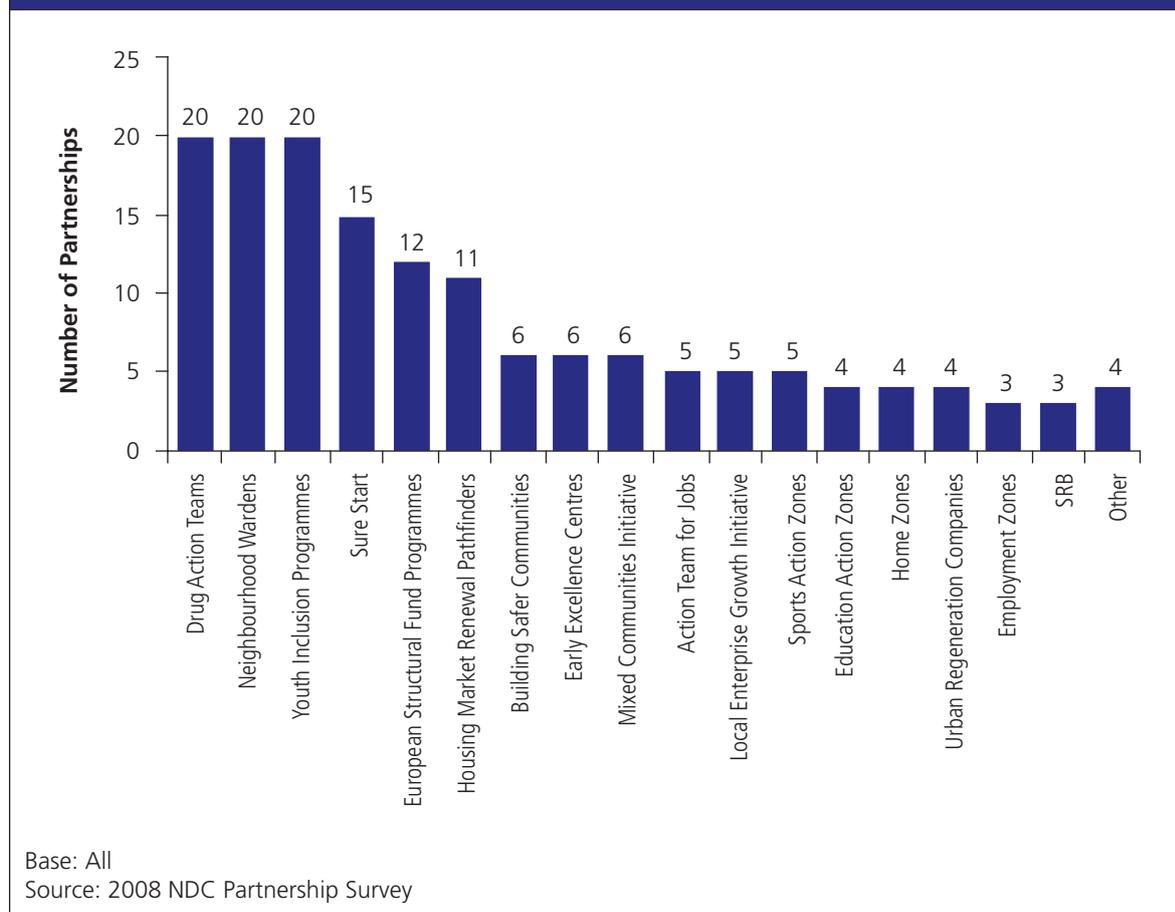
Figure 3.1: ABIs located within NDC areas



3.2. NDCs were also asked to identify the degree to which they were engaged in partnership working with other ABIs (Figure 3.2):

- as in 2006, the three ABIs with which the highest number of Partnerships engage a 'great deal or a 'fair amount' are Drug Action Teams (DATs), Neighbourhood Wardens, and Youth Inclusion Programmes (YiPs)
- all NDCs with Sport Action Zones and 11 out of 12 NDCs within Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders engage with them 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'
- the number of overlapping ABIs with which NDCs engage ranges from none to 10; the average being four
- thirty-one NDCs engage with over half of overlapping ABIs, 12 with all of them; one NDC does not engage with any of its three overlapping ABIs.

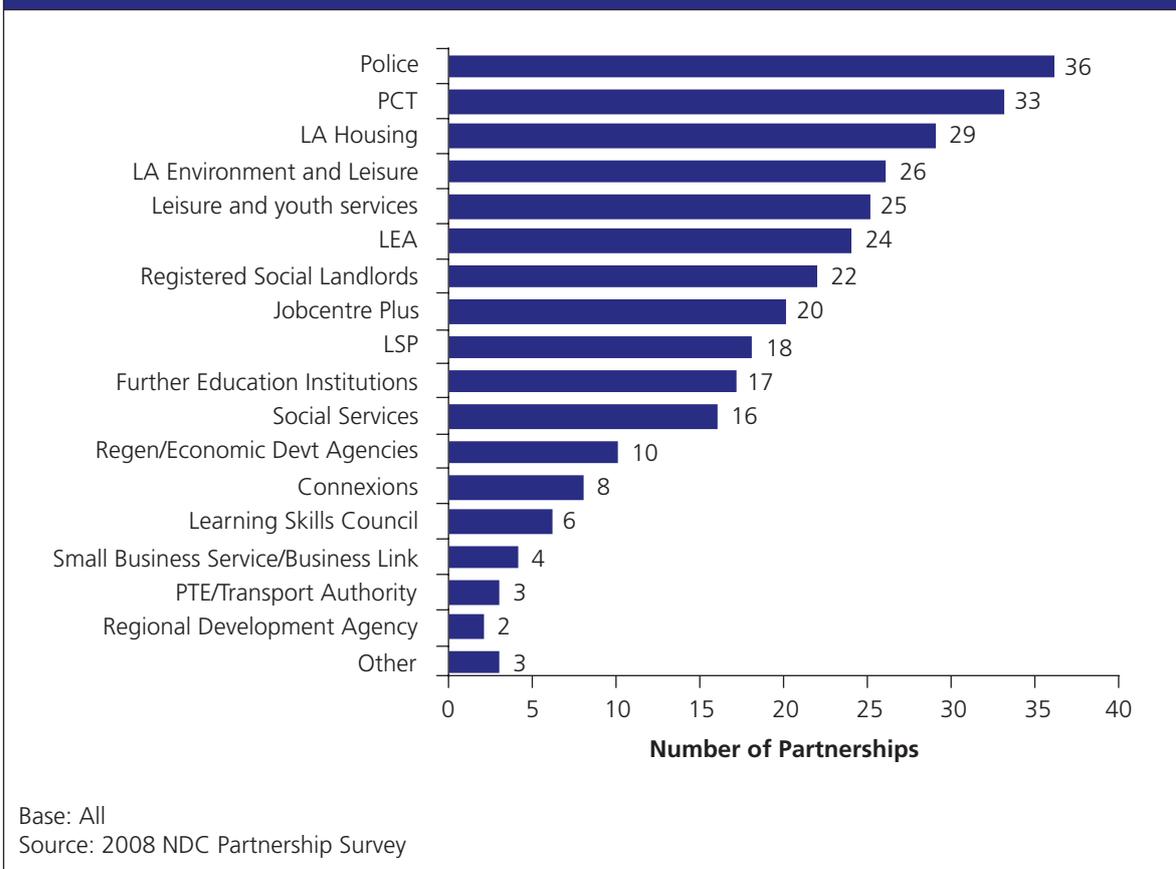
Figure 3.2: ABIs with which NDCs engage 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' in partnership working



Engagement with agencies

3.3. Figure 3.3 explores another dimension to partnership working: the degree to which NDCs identify significant engagement with other agencies:

- on average NDCs have significant engagement with eight agencies, compared with nine in 2006
- this ranges from one NDC having significant engagement with 15, to one having significant engagement with just two
- as was the case in 2006, the four agencies with which most NDCs have significant engagement are the police, with whom 36 describe their engagement as 'significant', PCTs (33), local authority housing departments (29) and local authority environment and leisure departments (26).

Figure 3.3: NDCs and agencies: 'significant' engagement

3.4. NDCs were also asked whether agency engagement had 'severely constrained,' 'constrained,' (been) 'neutral,' 'helped' or 'significantly helped' delivery. Using these responses a composite score has been created based on:

- 'significantly helped' and 'helped' scored = +1
- 'neutral' = 0
- 'severely constrained' and 'constrained' = -1.

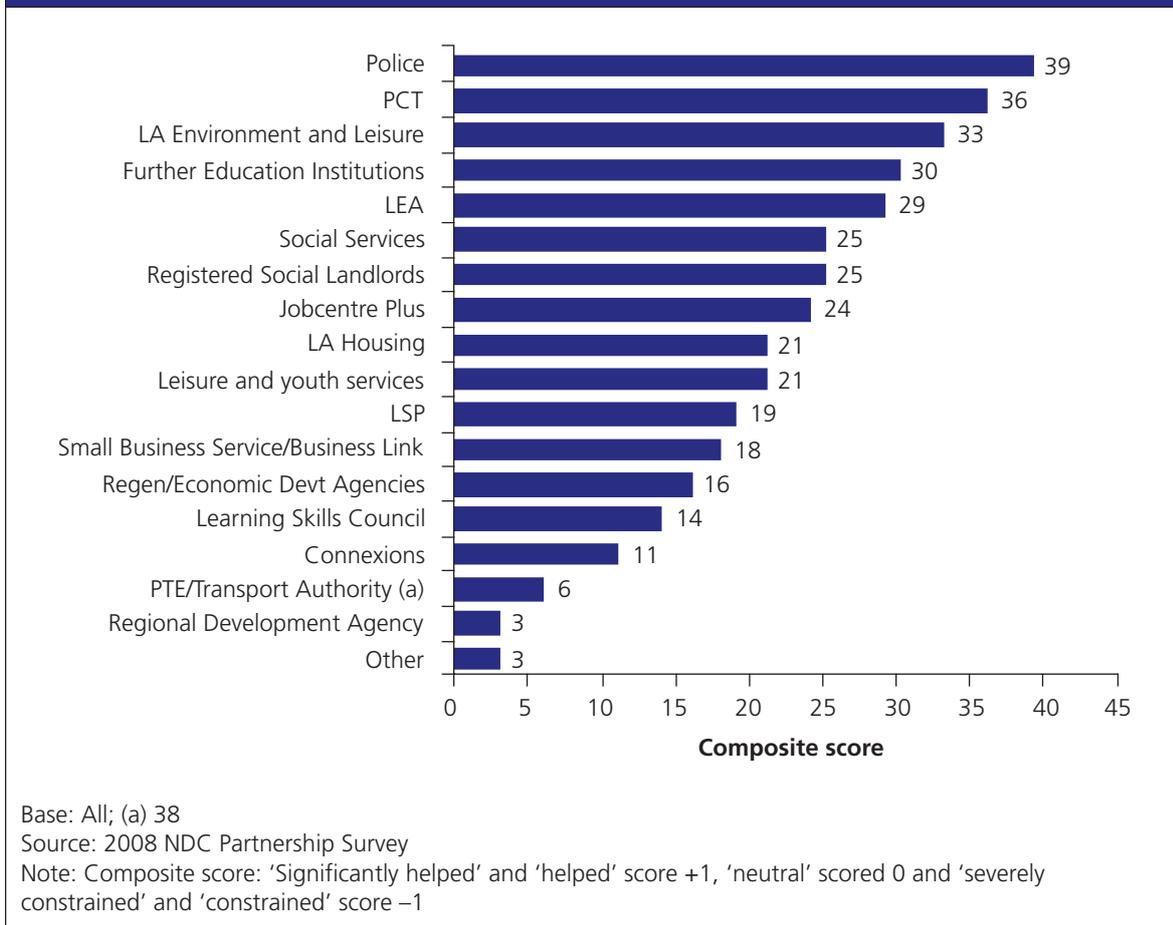
3.5. Each agency can thus potentially achieve a score ranging from -39 (all NDCs report 'severely constrained' or 'constrained') to +39 (all NDCs report 'significantly helped' or 'helped'). Results are presented in Figure 3.4:

- the police, PCT and local authority environment and leisure departments recorded highest scores, and are thus perceived by NDCs to have been most helpful in supporting NDC delivery
- there was no agency for which more NDCs felt engagement constrained, rather than helped, delivery.

3.6. In assessing relationships with agencies each NDC could potentially 'score' from +18 (all 18 identified agencies help delivery) to -18 (all agencies constrain delivery):

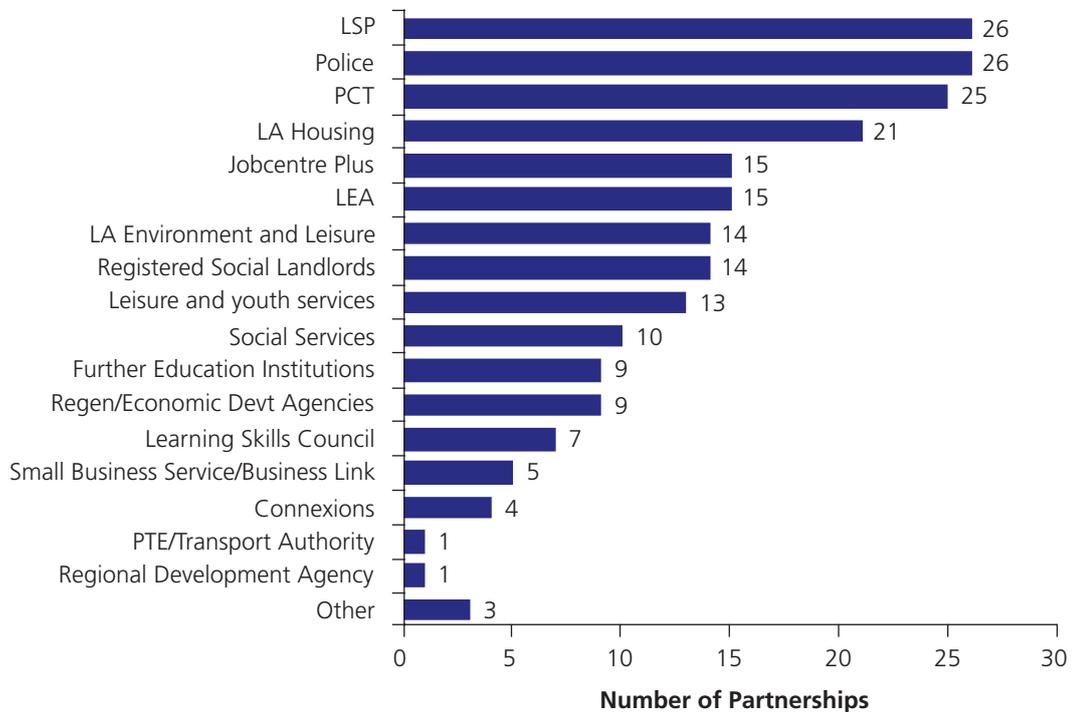
- the highest 'scored' 17
- only one NDC had a negative 'score' (-7)
- the average 'score' was 10.

Figure 3.4: Agencies: engagement helping or constraining delivery (composite score)



3.7. Figure 3.5 explores the extent to which NDCs are represented on the boards or working groups of other agencies:

- on average, NDCs have some sort of representation on the board or working groups of six other agencies
- all NDCs are represented on at least one other board or working group; one NDC is represented on boards or groups of 17 out of 18 agencies
- the agencies on which most NDCs are represented are LSPs, the police and PCTs
- transport bodies and Regional Development Agencies each have only one NDC represented on their boards or working groups.

Figure 3.5: NDC representation on agency boards and working groups

Base: All

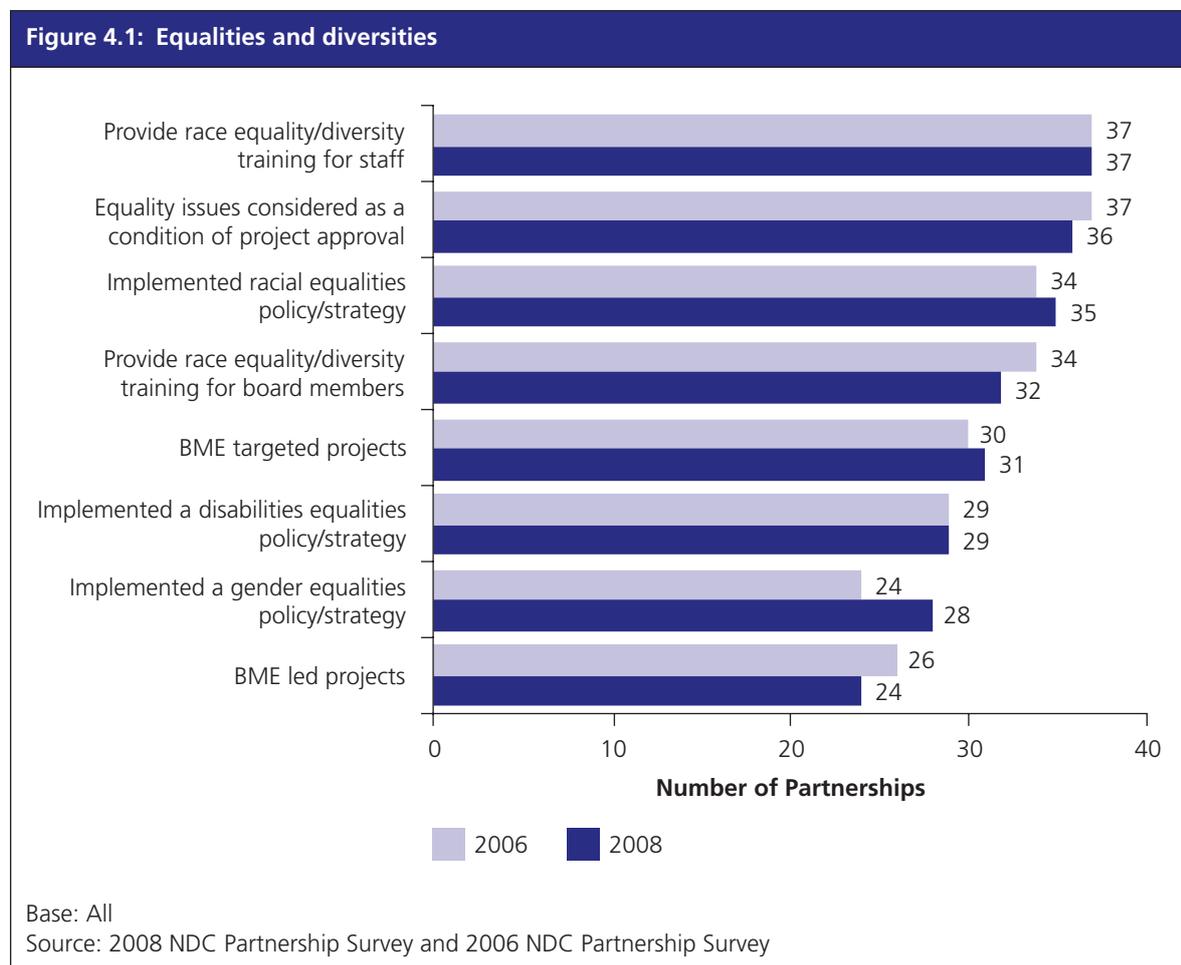
Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey

- 3.8. In terms of engagements with wider strategic processes and institutions, thirty-three NDCs consider they are involved with their Local Strategic Partnership, one less than in 2006. NDCs are involved most frequently through chairs and/or chief executives sitting on LSP Boards, sub-committees or groups (Figure 3.5). Thirty-five are involved with the Local Area Agreement (LAA) covering their area, three more than in 2006. Again, involvement is typically in the form of representation on working groups. Several NDCs said they were consulted on plans for the LAA.

4. Delivering neighbourhood renewal: equalities, evaluation, delivery and succession

Equalities and diversity

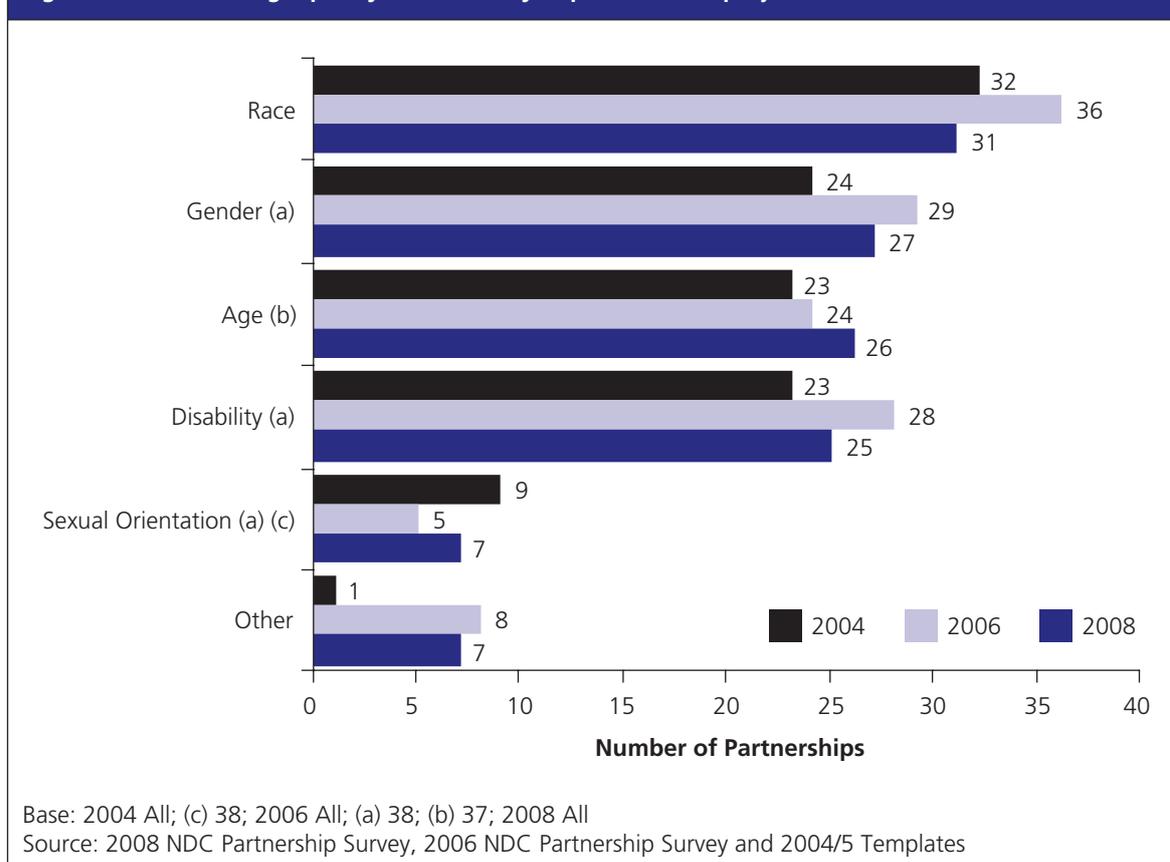
- 4.1. Figure 4.1 identifies ways in which NDC Partnerships are addressing equalities and diversity issues. Across the Programme the emphasis tends to be placed on equality issues in relation to staff training (37 NDCs), project appraisal (36), implementing racial equality policies/strategies (35), and training Board members (32).
- 4.2. On the whole, there is little change compared with 2006: four more NDCs have now implemented a gender equalities policy or strategy, although gender and disability strategies are less in evidence than are those which address race equalities issues.



4.3. Figure 4.2 identifies the numbers of NDCs monitoring the equality and diversity impacts of their projects:

- in general, fewer NDCs are monitoring equality and diversity impacts in 2008 than was the case in 2006, other than in relation to age and sexual orientation
- however, in all cases other than for race and sexual orientation there has been a net increase since 2004
- despite a decrease in the numbers of NDCs monitoring the impacts of their projects on race, this still remains the most frequently monitored equalities issue.

Figure 4.2: Monitoring equality and diversity impacts of NDC projects

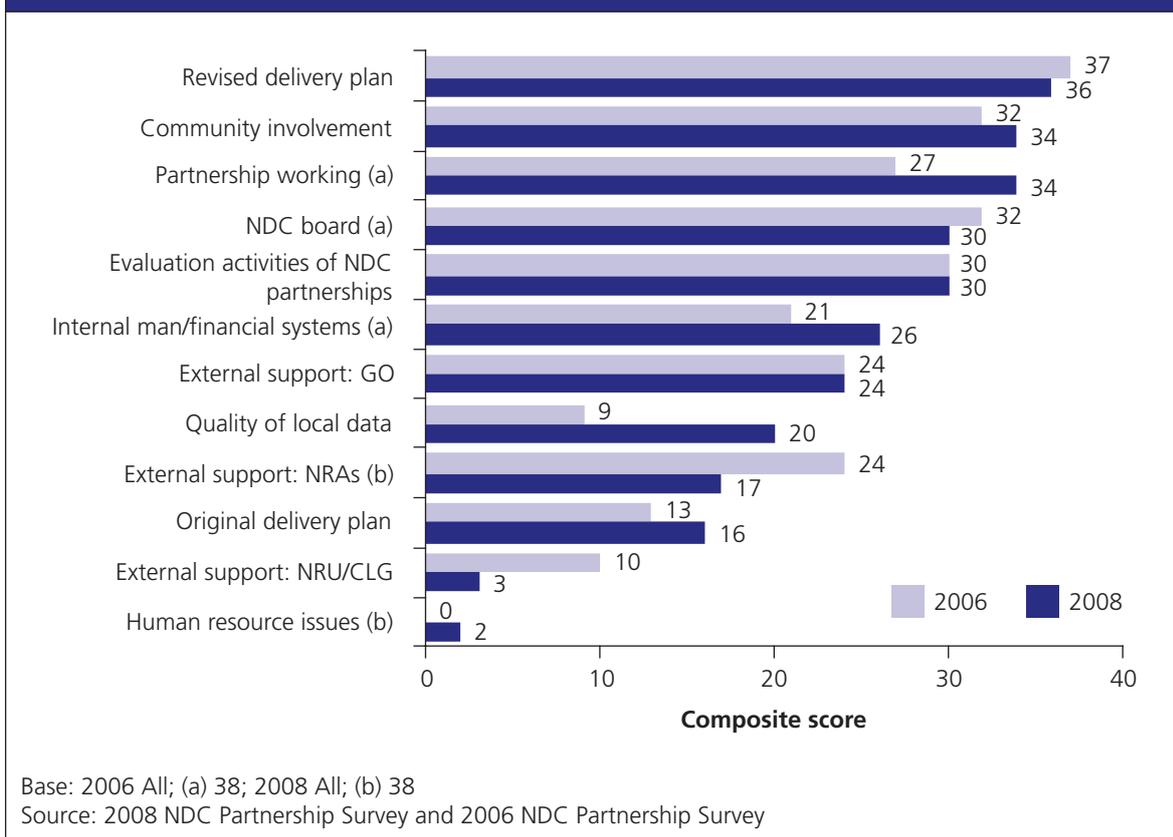


The delivery process

4.4. Partnerships were asked the degree to which a range of process issues either constrained, or encouraged, delivery. A composite score for each issue has been created in which 'seriously constrained' and 'constrained' responses scored -1, 'neutral/not an issue' and 'don't know' 0 and 'assisted' and 'greatly assisted' +1 (Figure 4.3). Key findings include:

- as was the case in 2006, revised delivery plans, community involvement, partnership working, NDC Boards and evaluation activities most assisted delivery in the previous 12 months
- once again, human resource issues are viewed as being the least assisting/most constraining factor
- while revised delivery plans were seen as the most positive factor, original delivery plans were considered helpful by far fewer NDCs and even seen as a constraint by three
- between 2006 and 2008 three factors saw a marked increase in assisting delivery: partnership working, internal management and financial systems, and the quality of data on local needs
- on the other hand, two factors saw decreases: external support from Neighbourhood Renewal Advisors and also from central government through CLG.

Figure 4.3: Factors assisting and constraining delivery in the past 12 months (composite score)



4.5. NDCs were also given an opportunity to provide their own observations in relation to two open ended questions:

- ‘... state the three key factors which have contributed to your Partnership’s success in the past year’
- ‘and the three main challenges your organisation will face in the year to come’.

4.6. In relation to factors contributing to **success** the most frequently mentioned issues are:

- partnership working (32 NDCs)
- Board strengths and continuity (20)
- staff strengths and continuity (18)
- strategy (15)
- community engagement (15)
- projects (12)
- mainstreaming (8)
- internal systems (8).

4.7. And with regard to **challenges** the most commonly identified issues are:

- funding (26)
- developing or implementing succession strategy (24)
- completing capital programmes (16)
- staffing (13)
- partnership working (10)
- mainstreaming (10).

4.8. Eight Partnerships referred to the 'credit crunch' or 'economic downturn' when describing the challenges faced, particularly in relation to the completion of large capital projects.

Exit/succession strategies

4.9. At the time of the survey, all 39 Partnerships had less than three years to run on NDC Programme funding; one was to wind up within three months. Partnerships were asked to identify arrangements for spend over the remainder of the Programme:

- twenty-one have committed all of their funding until the end of the Programme; as might be expected, of the 17 with less than two years left to run, nearly two thirds have committed all their funding
- the remaining 18 Partnerships expect to commit all of their funding before the end of the Programme
- twenty-five NDCs expect one or more of their large scale capital projects to be on going after the end of the Programme.

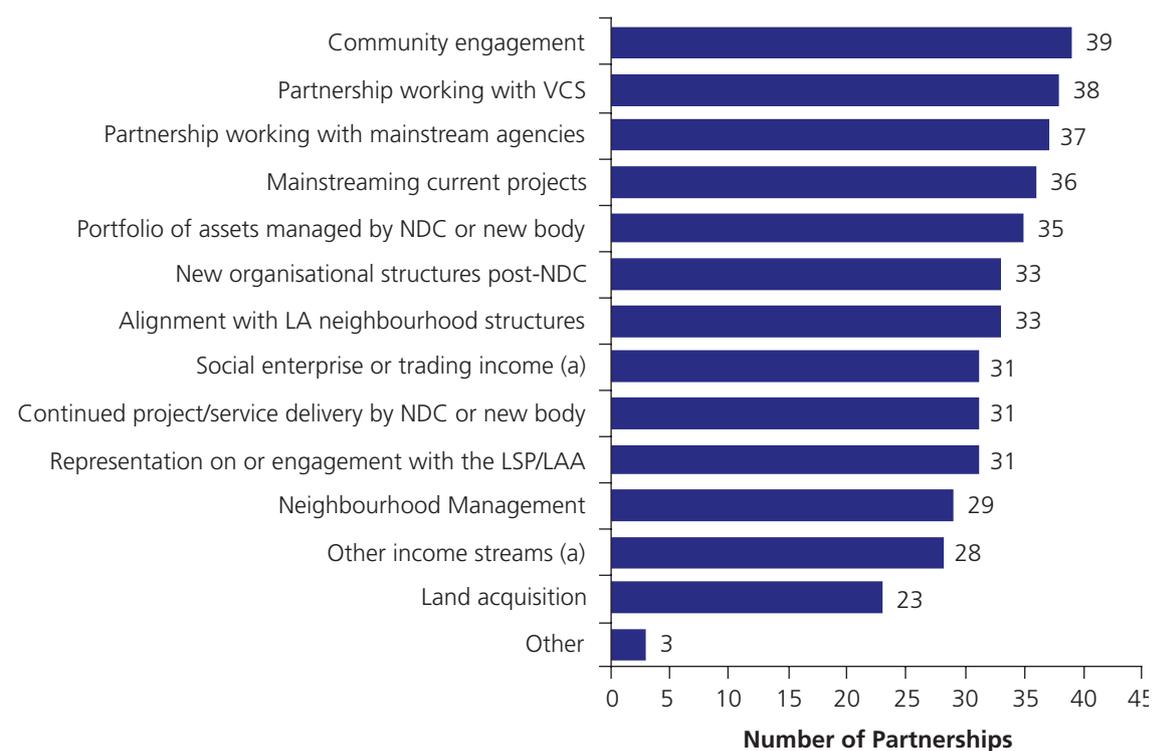
4.10. Respondents were also asked to comment on their succession strategy⁵:

⁵ Research on NDC succession strategies has been carried out by the national evaluation team: *Delivering Succession Strategies: some lessons from the New Deal for Communities Programme* http://extra.shu.ac.uk/ndc/downloads/reports/Delivering_Succession_Strategies.pdf.

- twenty-one have an exit or succession strategy in place, compared with only 10 in 2006
- the remaining 18 are in the process of developing their strategy; of these, 12 think it will be in place in the next six months and four between six months and a year; two did not specify.

4.11. Key elements Partnerships are including in their exit/succession strategies are shown in Figure 4.4. All 39 are committed to continued community engagement, while partnership working with the voluntary and community sector (38) and with mainstream agencies (37), mainstreaming of current projects (36) and the management of assets (35) are also mentioned by most as key elements in succession arrangements. Twenty-six NDCs currently own or manage assets on behalf of the local community. These range in value from £480,000 to £14 million.

Figure 4.4: Factors included in exit/succession strategies



Base: All; (a) 38
 Source: 2008 NDC Partnership Survey

£15
ISBN 978-1-4098-1435-1

ISBN 978-1-4098-1435-1



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