



## Social enquiry, social reform and social action

one hundred years of Barnett House

George Smith, Elizabeth Peretz and Teresa Smith







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We should finally underline that the book represents the views of the three authors, and not necessarily those of the Department of Social Policy and Intervention, the Social Sciences Division or the University of Oxford.

George Smith, Elizabeth Peretz and Teresa Smith June 2014

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## Glossary and abbreviations

### University of Oxford bodies referred to in the text

General Board of the Faculties: co-ordinated and supervised the work of the academic faculties including all matters connected with research and teaching at the university. Merged with Hebdomadal Council in 2000 to form the new Council

**Hebdomadal Council:** committee originally meeting every seven days, composed of university, college, and faculty members to advise Congregation on reform and matters of university administration. Merged with General Board to form the new Council.

**Council:** the university's executive governing body since 2000/01. Members of Council are in effect the charity trustees.

Vice-chancellor: administrative head of the university, although the titular head of the university is the chancellor. Until 1969 a strict rotational role appointed by all the college heads; now appointed by a specially formed committee chaired by the chancellor.

Congregation: sovereign body of all academic staff, heads and members of college governing bodies, senior research, computing, library and administrative staff; in effect the 'demos' of senior members based in Oxford. Note that convocation includes all Oxford MAs, wherever they reside.

**Colleges:** self-governing bodies which sponsor candidates for matriculation in undergraduate and graduate examinations of the university. They are each responsible for their undergraduate teaching and for discipline.

**Divisions:** from 2000–01 the university created originally five divisions (now reduced to four), one of which is the social sciences; the others are the humanities, medical and mathematical, physical and life sciences.

Faculties, departments, schools, institutes are all grouped under the relevant division. Thus the Social Sciences Division currently covers the Faculty of Law, seven schools, six departments and two institutes.

**Delegacy** was a term used to describe a body that was part of the university but delivering a specific function for which the university was responsible. Current use of the term is largely restricted to the Delegates of the University Press, who are academic staff appointed to supervise the policy of the Oxford University Press, which is itself a department of the university.

#### Glossary and abbreviations

EPPE & EPPSE - Effective Provision ADSS - Association of Directors of Social Services of Pre-School, Primary and Secondary Education BPhil – Bachelor of Philosophy (Oxford graduate degree) EPSC – Education Policy and Standards Committee BSA – British Sociological Association ESRC - Economic and Social Research Council CAB - Citizens Advice Bureau FEC - Full Economic Costing CASASP - Centre for the Analysis of South African Social Policy GSC - Graduate Studies Committee CCETSW - Central Council for IFS - Institute for Fiscal Studies Education and Training in Social IMD/ID – Index of Multiple Work Deprivation/Indices of Deprivation CDP – Community Development IULA – International Union of Local Project Authorities CEBI - Centre for Evidence Based JRAM - Joint Resource Allocation Intervention Mechanism CERI - Centre for Educational JUCSS - Joint Universities Council for Research and Innovation, OECD Social Services COS - Charity Organisation Society LGA – Local Government Association CPAG - Child Poverty Action Group LMS – Local Management of Schools CQSW - Certificate of Qualification LSE - London School of Economics in Social Work MPhil – Master of Philosophy CSS - Certificate of Social Service (Oxford graduate degree) CSU - Christian Social Union MSC – Manpower Services CVCP - Committee of Vice-Commission Chancellors and Principals MSc - Master of Science (Oxford DES – Department of Education graduate degree) and Science (now Department for MSWs – Medical Social Workers Education, DfE) NALGO - National Association of DHSS - Department of Health and Local Government Officers Social Security (now Department of NatCen - National Centre for Social Health, DoH) Research (now NatCen Social DipSW – Diploma in Social Work Research) E&PS - Economics and Political NCSRS – Nuffield College Social Science Reconstruction Survey EBSI - Evidence Based Social NCSS - National Council of Social Intervention Service EBSW - Evidence Based Social Work NDC - New Deal for Communities

NFWI - National Federation of

Women's Institutes

EPA - Educational Priority Area

NHS - National Health Service

NIH - National Institutes of Health

NSF – National Science Foundation

OCSI – Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion

OCSS – Oxford Council of Social Service

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

OISP – Oxford Institute of Social Policy

ONS – Office for National Statistics

OPRG – Oxford Preschool Research Group

ORCC – Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

OXFLAP – Oxford Centre for Family Law and Policy

OXPOP – Oxford Centre of Population Research

PATs – Policy Action Teams

PGCE – Postgraduate Certificate in Education

PI – Principal Investigator

PLDK – Preschool Learning Development Kit

PPE – Philosophy Politics and Economics (or 'Modern Greats' – undergraduate degree in Oxford) PSSRU – Personal Social Services Research Unit

RAE – Research Assessment Exercise

RAM – Resource Allocation Mechanism

RCTs – Randomised Control(led) Trials

REF – Research Excellence Framework

SBC – Supplementary Benefits Commission

SCIE – Social Care Institute for Excellence

SDRC – Social Disadvantage Research Centre

SEU – Social Evaluation Unit, Barnett House; or Social Exclusion Unit, Cabinet Office

SSRC – Social Science Research Council

UFC - University Funding Council

UGC – University Grants Commission

USAF - United States Air Force

WEA – Workers' Educational Association

YMCA – Young Men's Christian Association

### **Preface**

Although inequalities have risen in many affluent democracies since the 1970s, the expansion of social policies, including support for socially disadvantaged people as well as universal policies and social insurance aimed at insuring against social risks, has had a positive impact, not only for the individual or groups of people covered, but also for the stabilisation of national economies and societies. The Great Recession of 2008–09 did not lead to a Great Depression, largely thanks to the stabilising effects of the welfare state. Unemployment, disability and ill health, or old age, no longer more or less automatically lead to poverty, as they did in many European countries 100 years ago. At the beginning of the twenty-first century affluent democracies spend between 20% and 30% of their gross domestic product on a wide range of social policies and services. In many developing and middle income countries social policies are also expanding and the concept of social citizenship is advancing, leading to increasing amounts of public financial resources being committed to social welfare. Social policy is at the core of what democratic governments do.

For the past 100 years, work carried out at Barnett House has contributed to the research and social scientific evidence base for social policy initiatives at local, national and international levels as well as to a better understanding of social policy developments. From its very beginning, research at Barnett House has on the one hand studied the micro level and individual behaviour and contributed to social work, and on the other hand conducted social enquiry that analyses macro structural conditions. This tradition continues until today. The Centre for Evidence-Based Intervention (CEBI) is primarily concerned with providing the evidence base for individual-level psychosocial interventions; the Oxford Institute of Social Policy (OISP) places its focus on larger sociological concepts (such as class, family, inequality, poverty and social mobility) as well as macro structural conditions and comparative policy analyses. This

research is complemented by demographic analyses of population developments in Britain and internationally.

One of the core elements for the success of the research carried out at Barnett House is its multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approach. There are only a few social welfare research institutions globally that can boast an academic faculty and researchers from such a wide array of academic disciplines and subject areas, including anthropology, demography, economics, political science, psychology, public health, social policy and social work, as well as sociology. From initially primarily studying developments in Britain, research has increasingly become international, which might be partially a result of recruiting a global academic community of faculty members, researchers and students.

Faculty have taught and trained future generations of social activists and reformers, public servants and academics in social science research focusing on improving the welfare of people. Alumni have gone on to become leaders of non-governmental organisations, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in the United States, politicians, government advisers and senior public officials in a number of countries and with international bodies, including the European Commission, the International Labour Organization, the World Bank and the World Health Organization. Others have taken up academic appointments in leading institutions of higher education, for instance at Harvard University, the London School of Economics, Rhodes University, Seoul National University, Yale and many other institutions. Barnett House can take pride in its highly successful alumni community.

Contributing to impact outside academia has recently become a priority for organisations funding research, be it the European Commission or the UK government. The desire behind the impact agenda is a value for money debate, where the social sciences are asked to demonstrate that the money provided for research has an added societal or economic benefit. However, public involvement is what many social scientists do in addition to their day job and it is definitely part of the collective DNA at Barnett House. Although stereotypically university faculty are often said to stay within the confines of their academic comfort zone, in the world of social policy this is not the case. It is not for lack of robust evidence or public engagement by the research community that opportunities to reduce poverty, improve public health, provide better childcare services and

#### Preface

pensions for the elderly are often not pursued, but due to power relations and political interests. When Samuel Barnett in 1888 wrote 'the ways and means of improving the conditions of the people are at hand', social science research was not yet very far developed and his statement should be understood as a normative and moral obligation. Today, more than ever before, we have the knowledge and the means to mitigate poverty, social exclusion, ill health and inequality, and create more just societies. It is for public policy and civil society actors to make use of the available research findings.

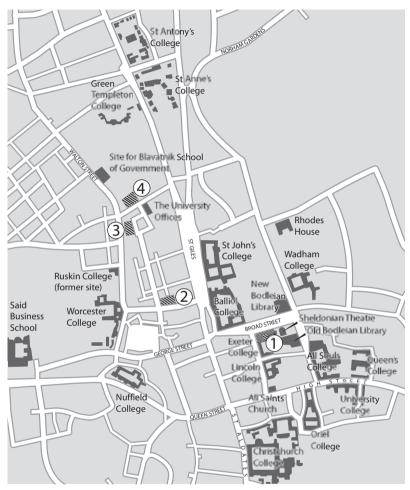
I hope that Barnett House will continue to educate leaders in social reform and contribute to the social-scientific knowledge base in making this world a better place to live in for the many and not only the few, as has been the case for the past centenary and has been so lucidly evidenced in this book.

#### Martin Seeleib-Kaiser

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June 2014

## Map of locations



Map of central Oxford with Barnett House locations and other selected landmarks

#### Key:

- 1. Barnett House, 1914–1936
- 2. Barnett House, 1936–1957
- 3. Barnett House, 1957-1971; 1979 to date
- 4. New Barnett House, 1971-1979

### Introduction

A centenary history of an institution is in one sense an arbitrary time slice of no particular significance. Though it may have a beginning, it does not necessarily have a neat shape – a rise, a fall or an end. Equally the history of one relatively small academic institution might be of great interest to its close associates but raise few issues of wider concern. But the Barnett House story is not just of parochial interest; it raises many wider issues against the background of the growth of the social sciences and social research over the last 100 years. These include the tensions between social enquiry, social reform and social action in an academic setting, and the development of social work and social research as these became increasingly professionalised activities (although it cannot claim to be a history of any of these). Its story is a rarely told part of the Oxford tradition of philanthropy and public service.

Barnett House was founded in Oxford in 1914, physically close to the heart of the university but not formally part of it for another 30 years. It was designed to be a centre for the study of contemporary social and economic problems, and for the preparation of young men and women for social work or social research. Focusing on social problems required what would now be termed a multidisciplinary approach; this was one of its characteristics throughout. The history of Barnett House is of interest in its own right, with its twists and turns, institutional, personal and professional tensions and clashes, as it carved out a role at the margins of a large and very powerful university. But it also illustrates how an academic institution which set out not just to study contemporary social issues but to promote reform (and, as its founders saw it, 'improvement' or 'betterment') through social policy and practice, not least through the training of the next generation, attempted to thread its way between the Scylla of becoming merely a set of activists or a pressure group, and the Charybdis of being a set of detached voyeurs dissecting other people's miseries. These tensions were there at the start in 1914 and they were there at the end of our story – particularly in the twenty-first century with the emphasis in the latest national research assessment

exercises on the influence or impact of research undertaken within higher education.

There were also tensions within Barnett House, which contained staff with a strong commitment to the applied end as well as those who focused primarily on their academic discipline. There were tensions, too, with the university both before and after Barnett House was formally incorporated – was the programme of research or teaching 'academically respectable' enough? Barnett House no doubt shares these tensions with many other university social science and education departments, but its long and varied history illustrates how this worked out in practice in one setting. The central question it raises is the possibility within a higher education institution of a role that combines the study of pressing social issues and their potential alleviation through policy or practice reform with the education and training of future policy makers, practitioners and researchers. The founding generation had little doubt that Barnett House was the answer, with a 'Barnett House' confidently proposed for every major town or city by Sir Henry Hadow in a speech in Glasgow in 1922. A hundred years of experience may lead to a different conclusion in today's much more crowded field, with the expansion of social research and the proliferation of university social science departments and research units, think tanks and pressure groups. But in 1914 Barnett House was a pioneer.

The history of the hundred years from 1914 to 2014 shows some strong continuities in subject matter; many social problems that preoccupied the founders – youth (un)employment or delinquency for example, have sadly remained major issues as have poverty and deprivation, though the definitions and explanations may have shifted. There are some surprising continuities too, for example the emphasis on conducting local experiments to test out new policies and practice ideas, first seen in the 1920s, then again in the 'action research' of the 1960s and 1970s and most recently in the form of evidence-based intervention with randomised control studies. There is also the continuing theme of the link between these local pilot initiatives and wider national or even international policy and practice. Many Barnett House studies started with a strong local focus even though their goal was also to influence wider policy and practice – seen, for example, in the community regeneration projects in both rural and urban areas. But this raises the question of how these local examples could best inform and influence wider policy. Here

there are discontinuities in ways of measuring 'what works'; in its early days as a 'civic house' hosting debate, study and action, the criterion for success was 'getting things started' or how well the new ideas worked in practice. Now the emphasis is on setting measurable outcomes and rigorously testing the results over time against control groups or areas.

Several other themes run though the narrative; some of these are more prominent in the earlier period and some in the postwar era; others remain throughout. One of the major motivations at the start was to reform the university's agenda to include more emphasis on contemporary social and economic issues and to broaden its intake, but this receded as this role was taken over by other groups; Barnett House moved on to pioneer new areas and itself became a provider rather than simply a catalyst for others. From the start women played a central but sometimes invisible role in Barnett House; a theme here is the way this shifted over time in an institution that throughout the 100 years had a much higher proportion of female academic staff than most other social science departments in the university. One clear strand at the start is the strong Christian background and motivation of many of the founders but over time this became increasingly secular in form to merge into a public service ethos. From the start there was a strong emphasis on the importance of the voluntary contribution, persisting well into the era of growing statutory state services after the second world war. Perhaps for this reason and also through its links with local initiatives and local research, Barnett House was rarely an advocate of purely central state solutions to social problems, though central government had a key role - and was therefore the right target for evidence and advocacy to feed into policy development. The intention was to persuade others (governments, local authorities, professional groups) to introduce reforms, sometimes by the shock of data, sometimes by research on 'what works' or by detailed groundwork on the nature of social problems, and sometimes by acting as formal or informal advisers. Barnett House's founders were explicitly reformers rather than radicals and this was a characteristic that survived even through the rather more radical late 1960s and 1970s.

Until the 1960s there were never more than ten teaching and research staff, many of them unpaid volunteers; and at its peak, Barnett House never numbered more than 40. We can only illustrate its range of work and impact with selected examples rather than a

comprehensive survey. For the major part of the 100 years Barnett House's focus was on the UK. But in the early period with students from many countries there was the 'imperial' assumption shared by the founding generation that what was good for the UK could safely be exported elsewhere. More recently (post 1990) the growth in numbers of overseas graduate students and international staff, as well as the increase in international research, has meant that this influence has spread to many other locations. Much of this is diffuse and difficult to analyse. However, in countries such as South Africa it has been concentrated and significant.

Much harder to cover is the impact on those who moved through Barnett House in their training or research. In one sense Barnett House presumably wanted (even though it might not always have succeeded) to recruit able and committed students who broadly shared its objectives, and so while it might have shaped or bent their trajectory, they were already halfway there. We have not attempted to do more than illustrate this element of Barnett House's influence though it may well be far more important than all the other elements combined.

In writing this centenary history we have set out to trace both its trajectory since its foundation, and some of the major issues which run through this hundred year period. The book is divided into three main sections; the first, and longest, is a chronological history, which traces the personalities and themes which have contributed to the shape of the department. The second and third sections – centenary accounts of social and community work in the department and research, respectively – stand in their own right, with more detail than the chronological history allows. Inevitably there is overlap with the chronological section, as taking out all the social work teaching and social research would leave a rather thin historical narrative.

The three authors have worked collaboratively throughout, but have put their own stamp on the chapters for which each holds prime responsibility. Elizabeth Peretz is the primary author of chapters 1–4, George Smith of chapters 5–8 and 11–12, and Teresa Smith of chapters 9–10. Two of the authors have been long-standing members of Barnett House staff, and were both heads of department; for this period, they have used the convention of writing in the third person. We make the disclaimer that we have written a history of an institution in its context, and have not attempted to write the history of the context itself; overall histories of social work, community work

and social research – and indeed the University of Oxford – are left to others, though we hope to have raised some questions and provided significant examples in all these major areas. Though Barnett House makes occasional appearances in many published sources there is no overall account. We hope we have put that straight.

Finally, we have been very selective in the issues we raise, the examples we have chosen and the people we mention to illustrate the Barnett House story. Other people would write a different story and feature different actors. Some will take the view that we should have drawn stumps at about 1990, as no history can or should be written until a suitable time interval has elapsed to allow proper judgement. But to truncate the centenary account after 75 years would not fit our purpose, and some of the most significant events occurred after 1990. This period is likely to be the most contentious, not least because most people from that period are still around, but we hope they at least recognise the account even though they may not always agree with our selection or judgements.

A note on sources for the history: as well as published documentation – there are at least three full autobiographies by former Barnett House members – we have drawn on material in the Barnett House and university archives, and other archival collections in London and elsewhere; these are listed in the bibliography. We have also used our own collections of papers for more recent events. We have drawn extensively on interviews with former and current staff and former students. We have not conducted a formal survey of either staff or students; nor is this an oral history. The interviews have enormously enriched the story. We have used the interview material to illuminate personalities and events and to highlight key issues. Some direct quotations are used when they express a general point, but attributable quotations are rarely used.

A note on uprating historical costs: to give a better sense of the current values of monetary amounts in the text we have sometimes uprated these to 2014 values. We have mainly used the price index as a rule, though in measuring research and other costs, wage indices could be a more accurate guide, and in the earlier period much of the labour was voluntary.

George Smith, Elizabeth Peretz, Teresa Smith May 2014

# **History of Barnett House**

#### CHAPTER 1



Sidney Ball: 1857-1918

# Origins and early days: 1914–1918

Barnett House was formally opened at 6.30pm on 6 June 1914. From the start it was very closely associated with the University of Oxford, though not a formal part of it or any of its colleges. It was an institution dedicated to social enquiry and action, dependent on private subscribers and fundraisers. Speeches were made in Balliol College Hall, after a formal tea at the 'House', as it immediately became known. Presiding were AL Smith, master of Balliol, and Sidney Ball, a distinguished academic of neighbouring St John's College, who was Barnett House's first president and its principal advocate. The gathering included the vice-chancellor of Oxford, heads of colleges¹ and many important Oxford families. Lord James Bryce, the just-

<sup>1</sup> Oxford has always had a federal structure. Its constituent colleges are autonomous, self-governing institutions. The senior figures in the university were also senior members of their colleges. Until recently, the vice-chancellorship was held by a 'head of house' (college) for a fixed period on the principle of seniority.

returned British ambassador to Washington, and Horace Plunkett, the agricultural reformer, addressed this distinguished audience to launch the venture.

Both these men had international reputations, Bryce in the United States, and Plunkett in America and in Ireland. Why would they have been advocates of this new institution? Brvce, by this time in his 70s, had a formidable reputation as a historian, expert on American, Irish and European politics, jurist, academic reformer, Christian Nonconformist (uncomfortable, this, for his fellowship at Oriel College in the mid-nineteenth century), supporter of women's higher education (a founding member of Girton College in Cambridge) and major Liberal politician. The Royal Commission on Secondary Education (1894–96) he chaired had shaped the 1902 Education Act. Like the instigators of Barnett House, he had been a close friend of the Oxford philosopher and social activist TH Green, and was well known in London literary circles. He was also an intrepid international climber – the first European to climb Mount Ararat – with even a mountain named after him, Mount Bryce in the Rockies. Bryce was thus an extraordinary all-rounder, a 'walking encyclopaedia' (as his Dictionary of National Biography entry records) and a heavyweight intellectual, who was also practically engaged in contemporary issues of social policy. He was the first president of the Sociological Association founded in 1903 (Platt, 2003:8). This combination of outdoor activity, intellectual pursuits and social action made him almost the archetypal 'Barnett House man' and its ideal patron, a position he retained until his death. The other speaker, Plunkett, a wealthy Irish farmer, Liberal politician and great exponent of rural regeneration and proselvtiser for co-operation in the countryside, had devoted his life and fortune to the cause of the small farmer, encouraging agricultural co-operatives, farmers' clubs and the revival of the countryside – as in the slogan 'better farming, better business, better living'; he had enjoyed great success in the United States, mixed success in Ireland and had recently settled in England to further his cause.

The opening was recorded in the national and local press.<sup>2</sup> Plunkett's speech, emphasising the need for research into rural matters, was summarised and so was Bryce's, commending social

<sup>2</sup> Articles from ten newspapers survive, including the *Manchester Guardian* and the *West-minster Gazette*. Henrietta Barnett's scrapbook contains many examples (SC/1/48, Oxford University Archives).

enquiry as an academic pursuit. Bryce congratulated Ball for furthering social and political studies in Oxford; Plunkett hoped that Barnett House would increase knowledge of agricultural and rural conditions. In the local press, it was hoped that the new venture would throw 'light' on social issues and remove 'heat' from disputes.<sup>3</sup>

The people who had donated funds for this solid three-storey building, which stood at the heart of Oxford University, were supporting a very concrete memorial to the admirable Christian social reformer Canon Barnett, who had run Toynbee Hall, a settlement house in East London, for the previous thirty years. From Barnett House, on the corner of Broad Street and Turl Street, it was a few minutes' walk to the colleges of the first Barnett House Council members - All Souls, Balliol, Exeter, Oriel, St John's, Trinity, University and Wadham. For the university, then, Barnett House was hard to ignore. This memorial was not to be another settlement, despite the fact that most of Barnett House's advocates were deeply involved in the movement, and in particular at Toynbee Hall in Whitechapel. Settlements were still being set up – in Edinburgh in 1905, and Bristol in 1911 - bringing students and graduates into close contact with the urban poor; they were residential settings where the better off could settle amongst the poor for periods of casework and community work (Beauman, 1996; Bradley, 2009). But Barnett House was to be more research oriented; a centre for social enquiry, social reform and social action.

The letter sent to potential donors describes the three main aspirations for the memorial house: first, to develop a 'specialised library collecting and co-ordinating material for study and investigation'; second, to provide a headquarters for the adult education movement in Oxford; and third, to create a permanent centre for the Oxford University settlements' committee. It also aimed 'to provide for lectures and instruction, and the issue of publications', and 'a place in which various movements concerned with the study of social conditions' can meet and confer.<sup>4</sup> To the credit of Sidney Ball and his founding committee, these aspirations were achieved within the first five years, and, with some twists and turns, survive in one form or another. There were always going to be tensions; these power-

<sup>3</sup> An article in *Jackson's Oxford Illustrated News* (10 June 1914) commends 'the foundation of houses of quiet thought on very difficult problems out of which might come light rather than heat'.

<sup>4</sup> Comments in the first appeal for Barnett House, circulated in 1914 (SC1/2/1 and SC1/16, Oxford University Archives).

ful individuals were following paths not always leading in the same direction. This contributed to great vibrancy, but also to conflicts.

The signatories of the letter, and the donors, were motivated by diverse but overlapping concerns, all connected to the then current ideal of 'responsible citizenship' (Harris, 1992). Many of them were local families, but the list included national and international figures known for public service, including the Rowntrees, the Cadburys and Jane Addams, the prominent USA philanthropist and social worker.

## A centre for social enquiry, social reform and social action

Britain in the period before the first world war was gripped by industrial unrest. There had been violent conflicts in Tonypandy in Wales between the coal owners and their workers in 1910. The franchise was again in question; women were demanding equal citizenship. In June 1913 Emily Davison had been killed after throwing herself in front of a horse at the Derby to advertise the cause of 'votes for women'. Oxford reflected the wider society, despite being a rather protected cathedral and university town (Whiting, 1993). The latest conflict in the town had been a long and bitter tram strike in August 1913. Social enquiry, in the pursuit of urgent social reform, was being undertaken in intellectual circles and in government.

'Barnett House' had first been proposed in November 1913. Sidney Ball had invited some of his colleagues to his rooms in St John's College, Oxford to discuss how best to honour the memory of their friend Canon Barnett. This meeting deliberately echoed a similar occasion in Ball's rooms, thirty years earlier to the day, to decide on a memorial to Arnold Toynbee, passionate supporter of working-class adult education and a highly gifted lecturer. The meeting in 1883 resulted in agreement to found a settlement house, Toynbee Hall; the gathering in 1913 resulted in agreement to found Barnett House in Oxford.

By 1914 Sidney Ball had been an Oxford college fellow and tutor in philosophy for more than 30 years, after a period studying philosophy and political economy in Germany. In addition to his extensive work with generations of students, he was active in pressing for what he saw as 'progressive' reforms both inside and outside the university. In the university these included the full admission of women,

and increased emphasis on the study of contemporary social and economic problems; he was a key figure in initiatives such as an Oxford social science discussion club. Like Bryce, he was a keen outdoor man, regularly taking groups of students walking. He had also spent time in Chicago, at the university and in the settlement house. While he was a prominent figure in very many ventures, his special skills appear to be in turning imaginative ideas into practical initiatives and then organising and canvassing support rather than in being the central charismatic figure.

The provisional committee set up to develop the idea included some very substantial Oxford figures: AL Smith, master of Balliol College and champion of the adult education movement; WGS Adams, Gladstone professor of political theory and institutions, staunch supporter of rural regeneration and adviser to Lloyd George; WD Ross, fellow of Oriel College, who developed the idea of 'absolute duty'; William Geldart, Vinerian professor of law in Oxford; and the young Rev GM Bell, later the outspoken Bishop of Chichester. These men had much in common. All were imbued with a strong sense of public, Christian duty; all believed in working men's education, and most had taught in Liverpool, Glasgow or, nearer to home, at Ruskin, the newly formed working men's adult education college in Oxford.<sup>5</sup> They had all spent time in the university settlements; some in Toynbee Hall itself, some in other parts of Britain and in the United States. They believed in a responsibility to their fellow men and women to share their own learning and, through that, to help build a democracy by co-operation between different parts of society. They believed that Oxford University had a duty to open itself up more broadly to the population, to extend its curriculum to the study of contemporary social and economic problems, as well as to advise governments at local and national level. They were all protégés and admirers of TH Green, a fellow of Balliol and White's professor of moral philosophy. The memorial plaque on the boys' school which TH Green helped found in Oxford commends his work in 'completing the city's "ladder of learning" from elementary school to university...thus were united town and gown in common cause'.

The strands interwoven here should be laid out separately to view. These men were reformers – self-defined 'progressives' clearly

<sup>5</sup> Ruskin was not a college in the university, but one in the town which did not offer degree courses at this time. It was for working-class men, especially trade unionists.

distinguished from 'radicals' - concerned for university reform as well as the social welfare legislation of Lloyd George's 'New Liberal' budgets, and keenly aware of the growing importance of social science to social reform. They, like Barnett, had been part of the movement in the late-nineteenth century fired by the social philosophy and political engagement of TH Green, part of the late-Victorian moves towards secularisation, as religious doubt became channelled into social enquiry, civic duty and philanthropic action (Vincent and Plant, 1984). This shift was tartly described by Beatrice Webb in her autobiography as transferring 'the moral duty to serve the poor... from the Kingdom of God to the Kingdom of Man'. She went on to remark about the Barnetts that 'in religious faith Mr Barnett is an idealistic Christian without dogma, and Mrs Barnett an agnostic with idealism; in social faith, the man a Christian Socialist, the woman an individualist' (Webb, 1926:184). Oxford was the heart of the Christian Social Union in Britain, also inspired by TH Green to focus on social problems and public service. Here we see ideas of duty, social responsibility, citizenship and community combined for the educated classes with traditions of personal responsibility to alleviate local suffering, expressed in practical Christianity and empirical socialism. In the 1870s, the art critic and social reformer, John Ruskin, then Slade professor of fine art at Oxford, had organised a project for undergraduates to improve a local road to Hinksey on the outskirts of Oxford. The aim was to underline the value of physical labour as well as provide a community resource – a robust example of putting ethics into practice and helping foster a public service ethic, that was later given expression in the university settlements (Eagles, 2011:103-109). The 'diggers' included Arnold Toynbee, whose memorial, just a decade later, was to be Toynbee Hall.<sup>6</sup>

Sidney Ball was the central figure in Barnett House from the outset. In 1913 he was in his 60s. Barnett House was 'a venture in Oxford which was destined to be in a great degree the focus for many new hopes and ambitions' (Ball, O, 1923:243). As an Alfred Kahn fellow<sup>7</sup> travelling in the United States, Ball had been impressed by the experimental civic houses he had seen in New York and in Chicago (Ball, S, 1912). These examples went beyond the mould of the Brit-

<sup>6</sup> Among the diggers were Oscar Wilde and WG Collingwood, later Ruskin's secretary.

<sup>7</sup> Alfred Khan was a wealthy philanthropist, who hoped to establish world peace by promoting better mutual understanding between nations. Alfred Khan fellowships were given to men to tour the world, speaking on social reform and publicising what they found.

ish university settlements, where university men and women spent a period of their lives befriending working class communities, working with them as caseworkers in their individual lives and supporting their groups and educational classes. The US citizens' houses were open to the broader local civil society to read reports and research on social matters, to hear lectures and take part in debates and, in short, to develop a community of responsible co-operative citizenship. They also engaged in local social surveys and social enquiry.<sup>8</sup> Ball was a Fabian; the Fabian Society, founded in 1884, advocated an evolutionary approach to a democratic socialist future, through the power of persuasion – pamphlets, conferences, lectures. Many of its members were liberal in politics. Ball is reputed to have toasted 'to religion and the republic' when others toasted 'to God and the King' at college dinners in Oxford (Baker, 1923:224).

Other early figures had much in common with Ball. AL Smith, master of Balliol, was also a one-time resident of Toynbee Hall. He was a prominent university reformer, passionately active in opening learning up to the wider population at home and abroad. WGS Adams – whose association with Barnett House lasted until the late 1940s – was also at that first meeting. He had been appointed to an Oxford fellowship in political economy in 1909 and by 1912 had become the Gladstone professor of political theory and institutions at All Souls College in Oxford.9 He, too, had experience in adult education and in the university settlements. Like Ball and Bryce, he had spent time in the United States, visiting Chicago, where social sciences, in contrast to Oxford, were already respectable academic subjects. He had served in the Irish Office under Horace Plunkett, and became a lifelong admirer of Plunkett. He acted as adviser to Lloyd George on the 'Irish question'. Dr Carlyle, one of the leading members of the Christian Social Union in Oxford, was also part of the Barnett House group; rector of All Saints Church (now Lincoln College Library), and a Ruskin College lecturer (like Ball). And the enterprise was given further seniority by the presence of William Geldart, Vinerian professor of law, who advised on legal matters.

<sup>8</sup> Jane Addams founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889 in emulation of Toynbee Hall. It was the first settlement in the United States. The movement spread rapidly. By 1918, 413 centres had been established in America (Husock, 1993).

<sup>9</sup> Adams' rapid rise from lectureship to Gladstone professorship was in part due to Anson, warden of All Souls and staunch Tory MP for Oxford University. Anson mistakenly saw the young Adams as an ally against Irish Home Rule and pressed All Souls to develop the professorship specifically for Adams (Green, 2014).

Those gathered on that November afternoon were close friends and collaborators. Despite their support for women's education, and despite the considerable role women were already playing in civic life and the academic studies of society, Ball's founding session did not include a single woman. Yet women were to play a very significant part in this history. One in particular, Violet Butler, well known to most of them, and later described as 'the uncrowned queen' of Barnett House, was already a respected author, and imbued with just the same Christian responsibility to devote her life and intelligence to the public good.

The man they were honouring was another of their kind. Canon Barnett's work in Toynbee Hall had grounded many future influential political figures in the realities of East End life. These included William Beveridge, the architect of the post-second world war UK welfare state, and Clement Attlee, the postwar Labour prime minister. They forged lifelong links with Toynbee Hall, regularly visiting and discussing social policy and its practical application. In 1914 the Toynbee Hall model was well entrenched within the world of social work and adult education. The settlement movement was an established feature both in Britain and in America. Part of their popularity lay in their apparent ability to 'colonise' slum areas of the industrial cities. In the imagination of the middle and upper classes, parts of urban Britain were alien spaces, as much in need of colonisation as parts of Africa (Driver, 2001). Indeed, missionaries were moved to operate in British slums as well as other parts of the world. The university settlements were populated by men and women with just such a missionary fervour.

Neither Sidney Ball and his fellow Oxford men, nor Barnett's widow, Henrietta, advocated a settlement to honour his memory. Why did they want something different? There were four strands in their overall aims: adult education, social enquiry, inserting social studies into the university curriculum, and social action and administration.

#### Adult education

Attitudes had changed in the thirty years since the founding of Toynbee Hall. By the first decade of the twentieth century some intellectuals and a growing number of social reformers felt they should support and respect the poor and help them use democratic means to improve their lot. This was conceived as a 'new' way of doing things. The movement for workers' education was especially strong in Edwardian Oxford. Goldman (1995) argues that despite the fact that Cambridge was the first to begin adult education 'extension lectures', Oxford had the most impact of all the universities in influencing the shape post-school learning was to take in Britain in the early years of the twentieth century.

Oxford's extension lectures were already well established in the 1890s in localities across Britain. They had been held in the Potteries, the industrial area around Stoke-on-Trent; the north west, including Manchester and as far north as Carlisle and the Lake District; as well as Yorkshire, the home counties and the south west, stretching down to Penzance. Lecturers on the circuit – who had included Toynbee, Ball himself, and AL Smith – and their students began to debate the need for a more intensive form of learning. something nearer, in fact, to the tutorial system that undergraduates experienced in Oxford colleges. There was a growing dissatisfaction with the learning afforded by crowded lectures – in fact, there was a falling off in numbers, possibly influenced by the advent of the Workers' Education Association (WEA) in 1903, and by Ruskin College, both of which offered a more intensive form of education than extension lectures. At the same time the Oxford lecturers continued to argue for the opening up of Oxford University itself to working men and to women – a democracy should not waste talent and had responsibilities to all its citizens.

In 1907 the extension lectures summer meeting in Oxford held a special Joint Conference on Education of Workpeople attended by 400 delegates representing over 200 organisations. There Sidney Ball delivered a lecture on 'What Oxford Can Do for Workpeople'. In 1908 the summer school produced a request to the Hebdomadal Council of Oxford University¹¹¹ that could be seen as both progressive and practical: a Joint Committee of Oxford University and Working Class Representatives to report on a new form of adult education for working people. Sidney Ball was one of the Joint Committee, along with AL Smith. The outcome was the Oxford Tutorial Classes Committee, which became the new model for extramural education not

<sup>10</sup> This was the body with 18 elected senior members from across the university that decided university matters other than academic administration, which was delegated to the General Board of the Faculties.

just in Oxford but also in the other British universities. This model - of smaller groups, and more intensive study of modern subjects like industrial history and economics – spread quickly. Funds for the Oxford tutorial classes were raised from local authorities, from Oxford colleges and from individuals. The tutorial classes administration began in 1909, with an office in St Giles, though it was looking for a permanent home. But the story of adult education in Oxford was not entirely one of co-operation between the social classes. Alongside the idealised picture of the adult learner at the 'feet of knowledge' embodied by their tutors (the majority of whom came from the elite) was one of a radical working class, who rejected the 'paternalism' of Oxford and, fearing incorporation into the establishment, were determined to 'learn' in their own way. A breakaway group of students and tutors in Ruskin College formed the 'Plebs League' and set up their own Central Labour College, which they moved to London in 1909, aiming to instruct future leaders of the Labour movement (Rée. 1984). Ruskin College survived, but the ghost of class division and conflict remained to haunt the university. It may partly explain Ball's early emphasis on what he called 'cooperation' between the different elements in society, which imbued his original vision of Barnett House. Where conflict flared up – as in the Oxford tram drivers' strike in 1913 – Ball and his fellow thinkers wished to get all sides together (at that time through the Christian Social Union) to hammer out a negotiated settlement.

#### Social enquiry and university reform

The idea that social enquiry and investigation are important precursors to addressing social ills has a very long history. Research into social conditions had paved the way to reform in the previous century, especially of housing, drains and working conditions. The famous surveys that led to reform in the later nineteenth century were carried out not by academics, but by businessmen, using observation and interview to make their case. But by 1914 social enquiry or research was beginning to be practised within the universities, tentatively at first, with few tools beyond observation and analysis. The founders of Barnett House were part of that movement, in establishing a centre for social research, equipped with a library of up-to-date facts, government papers and reports.

Ball, Carlyle, Geldart and Smith were all active supporters of university reform in Oxford, attempting to steer the university to adopt economics, political science and social studies. In 1903 they had persuaded the university to accept a certificate and diploma course in economics for non-graduates (that is, students coming from outside the university, such as adult education students from Ruskin College and the Catholic Workers' College [later Plater College], Rhodes scholars with degrees from other universities, and some women scholars). This course was to be run by a committee in economics, chaired by Francis Edgeworth, professor of political economy and including AL Smith, Sidney Ball and AJ Carlyle. Getting recognition of the diploma course for non-graduates had not been easy. Getting the university to recognise these subjects for undergraduate study was to be a much harder process. Powerful arguments were made to the university's Hebdomadal Council that Oxford was being left behind, that Birmingham and Manchester were already teaching business economics and political science, that the London School of Economics and Cambridge were also developing such courses. that since Oxford trained graduates for the civil service at home and abroad, it should take advantage of these new subjects and the funds and students they would attract. But arguments which in Cambridge were forcefully put and recognised in favour of a full-length economics degree were muted in Oxford by lack of agreement amongst philosophers, classicists and political economists.

The certificate and diploma in economics (a further combined diploma in economics and political science was added in 1909) attracted a broad constituency of international students, working men, those studying for the church and women. Since the first intake in 1904, student numbers had continued to rise. Women were especially conspicuous and successful. The committee records show that by 1913, 80 men and women had taken the courses. The university had begun to allow undergraduates to follow the diploma as part of their degree by then, and the vice-chancellor expressed his pride in the success of this initiative as Oxford's response to the international growth of academic study suitable for businessmen and the civil service.

The way this course had been introduced and the later manoeuvring to establish the undergraduate philosophy, politics and economics (PPE) degree in the 1920s (see page 53) well illustrate the difficulties of getting new courses established in Oxford. The

committee structures involving a hierarchy of bodies must have seemed labyrinthine and medieval to the outsider. Their connections with each other were often not very clearly defined. The committee structures were further complicated by overlapping membership. with many opportunities for blocking or delaying new developments - and a few opportunities for 'working the system'. The notes preserved at Oriel College between Sidney Ball and his lifelong friend Lancelot Phelps, provost of Oriel College, show how it was necessary to lobby actively and cajole to get out the vote if the 'progressives' were to make any headway against the status quo. 11 But the key block to new courses was then, as later, the need for each college to field enough academics to tutor undergraduates on the new course. Clearly, suitable academics were unlikely to be in post in any number until there was such a course. The way round this was to offer a diploma or certificate, where no such objection could be made, as teaching would not necessarily need to be college-based. However, this approach may ultimately have weakened the case for developing the diploma into a full undergraduate course.

The committee that ran the diploma had just started a further. connected year of study in the more practical but essentially overlapping field of social training. In November 1913 it began with an intake from Ruskin College, young men training for the church, and graduates from the diploma courses. Carlyle was the tutor, and the curriculum and examination were administered by the Committee for Economics and Political Science on behalf of the university. Social work was barely known as a term at the beginning of the twentieth century. Elizabeth Macadam, secretary for many years to the Joint Universities Council for Social Services founded in 1918, and one of the great pioneers of social work organising, began her article on 'The Universities and the Training of the Social Worker' thus: 'social work is so vague and elastic an expression that its use is only justified by its great convenience' when applied to 'the many forms of philanthropy' (that is, voluntary effort) and also to 'all kinds of State and municipal effort directed towards the improvement of social conditions' (Macadam, 1914).

The detail of Oxford's relationship with the broader story of social work, and the powerful part women played in Barnett House and

<sup>11</sup> Phelps' papers, Oriel College archives. Phelps was also a progressive, chairman of the Board of Guardians in Oxford, and correspondent of Sidney and Beatrice Webb and Florence Nightingale.

throughout its history of social work training, is explored in Chapters 9 and 10. In a world where professions were dominated by men, women found their sphere of influence in the intimate spaces and relationships of casework and community work with families, the young and the chronically sick. This was often unpaid or poorly paid work, but was accepted by fathers and husbands as a fitting outlet for women's talents, compatible with home duties.

#### Women at Barnett House

In comparison to the men associated with Barnett House's early years, the women were largely invisible. Their voice is seldom heard in the early council minutes except as administrators and minutetakers, and although they were on subcommittees – for the library, for finance, for social training, for lectures and research – they very seldom chaired these bodies, as is evident from the minute books of the Barnett House Council from 1914 to 1957. But women played different roles. As volunteers, they helped in the interwar surveys, in the library and in the administration – at different levels. No woman served as president of Barnett House until the 1950s, when Julia Mann, principal of St Hilda's College, held the post for four years; in contrast to the gender balance in the role of president – one woman to five men – ten of the administrative secretaries were women, and only one was a man. The paid office staff were women and women tutors, paid and voluntary, worked with the women students. As associates, women attended lectures and sat on House committees. There was a further division bringing its own internal tensions; while some came from working-class origins, the majority of these women were middle class, married to dons and professional men, or their spinster daughters.

The women active in Barnett House in its first decades were all social reformers, either in the caseworker or community worker mould or as academics. The principal woman social researcher in her own right in the early years was Violet Butler (1884–1982). She was a member of a distinguished professional and intellectual family; her father was a fellow of Oriel College and her uncle Francis Edgeworth, Drummond professor of political economy, noted now as one of the earliest econometricians. Her aunt was the renowned social reformer Josephine Butler, and her great-aunt the well-known



Violet Butler (front row, right) in 1904 with the Society of Oxford Home-Students hockey team

author Maria Edgeworth. Her two older sisters were both heads of institutions, Olive of the Lady Margaret Hall Settlement in Lambeth, Ruth of the Society of Oxford Home-Students (later to become St Anne's College).

Violet Butler held a first class honours degree in history (1905), and, in 1907, was the first woman to gain a distinction on the diploma in economics in Oxford. She went on to expand her diploma thesis into a well-received book, *Social Conditions in Oxford* (Butler, 1912). This study was reviewed enthusiastically in the *Spectator*, the *Daily News* and the *Economic Journal*. She taught undergraduate economics at the Society of Oxford Home-Students for over 30 years; she had gained a teaching diploma in London before the first world war but was to spend the rest of her life based in Oxford, the majority as tutor and later in charge of the various applied social studies courses. And yet, with all these confirmations of her powerful intellect, she chastised herself in letters for being a 'limpit [*sic*] on a rock', and her letters show she felt somehow unable to move from under the shadow of her powerful family and older sisters, unequipped to go out into the wide world. <sup>12</sup> She was first asked to tutor on the social

<sup>12</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 67, Bodleian Special Collections.

training course in 1914 – she remembered 'being asked casually if I would look after and tutor any woman students' by Dr Carlyle (Butler, 1964:41). It is surprising that she was not recognised as a substantial contributor to Barnett House, or its research, until later. She was not included on the council until 1920, after the inclusion of her non-academic female colleagues who helped out in the House administration, Anne Thackeray and Mary Venables, and the academic Annie Rogers, the representative of the Women's Delegacy. Butler became very influential in the history of Barnett House and tireless in her contributions for students, but she was not formally paid for her work until Barnett House was taken over by the university in 1946. Until then, she remained involved very largely in a voluntary capacity, a fact which seems to have been accepted without question or comment by the predominantly male council.

Annie Rogers, the other academic woman active in Barnett House in the early years, like Butler, came from a well-to-do Oxford family; she had gained a first in classics at the Society of Oxford Home-Students and went on to teach undergraduates there. She fought tirelessly for women's full acceptance in the university; she herself had been offered two scholarships to study at Oxford – one at Balliol, one at Worcester – and was top applicant of her year, only to be turned down when the university discovered she was a woman.

Anne Thackeray was a social reformer in the more traditional community worker mould. Born in 1865, she had been a Toynbee Hall volunteer as a young woman. She was co-opted as unpaid secretary at Barnett House to help with administration in the very early days. She was a well-known figure in Oxford public life, holding important local positions with Oxford City Council and in voluntary associations, and was a Poor Law guardian, later an Oxford alderman and played a key part in setting up and running the local home for 'feeble-minded' girls. Since she lacked a private income, she had originally come to Oxford in the 1890s to take over the duties of the Vinerian Professor Dicey's sick wife – running the household, presiding at dinners, and so on – as well as being her companion. She went on from this post to join the Venables household in Norham Gardens. Many families in this prosperous part of north Oxford devoted themselves to public service.

Margaret Deneke, friend and neighbour of Anne Thackeray, Mary Venables and Violet Butler, comments in her autobiography that Sidney Ball welcomed her as a secretary because of her feminine touch and lack of challenge: 'He preferred a biddable and ignorant helper to an eminent economist who had proffered her services. I was appointed at £100 a year, the Council accepting Mr Ball's view that my ignorance of economic affairs was an asset under existing circumstances.' Deneke and Venables, like Thackeray, were not academics; they worked as volunteers or elected members in the public life of the town. Deneke gives an impression that she felt at home in Barnett House; given that female undergraduates had to attend lectures elsewhere in the university with chaperones, to have a house in the centre of the university that one could enter alone, and feel welcomed, must have been a huge attraction. Men and women routinely occupied separate worlds at this time, so to enjoy the freedom of equality within the House must have been extraordinarily liberating.

### Voluntary work and social action

The men involved in the origins of Barnett House were like the women involved in local government, as city councillors or Poor Law guardians, and active members of voluntary organisations. Ball, Carlyle, Smith, Geldart and Adams were all involved in Oxford's civic life well before Barnett House started. TH Green had set an example in the 1870s as the first university don to be elected a city councillor, deliberately opting for election by the town, rather than by the university. Half the men gathered in Ball's room to discuss Barnett's memorial, including Ball himself, were in the Christian Social Union (CSU). Members of Oxford CSU included academics, churchmen, Oxford Trades Council members and women. The CSU involved itself in seminars and meetings about local and national strikes and social reform. The early Barnett House method of getting employees and employers together to negotiate agreements had been a hall-mark of the Oxford CSU branch. 15

Many CSU members were also engaged in various forms of social and welfare work through the Charity Organisation Society (COS) and other voluntary groups working in housing (especially the

<sup>13</sup> Deneke papers, Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>14</sup> At this time, some local councillors were elected by university senior members.

<sup>15</sup> Records of the Christian Social Union in Oxford held by Pusey House, University of Oxford.

Cottage Improvement Society), public health, infant welfare, young people's employment, holiday funds and district nursing. Butler's 1912 study noted the abundance of voluntary groups in Oxford at this time. There was a sincere desire for social change, especially within the workplace. Meetings were arranged with employers and trade union officials to resolve wage issues. A survey of young men's employment was commissioned. A register of unemployed and of jobs was attempted, a kind of employment exchange. <sup>16</sup>

This work was distinguished by the flexibility of approach to social questions and a co-operative approach to statutory and voluntary work; it was common, for example, for Barnett House Council to be approached for money for a scheme or an individual, while the COS would be asked to undertake a softer approach to an individual than the Poor Law official felt he could take (Harrison, 1976). These were busy people, practising public service interchangeably in the voluntary and statutory sectors. The need for co-operation, and mutual help, must have been very clear to them. There was an increasing urgency to find a headquarters for all this activity. Rather than meeting wherever there was space, in halls and rooms around the town, things could be done under one roof, in a house well set up for such co-operation. This house, moreover, could accommodate a library of contemporary government papers and social reform literature to illuminate debate. The Barnett House the founders had in mind was to be open to others engaged in voluntary work and public duties. They would subscribe to become associates of the venture, thus ensuring income and engagement. These would be mainly educated men and women of means; although at least at the outset there was an attempt to include trade unionists.

#### Henrietta Barnett and the foundation of Barnett House

Henrietta Barnett had a towering national reputation. Few in the history of Barnett House were more forceful (or formidable) than Henrietta; and the Barnett House supporters had to convince her, Canon Barnett's widow, of their ideas. She had a longstanding interest and substantial experience in philanthropic and social work

<sup>16</sup> Eglantyne Jebb had set up a similar scheme in Cambridge at this time, and William Beveridge argued for one at Toynbee Hall.

schemes (mainly education and poverty initiatives in London), and like many social reformers of her generation, she was a disciple of Matthew Arnold, who had argued for cultural betterment as the entitlement of the working classes (Arnold, 1869). As well as her intellectual investment in the development of Barnett House, she contacted many potential donors and even helped to provide domestic furnishings to make the House seem workable and welcoming. Alongside engaging a caretaker, commissioning a brass nameplate and making early donations of library books, carpets and curtains were provided. In these first years, she also offered Barnett House both a rather onerous bequest, which would have involved members of Barnett House Council in collecting rents and maintaining a London set of properties, and the possibility of establishing a Barnett fellowship – which did come about, but not in the way that either the Oxford dons or Henrietta Barnett had envisaged.

Henrietta Barnett had high hopes that Barnett House would provide an academic centre for the settlement movement. She also sought an academic link for Toynbee Hall. She pressurised the Barnett House Council to set up an academic fellowship, open to men or women who were part of the settlement movement, to give a respectable outlet for studies that might lead to reforms in education, housing, welfare and industrial harmony. This vision for Barnett House was part of a much broader scheme of social reform that Henrietta Barnett outlined in the second edition of Practicable Socialism (Barnett and Barnett, 1915:xi), which was itself rooted in the philosophy, vision and work of her late husband (Parker, 1992). For Henrietta, it was the 'knowledge of industrial workers and the crippling conditions of their lives' that had driven Samuel Barnett's innovations, and it was this social and religious philosophy that she wanted to see replicated in Barnett House: 'So as "Barnett House" is established and grows strong, and in conjunction with the Toynbee Hall Social Service Fellowship, will bring the University and the Industrial Centres into closer and ever more sympathetic relationship, it is not past the power of a faith, however puny and wingless, to imagine that the reforms my husband saw "darkly" may be seen "face to face" and in realisation show once more how "the Word can be made flesh" (Barnett and Barnett, 1915:xi). The Christian overtones of Henrietta Barnett's vision of Barnett House are overtly drawn here.

The 'sympathetic relationship' she idealised between academia

on the one hand and the real world of industry on the other hand still retained all the existing social hierarchies. Her conviction of the need for true co-operation between these fields was total and the settlement movement was to be the means. The 1915 edition of *Practicable Socialism* (still published in the names of herself and her husband, despite his death in 1913), contains 19 more essays, written between 1888 and 1915, than the original 1888 publication. These were chosen explicitly to reflect her and her husband's thinking, not just about university settlements, but also about social reform; they include essays on housing, wages, voluntary combination and adult education, as well as reflections on the responsibility of Christians to undertake quiet 'one-to-one' philanthropy, the overarching importance of co-operation and the importance of recreation. All these were echoed in the activities of Barnett House over its first four decades.

Those active in Barnett House at the outset were also involved in national events, giving advice to government. Some of the older academics who met in Sidney Ball's rooms in November 1913 had been actively involved in social policy at a national level. Sidney Ball had worked with the Webbs on the research and analysis that led to Lloyd George's 1911 Insurance Act. Geldart had advised the government about the legality of the Tonypandy riots in 1910 – advice that was ultimately protective of the coal owners' interests. Adams was one of Lloyd George's close advisers on the Irish situation. There was a strong bond between government and the universities of Oxford, Cambridge and London – the institutions that educated and shaped the next generation of civil servants at home and in the empire.

## **Barnett House opens**

At the time Barnett House was launched, these were its aims: adult education, a centre for social and economic research and social action, with a library, publications and conferences, and a concern to open up the university to a broader constituency including working men, businessmen and women. Edward Whitley, the industrialist and donor to many Oxford projects, put up £1,000; Cadbury provided another £1,000 (£1,000 was equivalent to at least £85,000 at 2014 prices, much more if wages or project index costs are used). Ball's widow recorded 'I do not think that Sidney Ball's life had many

brighter recollections than that of the Sunday morning post which brought Mrs Barnett's letter to tell him of Mr George Cadbury's generous gift of £1,000 towards the expenses of starting Barnett House' (Ball, O, 1923:243). This was enough to secure the house. The formal opening took place only eight months after the idea had originally been suggested. Meanwhile the provisional committee agreed to become a company limited by guarantee – an association, legally set up as a 'company not for profit', with members who paid a life subscription or an annual subscription, to guarantee the funds. Composed of the vice-chancellor, college and delegacy heads (including the Women's Delegacy and the Adult Education Delegacy), the committee anchored Barnett House just as much in the heart of the university as did its geographical location.

The first caretakers, the Collets, were installed; the first rooms were let; the library committee was formed, and the library began to fill with donated books. The appeal letters continued to go out; in May 1914, 1,000 copies went via Mrs Barnett. One of the first tenants of the house on the corner of Turl Street and Broad Street was CS Orwin, director of the new Oxford Institute for Agricultural Economics, which had been created with government funds to advise on developing aspects of agriculture (Harrison, 1994:145–6). The Tutorial Committee and the WEA were given rooms, and the Oxford Social and Political Studies Association met there. A name plate was put up, and a glass panel at the foot of the stairs announced the names of tenants. There was an office for the president, Sidney Ball, and a room for the secretary (the one who did the typing, not the formal secretary of the association). Henrietta's donated furniture and carpets arrived.

Shortly after the opening, Ball sailed for a conference on migration in Australia, leaving the House in Adams' hands. Then war was declared. The immediate effect on Oxford University was to reduce the undergraduate intake (Winter, 1994:8). Many of the academics were recruited or offered themselves for war duties, and this included WGS Adams and William Ross, key actors in these early days of Barnett House, who both entered the Ministry of Munitions. Before departing for London, Adams completed a survey

<sup>17</sup> The Oxford Social and Political Studies Association predated Barnett House. It had many of the same members. It ran the social training course from 1913–17, when the association dissolved, leaving the balance of its funds, and the social training course, to Barnett House.

of library provision in rural areas in 1914, commissioned by the Carnegie UK Trust (Adams, 1915). Both this survey and the time Adams spent in the Ministry of Munitions were to have a profound effect on the future of Barnett House. While Adams was engaged in welfare work at the Ministry of Munitions, he was recruited by Lloyd George to his personal staff; from 1916 he was the leading member of the personal advisers who worked in the garden of Number 10 in huts known as the 'garden suburb' (Turner, 1977:175).

With student numbers dropping, the necessities of war, the acute lack of money and the absence of key figures, the House's continuation might have seemed precarious. While the armed forces struggled to find, train and transport troops, the government found itself requisitioning factories to make arms, uniforms, food and equipment for the front. At the same time, the government had to find workers to replace those at war, and devise ways to support and house the families left behind. The realities of the war created a wider understanding of the importance of adult education, social planning and engaged citizenship. For those not serving on the front line, doing something for the community and studying ways to plan a better society seemed worthwhile.

Oxford, emptied of students, filled with the wounded and refugees. Very early in the war, Dr Carlyle had formed a committee to welcome Belgian refugees, and secured Ruskin College for their accommodation. Oxford was not the only town to offer welcome, but it proved especially helpful for some Belgian academics with their families, as well as a cross section of the 'middle classes' (Winter, 1994:6-7). Thanks to Carlyle, Barnett House offered its meeting rooms to Belgian professors (and, after consideration, to their wives). The town offered accommodation, and work. The city council even helped establish a Belgian lingerie workshop and a Belgian cake shop. Additionally, Barnett House offered refuge for four Serbian students. Oxford felt the pressure from the front line of the war; as the casualties poured into Britain from the trenches abroad, claiming every potential building for the wounded, Oxford relinquished its examination schools, a large building on the High Street, to be used for operations and recovery wards, and even erected tents in college gardens for the convalescents.

Ball, Smith and Geldart continued working to make the association a company 'limited by guarantee', a new legal structure for a not-for-profit enterprise. The appeal in 1914 had aimed to secure

donations to cover the sum required to register with the Companies Registration Office. But Geldart reported in February 1915 that Barnett House could not be incorporated until it had a more secure income; another £100 of annual subscriptions (one hundred more subscribers) was needed. A series of appeals were sent out over the next year. A new appeal letter to all heads of Oxford colleges included a revised list of four aims, and some changes in terminology. One change was that it no longer aspired to being a centre for the settlement movement; whether this was agreed with Henrietta Barnett, or whether it became a contentious issue, fuelling her later arguments with Barnett House Council, is not clear.

The required funding materialised; the wartime Barnett House was formally constituted in 1916 as a company 'limited by guarantee'. Membership of the formal council, and the executive committee that reported to it, was largely the same as those who had met in 1913 – Ball, Smith, Carlyle, Adams, Thackeray and Geldart. Despite Adams' wartime duties in London, he attended most of the Barnett House meetings in Oxford.

The work of the House continued, albeit in attenuated form, but with developments in social training, social research and the public lecture programme. The council was flooded with requests from voluntary groups wanting space to meet, and the House filled with volunteers and public spirited groups, many of whose members were women. When the council sent out a new letter asking for associates (£5 for five years), the functions listed for the House reflected these developments: 'we are confident that such a centre of social activity and social study as Barnett House is in a position to become. will be fruitful of the best results both for the University and for the Country'. Affiliated organisations inhabiting the House during those wartime years included the Tutorial Classes Committee, the WEA, the Oxford Interdenominational Society for Social Reform and the local women's suffrage society. Not everyone who asked was allowed to use the rooms. In the summer of 1916 the president read a letter from the Women's International League asking that its study circle might be held at Barnett House; 'on the grounds that the House should not encourage propagandist bodies, Professor Adams proposed that the application be refused, and this proposal was carried.'18

# BARNETT HOUSE, OXFORD

Incorporated as a Company not for profit under Licence of the Board of Trade, March 17, 1916



ARNETT HOUSE, established in Oxford as a Memorial to the late Canon Barnett was acquired towards the end of the year 1913, and was opened by Lord Bryce on June 6, 1914. The House is situated at the corner of Broad Street and Turl Street in the heart of the city, and in close proximity to Balliol College, Triaity College, the Sheldonian Theatre, and other historic buildings. The above print shows Barnett House on the right, with Exeter College, the Sheldonian Theatre, and the Clarendon Building in the distance.

> Visitor: VISCOUNT BRYCE, O.M.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK. THE BISHOP OF LONDON. THE BISHOP OF OXFORD, THE BISHOP OF WINCHESTER.

Honorary Associates: GEORGE CADBURY, Esc. RT. HON. H. A. L. FISHER, M.P. VISCOUNT MILNER.

SIR HORACE PLUNKETT. MISS JANE ADDAMS. MRS. SIDNEY BALL. MRS. S. A. BARNETT, C.B.E.

President: THE MASTER OF BALLIOL COLLEGE.

Vice-Presidents:

THE PROVOST OF ORIEL COLLEGE. THE WARDEN OF WADHAM COLLEGE.

Hon. Secretaries:

MISS A. W. THACKERAY. REV. DR. A. J. CARLYLE.

> Hon. Treasurer: MISS M. VENABLES.

> > Hon. Auditors:

MESSRS. PRICE, WATERHOUSE & CO., 3 Frederick's Place, Old Jewry, E.C.

Secretary and Librarian: MISS M. DENEKE.

Bankers:

MESSRS. BARCLAY'S BANK, 92 High Street, Oxford.

Front cover of Barnett House brochure and appeal for funds, 1916

It was at this meeting on 1 July 1916 that it was proposed to bring the social training course that had started in 1913 under the wing of the Social and Political Economy Club into 'closer connection' with the House. This was suggested to the Hebdomadal Council by the Committee for Economics and Political Science (E&PS), many of whose members were also on the Barnett House Council, and accepted in 1917. The Social Training Committee was formally constituted, with members appointed by Barnett House, the Committee for E&PS, and by the women tutors teaching history, political science and economics, and reporting to the Barnett House Council. But numbers during the war remained very small; only eight students completed the course up to 1919, and the very first student on the register was killed in action in Flanders in 1914.

The Barnett House programme agreed for 1916 illustrates the activities during the war years: 'conferences on urgent public questions to include war pensions, the increase in juvenile crime since the war, lectures on welfare work in Factories. Infant Welfare Work. the organisation and work of care committees and the Education of wage earners with special reference to the education of older boys and girls'. 19 These were burning social policy issues; they reflected some of the preoccupations of government at the time as well as the activities of local volunteers. The list of lectures delivered at Barnett House between 1916 and 1918, and published as Barnett House Papers, also shows topical subjects for postwar reconstruction nationally and internationally, including the problem of juvenile delinguency (already a term used for juvenile crime), the need for continuing education for young workers, the role of the universities and aspects of the work of the League of Nations. With these topics, and well-known and high-profile speakers, Barnett House was clearly positioning itself as a centre for serious discussion and analysis of contemporary issues and for postwar planning.

Ball had taken up the reins of the House on his return from Australia late in 1914. He was moulding Barnett House into a 'citizens' house' such as he had seen and been inspired by in New York and Chicago, with its library, its place as a centre for voluntary organisations, public discussion, social enquiry and the social training course for those who would go out into the community as caseworkers or developers of civil society at home or abroad.

<sup>19</sup> The programme was also agreed at the 1 July 1916 meeting.

#### Barnett House actors on the national stage, 1914-18

Meanwhile, many of Ball's colleagues were engaged in national work. AL Smith was chairing the committee considering future developments in adult education, part of the Ministry of Reconstruction in 1917. A big campaign in conjunction with the WEA was mounted to raise the school leaving age, to make continuing education compulsory, to increase adult education and to open up the universities. Smith lectured on the proposals across the country with Edward Cartwright, whose national WEA offices were now in Barnett House. Cartwright was a grateful tenant and a strong advocate of the House.

What happened in the Ministry of Munitions had a profound influence on future ideas of 'welfare' in government. When Lloyd George set up the Ministry of Munitions in 1915, 65,000 workers became state employees, 250 factories came under direct government control for the manufacture of armaments, and 22,000 more factories under indirect control, working under contract (Wightman, 1999:49). For the first time government was directly confronted with the task of maintaining a large, non-military workforce, many of whom were women who needed rapid training. The welfare provisions of Lloyd George's prewar policies, when he was chancellor of the exchequer (1908–15), had been directed at the frail and vulnerable, the old and disabled, and those out of work. Dealing with the problems of able-bodied workers showed the sound common sense of providing support for those in work as well.

The Ministry of Munitions' journals show staff, including Ross and Adams from Barnett House, grappling with the issue of how to keep this workforce content. They discuss the monotony of the work, the benefits of good meals and the need to develop interests – a games cupboard in the rest room, putting on a seasonal play produced by the workers in work time (Ministry of Munitions Journal, 1916–18). It was important to have good cloakrooms and 'sanitary' arrangements, to ensure that staff's problems were heard, and for managers to concede to reasonable staff demands. Trade unions are not mentioned in the Ministry of Munitions journal articles; these are significantly absent from its model of a well-run workplace. Violet Butler, who was found a job in the Ministry of Munitions by Adams in 1916 to document the history of the welfare department, remarks that the trade unions 'don't seem to like the superintendents'. Butler kept this job, along with her Oxford teaching, until the

ministry was disbanded in 1919; her 'history of the welfare division of the ministry of munitions' was commended, though to the outside world she remained anonymous since the government did not attribute authorship (Ministry of Munitions, 1918–23).

It was at the Ministry of Munitions that Adams was impressed by the work of Grace Hadow. She was to play an important part in Barnett House after the war. She was brought into the Ministry of Munitions, straight from her post as the first vice-president of the National Federation of Women's Institutes, to organise the female welfare superintendents in the ministry's welfare department. She was described as an inspiring leader and an excellent speaker. She wrote a glowing description in a letter to her brother, the educationalist and civil servant Henry Hadow, where her confidence in the power of culture to move all social classes shines through: 'Parenthetically it may interest you – it interested me a great deal, and surprised me almost equally – to know that a lecture on nature Poetry (with no lantern slides – no, nothing to help it down) drew an audience of 500 munitions workers - men and women - on Friday night and I never talked to a more responsive one. They were quite a rough type, and my heart was in my boots when I began, especially as I had been told the employer's point of view – expressed with some force – was that no sane person could expect factory hands to listen to stuff like that. And they came to such an extent there was no standing room. How's that for the working man and woman after a hard day's work!' (Deneke, 1946:78).

The state focus on the welfare needs of fit and healthy workers, and the emphasis on co-operation in the interests of harmonious workplaces and higher levels of production, was new.<sup>20</sup> And it vastly expanded the need for welfare workers; the government called them 'female welfare superintendents' and instructed every factory to employ one. Towards the end of the war factories also began to employ male superintendents to help boys acquire regular habits of work, to run cricket or swimming clubs, and to provide continuing education.

The war experience also opened the eyes of those in the Ministry of Munitions to the need for a solid generic social training for superintendents – all superintendents had 'basic training', but of

<sup>20</sup> Though foreshadowed by a range of enlightened industrialists, such as Robert Owen at New Lanark in the early nineteenth century, the Cadburys in Birmingham and Rowntree in York.

varying quality and content. It also alerted them to the potential for a harmonious, well-fed, healthy and contented workforce to be more productive. There was another important learning point from this work; the superintendents worked co-operatively with the voluntary agencies, local authorities and Poor Law guardians to help families in the areas where the workers lived, and they reported their findings to the ministry from all over the country. In this way a reliable picture of good and bad services throughout Britain, good and bad employers, and the best way to develop communities began to emerge. Co-operation between these agencies was fruitful. This fed into the Ministry of Reconstruction, the Local Government Board, plans for the Ministry of Health, and it added impetus for social training courses. Adams and Smith were at the centre of these debates, and brought them back to Oxford and to Barnett House after the war.

After only four years Barnett House had become a busy community, home to many burgeoning enterprises, including a rapidly expanding library. Its council was firmly grounded in the aspirations of 'idealism' and responsible citizenship. The House was even responsible for its own courses, now that it ran the social training component of the diplomas in economics and in economics and political science. The finances may to our eyes seem barely adequate, but this was supplemented by willing help given voluntarily by a strong network of associates – both across the university and within the town. There was a huge agenda of potential social action and enquiry to be developed. Under Ball its future shape had been formed – its council of senior members of the university, its conferences, its courses in social science theory and practice, its welcome to a broad audience including workers, employers and women. It richly displayed the strands which motivated its affiliates – adult education, social reform, co-operation between classes. It also reaped the benefits of the knowledge gleaned during the war by those in the various ministries concerned with reconstruction, and was to begin to put some new ideas into practice.



Grace Hadow, secretary of Barnett House 1920-29

# Bursting at the seams: 1918–1929

Barnett House had survived the war. It found itself, at least temporarily, in a very different world – one which more firmly embraced those aspirations which Barnett House founders held so dear – citizenship, adult education, co-operation between social classes and mutual support. The government was pressing universities to bring the 'social sciences' (economics, political science, government) into the mainstream curriculum. The central government's Ministry of Reconstruction was seeking to rebuild 'national life on a better and more durable foundation'.¹ It was sketching out – through, for example, the Haldane Committee's 'machinery of government' – an ambitious outline of planning with the linked information, research and civil society infrastructure believed necessary for modern Britain

<sup>1</sup> Lloyd George's government brief to the new Ministry of Reconstruction formed in 1917 and led by Christopher Addison (source: National Archives).

and its empire. Oxford and Cambridge were expected to produce graduates to plan and run both.

The national perspective on health and welfare was shifting. Edwardian Britain had developed the beginnings of a welfare state on a limited scale, but parliament now accepted that it should better co-ordinate local, state and voluntarily run services. The Local Government Board, the Ministry of Reconstruction, the Ministry of Munitions, the Ministry of Education, the Colonial Office and the new Ministry of Health were beginning to develop a more planned approach to life in town and country, and across the colonies. The government legislated for better housing, continuing education, leisure facilities, transport and employment exchanges. It also issued guidance for local authorities on these matters. These developments created a need for better trained staff and this, in turn, brought changes to higher education. But this did not spell the end of voluntary work; on the contrary, the voluntarily given time of the public-spirited middle classes was now highlighted as integral to citizenship. Part of the work initiated by the Ministry of Reconstruction was precisely to foster bodies such as the National Council of Social Service and the Joint Council for the Settlements to co-ordinate and harness voluntary work.

The immediate postwar enthusiasm quickly ran into financial problems and struggled under the economic difficulties and political challenges of the 1920s. The change of climate was very rapid. Ernest Geddes exemplifies this change; in 1918 he was arguing for a state subsidised national transport network, but by 1921–22 he opposed such nationalisation and was chair of the national committee that proposed major cuts in government expenditure; these become known as the Geddes Axe. In Oxford, plans for a large council house programme were reduced to a handful of houses. first amongst them Addison Crescent in east Oxford. The grants and loans dried up. State services had to be paid for by users, unless they were poverty stricken. Services run by local authorities were expected to fund themselves through charging. Voluntary organisations were expected to play a full part in provision of health, welfare, housing and poverty relief; the co-operation of an army of volunteers was at the heart of the postwar vision (Peretz, 1992:257–281).

Sidney Ball's death early in 1918 had been a grave blow for the House. He had encouraged, and been part of, the expansion of voluntary and committee work in Barnett House during the war. He

had overseen the incorporation of the social training course into the House, making a strategic link between Barnett House Council, the diplomas in economics and in economics and political science, and the university. Had he survived, the ensuing battle with the philosophers for the new undergraduate degree in the social sciences might have had a different outcome. As it was, he left Barnett House in the hands of AL Smith, master of Balliol, who became president of the House in 1918 at the age of 68, with Joseph Wells aged 63, warden of Wadham and the younger Adams, at All Souls, as vice presidents. Deneke, Barnett House secretary, predicted conflict: 'The guiding hand was missing. The Master of Balliol became the President and my loyalty was strained in diverse directions with incompatible schemes that AJ Carlyle, George Adams, Professor Geldart, and other members of the Council propounded'.<sup>2</sup>

The first move was to develop a fitting memorial for Ball, in the shape of the Sidney Ball memorial lectures. The first lecture by Horace Plunkett was not delivered until 1920, but since then this has been a regular (and mostly annual) Barnett House event, with many illustrious speakers and many prescient topics. In the 1920s, lecturers included Maynard Keynes and Beatrice Webb. Appendix 2 contains a full list of lectures over the hundred years.

The next action was to get the House onto a firmer financial footing. In 1919 a new appeal letter set out the agenda: 'Barnett House exists to provide a centre for the advancement of knowledge of modern social and economic problems, both urban and rural by... systematic study of social and economic problems..., to advance the work of the University Settlements...and to advance the work of the Workers' Educational Association and of the tutorial classes.' This was accompanied by a letter from Lord Bryce, its honorary patron ('visitor') and now very much the elder statesman. 'To avert grave conflicts between classes and interests we must in good time enquire into and determine in so far as possible their causes and conditions'. 'We need...much more adequate provision for social science...and publicity to the results of such research...Oxford, with its many overseas students, and Rhodes scholars, with its many Conferences and Summer Schools, is peculiarly fitted to be a strategic centre for this work, and Barnett House, founded in memory of one of the great modern pioneers of social service, is an institution admirably suited

<sup>2</sup> Margaret Deneke autobiography mss, Deneke papers, Bodleian Special Collections.

to link research not only with the training of students in economics and other branches of social science but also with the various practical movements for social and economic betterment'.<sup>3</sup>

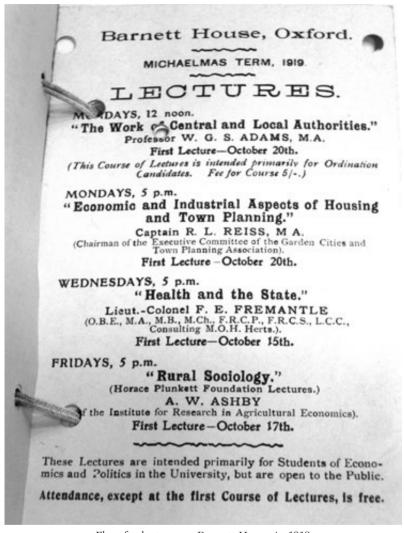
The key aspiration and tone seemed largely unchanged from 1914. But there was some further refinement of intellectual strategy, notably agreement on the importance of social research (termed 'examination') 'conducted in a spirit of scientific detachment', and a broadly conceived agenda of reducing social conflict. The agenda was implicitly not just to study contemporary social issues but also to promote reforms in policy and practice. Yet, quite how all this was to happen, with what emphasis, and how it was to connect with the real world of trade disputes and class conflict was still under debate.

With the end of the war Barnett House returned to its normal activities – the social training course, the library, the lecture programme and the environment of the 'civic house'. The social training course continued to develop in the hands of AJ Carlyle, Violet Butler and IL Stocks (later vice-chancellor of Manchester University). Butler's war role had finished in 1919 when the Ministry of Munitions was closed down, and she was left to consider her career. The position of women like Butler after the war was fairly bleak; women were going back into the shadows of the working world, now that the men were back from the front. Huge numbers of the officer class had died, so marriage for women of Butler's social class and age was much less likely (Nicholson, 2008). The opportunities for employment in health and welfare opened up for single women in the next decades but at the beginning of the 1920s were not yet significant. Butler, now in her mid 30s, was left with tasks hardly matching up to her intellect and achievements: tutoring in economics to women at the Society of Oxford Home-Students; committee work in voluntary organisations and government trades boards for women's work; and tutoring women on the social training course at Barnett House. Her only paid work was the economics tutoring, and this, she rather bitterly wrote in her letters of this period, was only through her sister Ruth, who organised the Society of Oxford Home-Students.4

In 1919, the number of voluntary organisations using the House

<sup>3</sup> Violet Butler kept the drafts for this letter – worked on by both AL Smith and Bryce – in her papers, VB box 42. Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>4</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 67, Bodleian Special Collections.



Flyer for lectures at Barnett House in 1919

as their administrative headquarters had expanded to include the Oxfordshire Federation of Women's Institutes, the Oxford Citizens' Association, the Oxford Juvenile Organisations Committee, the Oxford Interdenominational Committee for Social Reform, the university branch of the WEA and the World Association for Adult Education. In 1922 the Oxford Arts Club moved its headquarters there, and stayed for nine years. In 1924 six Van Gogh pictures and five drawings were on display in Barnett House for a month – the

second exhibition in England to show his pictures. No mention is made of this event in the minute books of the time but the catalogue is preserved in the Ashmolean Museum.

Academic groups as well as voluntary associations and campaigns were using Barnett House. A new arrival in 1919 was the Oxford University Economics Society, formed by some of the rapidly growing number of young Oxford economists. There were 34 founding members, 17 men and 17 women, all teachers in the university. The first honorary president was Adams, and its first vice-president Violet Butler. At the inaugural session held at Barnett House in March 1919. chaired by Dr Carlyle, the meeting discussed the 'Economic aspects of social problems, especially those pertaining to the subjects prescribed in the schools of the University', and Carlyle urged that the society should not limit itself to these prescribed subjects.<sup>5</sup> At the June meeting two women economists discussed the proposal for a 'capital levy' towards redistributing war debt. 6 The Oxford University Economics Society continued into the 1940s, still based in Barnett House, giving economists a focus for those subjects that lay outside the prescribed university curriculum.

One indication of the status and significance Barnett House enjoyed in the postwar period – in Oxford and in the nation – was demonstrated by Queen Mary's visit in 1921 as part of her itinerarv in Oxford. The Manchester Guardian reported the event on 12 March 1921, and did its best to sum up Barnett House as a 'sort of sociological clearing-house for social work and research'. The Queen had come to Oxford to celebrate the university's precedent in admitting women to take degrees, and to see something of the part women played in the university, its colleges and institutions. On arrival, she was awarded an honorary degree in the splendour of the Sheldonian Theatre, before being conducted on a tour of women's colleges. But before this she was escorted to Barnett House, where she was received by the Barnett House Council. 'A beautifully bound copy of all the Barnett House papers, embroidered, under the direction of Miss Thackeray, by the girls of the Cumnor Rise Home, [was presented to her].'7

<sup>5</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 62, Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>6</sup> One of the women who spoke, Lilian Mackintosh, took a paid role in Barnett House as librarian. She became the first librarian at Oxfordshire County Council when the rural library scheme concluded. Mackintosh was a graduate of the LSE and studied at the Oxford Society of Home-Students.

<sup>7</sup> Oxford Times, 13 March 1921.

That Barnett House should have been on the Queen's itinerary points to its place in the history of privileged women's education and activism – not only of women academics and students, but also of that very different group of women, the wives and daughters of professional men. It also reveals how Barnett House was cultivating the education of women in broader terms and amongst a wider group of women. On 19 March 1921, *The Observer* reported that gifts of a handwoven basket and doll were also presented to the Queen and her daughter by representatives of the Oxfordshire Women's Institutes, whose headquarters were in Barnett House. Henrietta Barnett kept copies of these newspaper articles in her book of cuttings about Barnett House, now in the university archives.

A second example underlining the aspirations of Barnett House to be a centre for education and the development of citizenship comes from the prominent educationalist and civil servant Henry Hadow, brother of Grace Hadow. In 1922, Henry Hadow gave a lecture in Glasgow, titled 'A Barnett House in Every City', on the theme of citizenship, which was reported in the national papers. Citizenship, for him and many contemporary social thinkers and activists like Bryce, was an outgrowth of education in broad cultural, economic and social terms. This was a model he saw cultivated in Barnett House. and which he wanted replicated: 'In every city of the Empire there should be an institution established for the study and investigation of civic problems...The benefits of such an institution...would be obvious; it would be a radiating centre of information on all subjects in which a citizen's judgement is concerned...it would be a forum of discussion on the great questions of political life...it would provide capital and labour, socialism and individualism with a neutral ground on which they could meet, with all the facts at the dispute ready at hand, with no suspicion of party advantage in the place or the surroundings...and therefore with the best possible hope of a fair debate and an honourable solution.'8

The 'neutral ground' (open to citizens and academics alike) that Henry Hadow exalted was, in Oxford's case, at the heart of prestigious higher education; the library, the lectures, the diplomas all signified the importance society accorded to learning.

<sup>8</sup> An extract was included as an appendix in Violet Butler's Barnett House 1914–1964.

#### A rural experiment

The experiment in rural regeneration begun by the House in 1919 was to be a real innovation, and have lasting results. The interwar period was one of permissive legislation in Britain, which allowed local authorities to develop their welfare services if they wished. with funding from the state. During these years, the great metropolitan areas and the more 'progressive' authorities developed their own institutions, and employed their own staff to run them; 'liberal' authorities like Oxford instead favoured co-operation between the statutory authorities and the voluntary sector, grant-aiding voluntary groups and thus keeping the rates very low for householders and the services at a minimum for citizens (Peretz, 1992:257-281). Oxford exemplifies the view that McCarthy and Thane (2011) advance: that in the interwar period the state actively sought co-operation between the organs of the state and the vast complex of voluntary organisations in the interests of reducing conflict. For Barnett House, such co-operation was about far more than penny pinching and social harmony; it was a blueprint for a better society. At a conference in Balliol College in 1920, Adams explained 'the good done by the State must depend upon the voluntary spirit behind it. This spirit, the missionary spirit, must never be diluted. The local and central authorities are well suited for carrying out certain functions but it is the voluntary spirit which must move them' (Campbell, 1970:4).

'Rural decline' was seen as a major problem of the time, much as industrial and inner-city decline was the major problem of the 1970s onwards. Barnett House was closely involved in 'action research' in both periods. Adams was the chief architect at Barnett House of the rural schemes in the 1920s. He had turned down the option of staying in Whitehall in favour of returning to his Oxford professorship. However, he maintained very strong links to government; he was already a member of the Romney Group, an informal lunch club for politicians and academics, which contained many Toynbee Hall names and people connected to Maynard Keynes. He chaired the National Council of Social Service in 1919, and became a development commissioner in 1924.9 Rural affairs deeply interested Adams.

<sup>9</sup> The Development Commission was responsible for a significant annual budget to be spent in communities (Brasnett, 1969). Between the wars it lent money to villages to build village halls, funded rural industries and supported agricultural reforms and many other schemes for rural and urban regeneration.

He had worked as superintendent of statistics and intelligence at the Irish department of agriculture and technical instruction in Dublin in 1905 under Sir Horace Plunkett, who became the dominant influence upon him. During the war, alongside all his other activities, he became involved in the newly formed National Council of Social Service (NCSS), the national body grant-aided by the Local Government Board to co-ordinate the interests of voluntary bodies across Britain. The NCSS was designed from the outset to provide two-way communication; the government could hear the concerns of the voluntary sector, but it could also get its own messages across.

Adams' NCSS work was an asset for Barnett House. In 1920, in the run-up to its first big conference, in Oxford, Adams brought the whole national secretariat out of London and it remained in the House for a whole year. The connection was further strengthened when Barnett House's secretary, Grace Hadow, worked half-time for the NCSS during the 1920s, thus neatly influencing the future direction of the NCSS while simultaneously bringing funds to the House (Brasnett, 1969).

The key enthusiasm Adams brought to the House was for a new strand of social experiment, a kind of 'action research' to effect social change. This absorbed Barnett House for some years. It was unlike anything recorded elsewhere in the UK at this time, and it was to have profound effects on the shape of civil society in the UK countryside and some impact on parts of the empire. In 1919 he laid his plan on rural regeneration before the council. <sup>10</sup> 'The revival of rural life is one of the most urgent and difficult of our modern social problems.' He linked his experiment firmly to recommendations made by the government's Adult Education Committee, chaired by AL Smith (chairman of Barnett House), in its final report. He also pointed out the synergy involved in co-operating with Orwin's Institute for Agricultural Economics in Oxford, which was currently investigating rural education. <sup>11</sup>

Another motivation for Adams in this work was undoubtedly his 1915 study of rural libraries for the Carnegie UK Trust, which had shown such a stark picture of rural England's lack of provision that the government had passed legislation encouraging local authorities

<sup>10</sup> SC1/2/2, Oxford University Archives.

<sup>11</sup> Orwin's institute was closely linked with Barnett House; it began its association as a lodger in the first world war; Orwin was an associate from 1914, served on Barnett House Council, and later took part in the 1930s survey.

to create libraries. In rural areas only 2.5% of the population had access to a library. Adams' report made recommendations about rural library services, training for librarians and the legislative change that was needed. Many local authorities had subsequently dragged their feet, especially conservative ones like Oxfordshire.

In Barnett House Adams proposed a scheme for local rural regeneration through libraries, adult education and voluntary work, with the support of the local authorities. Voluntary associations from the countryside would be welcomed to use Barnett House as a headquarters, and would then be enticed to work together to make changes in the outlying villages. Barnett House would find the grants, arrange the introductions, fire up the volunteers and support the grand plan. Over five tightly typed pages Adams argues that his 'experiment' could not be carried out by officers in government departments, but once Barnett House had established schemes for continuing education, or libraries, the local authorities could take them over. He was outlining an aspiration, and a method, for voluntary organisations outside government to conduct trials and make innovations that might then be taken up by state organisations, which still has credence 90 years later.<sup>12</sup>

Adams' plan, from the outset, was to use Oxfordshire as a model or 'pilot' scheme that could be copied throughout the country, and also in the colonies and elsewhere. He needed a full-time organiser who shared his vision, so with the Barnett House Council's approval, he approached Grace Hadow, who had been his respected colleague in the Ministry of Munitions, to be general secretary of the House. She accepted, and started in January 1920. Her reputation as an inspiring leader was confirmed in her years as general secretary of Barnett House (1920–29). She immediately opened the doors of the House wider, to include the YMCA-run Red Triangle Clubs and the village club confederations, which by 1922 met there as the newly formed 'provisional council of village clubs'. 13 She encouraged county council officials and elected members to join this provisional rural community council, as they called it, to cement the co-operation between state and voluntary organisations. She had remarkable success; there were members from both the city and county councils, and Oxfordshire town councils, including the chair of Oxfordshire

<sup>12</sup> SC1/2/2, Oxford University Archives.

<sup>13</sup> Barnett House annual report 1922.

County Council. The provisional council's priorities were opportunities for adult education, funding for playing fields and village halls (the latter was a primary aim of the early NCSS), and rural libraries.

Grace Hadow was intellectually as well as pragmatically well suited to take up Adams' schemes. As vice-chairman of the National Federation of Women's Institutes (NFWI), she was one of three women who sat on the Board of Education's Adult Education Committee, which was established in 1921. She adapted the direction of the work to the demands of the clubs, organising volunteer speakers to talk on requested subjects (ranging from boxing and basket-making to citizenship and history), and instituting a campaign with a meticulously laid strategy to bring libraries to the villages of the district.

The village library scheme – at the heart of the rural experiment – was Adams' and Hadow's first success. It had all the features of what came to be seen as Barnett House ventures of the time: a voluntary endeavour, with very many highly educated volunteers, begun as a pioneering initiative with the ultimate aim that it be taken over by the authorities. The strategy was to encourage donors to provide the books, enlist the help of volunteers to box them up and encourage likely hosts from the villages to take charge of lending. Boxes of books could be changed from time to time, and categories of books could be requested. The new Barnett House librarian, Lilian Mackintosh, administered the scheme as well as looking after the existing Barnett House library with its collections on economics, politics and social policy. A band of almost entirely female volunteers aided her work <sup>14</sup>

The Plunkett Foundation and Carnegie UK Trust funded the scheme from 1921. Carnegie was initially reluctant: it was already supporting county council library schemes by grant-aiding the local authorities. It was not until Adams persuaded Carnegie that this was not just about libraries, but part of a wider learning and citizenship venture, that the organisation agreed to give £1,000 over two years. A committee was set up with both the chairman of the county council and the council's directors of agriculture and education as members. It was a runaway success story. In its first year, 17 villages were represented at a conference to publicise the scheme;

<sup>14</sup> Barnett House annual report 1922.

<sup>15</sup> Carnegie UK Trust timeline, www.carnegieuktrust100.org.uk/timeline/. Carnegie's grant of £1,000 in 1921 is roughly equivalent to £39,000 (at 2014 prices).

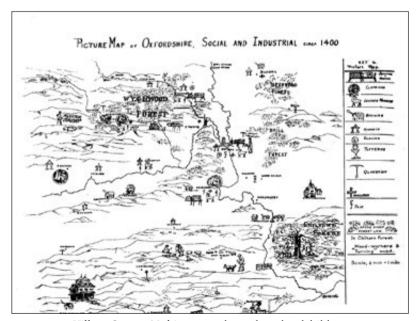
the rural libraries had 5,000 books. The circulating library scheme began in earnest in September 1921. A hundred books were boxed and sent once a quarter to each of the 46 subscribing villages (who paid 15 shillings a year); 'fiction', it was noted, 'is read to a far greater extent than more solid books'. In 1922 the county council voted to adopt the library scheme, though it was advised to accept the Barnett House offer to continue to build it up before taking it over. By 1924, 59 villages were part of the scheme; the rural libraries were stocked with 6,000 books and, thanks to the grants, there were two vans with volunteer drivers. The circulating library scheme had taken off, and one radio had been purchased to broadcast talks in the villages by arrangement. This success prompted the county council to take over the entire enterprise including Lilian Mackintosh who, after a tour of the United States, became the first permanent Oxford County Council librarian. The council paid a fair price for the books, and the vans were now available for the next parts of the rural regeneration strategy.

The scheme itself enhanced citizenship through the spread of knowledge and, through the harnessing of local enthusiasm for the libraries themselves, it developed civic pride. It was theoretically a 'classless' project, since it was hoped that rich and poor in the villages would equally take advantage of the books. And it was for women as well as men. The whole project of rural regeneration was designed to educate the 'millions of new voters', including women. Women were only fully enfranchised in 1928. While it has been suggested that, having won the vote, they stopped agitating for gender equality, Beaumont (2000) argues that this agitation was merged instead into the fight for equal citizenship in the interwar period. This is exemplified by the Oxford rural experiment.

None of this was an attempt to overthrow the status quo; rather it was designed to develop co-operation between the classes, co-operation between the state and the voluntary sectors, and to move forward to a full flowering of citizenship within a developed democracy – a model it was hoped other countries would follow. Grace Hadow shared her brother's goal for accessible and broadly conceived education, as she described in an article on the Women's Institutes in 1926: 'teach people to think, and leave the direction of their thought to themselves: seek truth in all companies, and welcome it in any guise' (Hadow, 1926:91). Echoing the 1914 comment in the Oxford Journal, hoping that Barnett House would throw light

on current events and not increase heat, she wrote in 1920: 'I have recently come across evidence of very active Bolshevik propaganda in Oxford, and I do feel that it is really urgent that some systematic attempt should be made to educate working people in simple facts – without party bias' (Macdonald, 2013:114). The citizenship she desired was not confrontational. It was, however, useful for developing women's confidence. Through this rural experiment Barnett House developed further as a safe place for all associated women – volunteer welfare workers, students and academics.

It is at this time, explicitly building on the Oxfordshire scheme, that national plans to develop Women's Institutes, councils of social service and rural community councils in the empire began to emerge. Former students and acolytes of Barnett House went out to the empire, to Singapore, Ghana, India, Australia, Malaysia and South Africa, to create their own versions of the model. Judgement of the success of this approach lies with colonial historians; but the fact that there are still Women's Institutes, councils of social service and rural community councils in these countries is itself an indication of their durability. This is not, of course, to claim for Barnett House all the credit for this essentially progressive project, but simply to



Village Survey Making: map drawn by schoolchildren

explain the part it played. Barnett House has been largely ignored in the story of the growth of citizenship or survey work, as has its part in town and country planning at home and abroad, and even in the individual histories of its adherents. Jeremy Burchardt (2012) is a notable exception who gives full credit to Grace Hadow and to Barnett House.

A further rural regeneration project, a spin-off from the earlier scheme, was also about rural education and citizenship. Witnessing the evident success of the library scheme, Violet Butler determined to begin a complementary initiative. She and her colleague Charlotte Simpson, both of whom were keen social researchers, early community workers and members of the Sociological Society based at Geddes House in London, set to work on an experiment with elementary schoolteachers. They started a class in 1923 on 'Local Geography and Social Problems: regional survey as a basis of citizenship', which coached teachers 'and others interested in social problems' in village survey-making as a method to encourage schoolchildren and their families to engage with their environment.<sup>16</sup> Butler's and Simpson's view, grounded in the work of the French sociologist Frédéric Le Play (who had been championed in Scotland by Patrick Geddes and in England by Abercrombie and Branford), was that people had become distanced from each other and from the places where they lived, and needed to be actively encouraged to discover and survey their geography, history, family and occupational make-up, and leisure activities. The very act of doing this would bring communities together with a sense of pride, purpose and citizenship. People would become active citizens, keeping their villages tidy, pressing their councils, through the machinery of democracy, to provide better housing, or playing fields, or education. This scheme was also a success. The class was repeated for several years; the village survey club of schoolteachers continued until the outbreak of the second world war. The project was written up as a pamphlet for the Board of Education and was widely distributed way beyond Oxfordshire (Butler and Simpson, 1928). Violet Butler received a letter from the trade commissioner for southern Australia, describing the success of her pamphlet in local schools and asking for updated information on the scheme.17

<sup>16</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 57, Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>17</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 57, Bodleian Special Collections.

How far the rural experiment itself was seen at the time to be part of the regional survey movement is not clear. Abercrombie did carry out a regional survey of Oxfordshire in 1928, on which he lectured in Barnett House (Mayo et al, 1931). But the only person in Barnett House who seems to have taken an active part in the Sociological Society was Violet Butler; and the only part of the rural scheme that actively used the Le Play motto 'work, place, folk' was the village survey. The overall approach was designed as an exercise in civics, to promote responsible citizenship, and thus neatly complemented the larger rural experiment. The village surveys were said to 'stimulate much local interest and patriotism'. <sup>18</sup>

Hadow and Adams from the outset had planned that their experiment would have lasting significance. If it worked in Oxfordshire, they hoped it could be replicated. They proposed to make the provisional committee into a permanent federation of voluntary organisations for the county, closely related to the local authority and in the end standing apart from Barnett House. The Oxfordshire Rural Community Committee which had started with Grace Hadow's arrival, and had been constituted in 1921, formally constituted itself as the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) in 1925. 19 The ORCC comprised five committees: adult education, public health, social and recreational activities, rural industries and juveniles. Each group had voluntary and statutory members. The president of the Oxfordshire County Council chaired the council. The link between ORCC and Barnett House was cemented by each body having a member on the other's council, and also by personnel; Adams was appointed chairman of the ORCC central committee alongside his continued commitments to Barnett House (vice-chairman) and NCSS (chairman). Until 1934 the secretary of Barnett House was also secretary of the ORCC. These were very personal and powerful links, deliberately forged just as the Barnett House Council itself had been constituted, to bond different bodies co-operatively together.

The ORCC became a matter for national pride and national enquiry. The NCSS organised a conference about the rural regeneration scheme in 1926 at Barnett House, which brought about the founding of 37 more rural community councils throughout England and Wales. These robust organisations have survived remarkably

<sup>18</sup> Barnett House annual report 1926, page 4.

<sup>19</sup> Barnett House annual report 1926.

well. As an example, today the ORCC runs nearly 300 village halls, around 70 community transport schemes and many community shops. <sup>20</sup> The 'experiment' launched under Grace Hadow's secretaryship in 1920 successfully combined everything Barnett House was interested in; it was an experiment in being a catalyst for change in adult education, growth in citizenship and the development of pride in place.

The impact of this piece of action research is explored further in Chapter 12. It did what it set out to do – to revitalise the life of the villages and encourage citizenship. It relied on the most basic materials: pen and paper for reports and observations, measurement of books borrowed or class sizes, conferences to 'spread the word'. Grace Hadow, on whom the success of the scheme and its emulation elsewhere largely fell, left Barnett House in 1929 to take up the leadership of the Society of Oxford Home-Students, soon to become St Anne's College.

#### General activities in Barnett House in the 1920s

The Barnett House Council membership expanded to include a manufacturer and a trade union leader. Leading Coventry manufacturer, CG Renold, who gave talks about commerce and industrial relations, agreed to join the council in 1922, and in 1923 so did the Oxford Trades and Labour Council executive member, William Hyde.<sup>21</sup> The appointment of these men was part of Barnett House Council's postwar policy to become 'a platform on which men and women of all classes and of the most divergent views can meet and discuss questions of economic importance'.<sup>22</sup> The trades council in these early years was not especially radical; its politics were still largely liberal (Thornett, 1987:3).

Hyde's appointment came after a series of 'quite informal conferences' between members of the local trades and labour council and university figures organised to discuss social and economic questions – although it should be noted that while working-class men began to have a place in the House, working-class women remained

<sup>20</sup> Source: www.oxonrcc.org.uk, accessed 4 April 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Barnett House annual reports 1922 and 1923.

<sup>22</sup> Barnett House annual report 1920.

largely absent.<sup>23</sup> The precedent for these 'informal conferences' can be traced to the Christian Social Union days, and its idea that university men were to provide a key role in generating a spirit of cooperation between employers and employees. But this was a highly ambitious project for any university. While the chain drive manufacturer Renold remained on the council and gave lectures for many years, along with PJ Pybus, managing director of English Electric, Hyde and the trades council withdrew from Barnett House in 1925. (Hyde returned as a county councillor to Barnett House in the 1930s, giving talks on local government to students.) The most prominent local industrialist, William Morris (later Lord Nuffield), who was subsequently to fund Nuffield College in Oxford, never joined, although it is likely he was invited. The policy of bringing people together at the negotiating table had not lasted.

'Co-operation' became a dirty word for trade unions, whose members were feeling the sharp end of the postwar slump. Trade union feelings about voluntary organisations and middle-class advocates of citizenship are clear from these views from later in the 1920s and 1930s: in 1926 the trades council was deeply critical of the mayor's scheme to take his mace to every school in Oxford to encourage citizenship, arguing that the city council should first see that children had shoes and their families had adequate housing; in 1933 the trades council noted it would offer 'steady resistance to well-meaning but patronising persons in official positions whose "sympathy" not being prompted by knowledge or experience of working-class conditions is sometimes obnoxious if not nauseating' – a caustic comment on the Oxford Council of Social Service, housed in Barnett House. It is noticeable that Barnett House did not engage with or even mention the General Strike of 1926, or a strike at the Pressed Steel works in 1934, despite meetings that attracted thousands of workers to St Giles, a hundred metres from its front door (Peretz, 2004:11).

Co-operation between classes, in the sense hoped for, did not flourish in the depressed economic climate. But co-operation of a different sort – between statutory and voluntary action rather than between employers and employees, developed by the rural regeneration experiments – brought more enduring co-operative activity to the House, in social enquiry and experiment, and in professional training.

<sup>23</sup> Barnett House annual report 1920.

#### New pressures on Barnett House

Despite the flowering of voluntary action, and the continued attraction of Barnett House as a centre for debate by very significant national figures, there was concern about the future of the House from the later 1920s. There were three strands to this: first, the creation and rapid development of the new philosophy, politics and economics (PPE) degree, which increasingly took undergraduates away to lectures elsewhere; second, the departure of adult education to a new home; and third, the more personal 'family' feud with Henrietta Barnett. In addition, the ending of the funding given by the Carnegie UK Trust and the Plunkett Foundation for the rural regeneration projects left a sizeable hole in the finances.

First, the long struggle for economics teaching and political science in the university, so keenly backed by Ball and colleagues, was won – but not by the Committee for Economics and Political Science that ran the diploma programme and the social training course, so central to Barnett House. The committee put forward a proposal, which was refused. In November 1920 the university's Hebdomadal Council adopted the philosophers' scheme for philosophy, politics and economics (PPE), which was named 'modern greats' (Chester, 1986:31). One of the main reasons for the philosophers' success was almost certainly to do with teaching capacity. Each college needed to employ or have access to enough tutors in a discipline for it to run a full undergraduate degree. There were hardly any economists as such or political scientists in college posts at the time, but there were philosophers and historians in every college, and sometimes more than one. Their contribution ensured that the new course – which included papers on modern history – could meet the requirement for enough potential tutors across the university. Oxford University had lagged behind other UK universities - ten schools of social studies had been set up between 1904–19 (Harris, 1992). Harris argues that the rapid growth of these schools was fuelled by a progressive idealism that also 'permeated the organs of state'. In the case of Adams, or Smith, it is easy to see how their private lives and public roles embodied the intertwining of state, university and civic life.

To begin with, PPE was administered by a board of studies on behalf of the Hebdomadal Council. The economists continued to press for better representation on the board, and the Committee for Economics and Political Science continued to press for any representation at all. Both were a long time coming. The economists won some recognition when the Social Studies Board was later raised to the status of a faculty, with sub-faculties in economics and politics, in 1932–34. Sociology was not recognised in Oxford as an academic subject until after the second world war. The Committee for Economics and Political Science, with its diploma courses, remained separate from the Social Studies Board until 1938, and continued to report directly to the Hebdomadal Council until that time (Chester, 1986:30–51).

Despite the courses themselves being separate, the personalities involved were totally interconnected. As we have already seen, multiple office-holding, as Butler remarks in her 1964 history, was a trademark of the House, within and outside the university. Adams – so central to Barnett House and the Committee for Economics and Political Science – was also the chair of the Board of Studies for the Honour School of Philosophy, Politics and Economics (later renamed the Social Studies Board) from the outset in February 1921. <sup>24</sup> Dr Carlyle – who was to make multiple supplications to the Social Studies Board to include Barnett House's diploma courses – was a member of the executive of that board.

The creation of PPE had a direct bearing on the status and life of Barnett House. The library was increasingly well used by the new students. To begin with, these students continued to attend the lectures and conferences held in Barnett House on current affairs, but this tailed off in the later 1920s as PPE lectures developed elsewhere. Although the economists continued to meet there, the annual report of 1929 records that 'the formation and development of the School of Philosophy, Politics and Economics has to a large extent obviated the necessity for the provision by Barnett House of the type of lecture which it provided for some years.'

Second, there was the blow from the loss of adult education, which had been key to the early aims of Barnett House. AL Smith, fresh from chairing the government committee on the future of adult education, was confirmed as president of the House in 1918. He had worked for the opening of the universities to the less privileged classes for a generation. The funding his government committee had recommended only partly materialised – but enough was forthcoming for Oxford University to secure a proper centre for adult

education, so the tutorial movement could move from offices in Barnett House to a permanent home with residential accommodation in 1927 (Goldman, 1995). Until then, adult education had remained with Barnett House; the annual report for 1924 noted with pride that in rural Oxfordshire in the previous year 6,000 people had attended classes in subjects ranging from basket work to philosophy. From the late 1920s, adult education disappears from the list of priorities.

The third strand in Barnett House's difficulties at this time was the relationship between Barnett House and Toynbee Hall – and Henrietta Barnett. This relationship had been of fundamental importance in 1914, but from the 1920s was to prove a source of critical tension up to Henrietta Barnett's death in June 1936. During this time, there was bitter correspondence between Henrietta Barnett (and her assistant and companion, Marion Paterson) and the various secretaries of Barnett House, as well as telegrams, official visits and stormy council meetings.

There were probably several reasons for this deterioration in relations. It seems likely that the London-based Henrietta Barnett saw Barnett House as an extension of work already under way at Toynbee Hall, and expected the younger acolytes of her husband to behave with proper respect to his ideals; whereas the prominent dons and college heads who ran Barnett House had a more Oxford-centric view of the world and a clear understanding of the importance of Oxford's influence and example on social policy; and their allegiance to the settlements in London, the rest of Great Britain and the United States, was on a more personal level. Their influence on Whitehall was already secured through their Oxford connections; they had no need of Henrietta or Toynbee Hall to further those links.

Henrietta Barnett strongly criticised the House, belittling the rural scheme and berating her fellow Barnett House Council members. In 1928 she began a heavily critical campaign. She asked the Toynbee Hall representative on Barnett House Council, Mr Catchpool, to attend a meeting for her to 'make the name of Barnett the most honoured in Oxford. The place ought to throb with activities.' Yet she was unmoved when Catchpool wrote to her after the meeting saying he had spent a tiring day seeing all the activities which took place or were planned to take place in Barnett House.<sup>25</sup> (This is the

<sup>25</sup> From Henrietta Barnett's autobiography, dictated to her companion, which is held by the LSE..

list Catchpool sent to Henrietta Barnett, produced in full to give a flavour of an outsider's observations on activities at this time: 'A Poor Man's Lawyer Service at BH, A Barnett House Travellers Club, An Oxford Civic Fund, An Oxford Rotary Club, A Barnett House Economics Club, A Housing and Town Planning study Group, Housing and Town Planning exhibition at B.H., Oxfordshire Preservation exhibition at BH, A University Faculty – department of Town Planning and Housing at Oxford University, A BH Guest Night for Oxford City's needs, Oxford City Guild of Help at BH, Oxford City Playing Fields Association at BH, Oxford Children's Country Holidays etc, A basket-making class, French circle, History circle etc'.) However, the connection between Toynbee Hall and Barnett House persisted, with the Barnett House Memorial Fellowship, a joint project between the two institutions, begun in the 1920s.

The writing table Henrietta left to the House in her will may have been a token of reconciliation – or her desire, never achieved, to be remembered alongside her husband by Barnett House being renamed Barnetts' House. <sup>26</sup> The difficult relations certainly took up much of the various Barnett House secretaries' time – and also some of Miss Butler's, who had a large correspondence with Dame Henrietta. But ultimately these difficulties had much less effect than the advent of PPE, the departure of adult education and what was happening in the world outside.

What were the achievements of the 1920s? Under the protection of men who held very senior roles in the university – House presidents Smith and Wells were both university vice-chancellors in these years – the civic house had flowered. An extraordinary rural experiment had been successfully replicated across Britain and was inspiring schemes in the empire; conferences and lectures attracted students and citizens; the library scheme exemplified a vital co-operation of voluntary and state action. Although the diploma courses were slightly eclipsed by 'modern greats', they still commanded students and filled an important place in Oxford's offering to foreign visitors and to working class students. By 1930, four of the early associates – Ball, Smith, Wells and Geldart – had all died. The work continued to expand, and the House continued to attract associates. It was full of activity, debate and public-spirited zeal, bursting with ideas, students, townspeople and foreign visitors. However, it faced some

<sup>26</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 67, Bodleian Special Collections.

Chapter 12: Research at Barnett House: 1965–2014

serious problems. Adult education had departed for a new home, and the PPE course had give the university another focus for the development of social sciences. Despite all the voluntary support, there was still pressure on finances.



WGS Adams, president of Barnett House 1930-49

# Barnett House comes of age: 1929–1946

Whatever the economic problems endured during the 1920s in Great Britain, the years following the 1929 Wall Street crash were to be much worse. With widespread and chronic unemployment in south Wales and the north of England, public-spirited volunteers turned their attention to schemes of relief, in the old style of welfare handouts and camps for the young unemployed. Some areas were spared: Oxford, like Dagenham and Slough, was home to the new interwar light industries and enjoying relative prosperity; workers flocked to the car factory and allied works in and around the city. This led to a crisis in housing; people lived in tents and huts around Oxford to take advantage of the work, and new private housing schemes mushroomed with scant reference to necessary infrastructure (Peretz, 1993:133–4). Social planning seemed ever more important with these substantial migrations, and with the problems of new estates, transport, schools and utilities that came in their wake.

Grace Hadow resigned as secretary of Barnett House in 1929 and moved on to take up the substantial role of principal-elect of the Society of Oxford Home-Students. The new secretary EEA Joseph had been an administrator in the Punjab, and had recently returned to Britain. One of his first tasks was to encourage more undergraduates to come back to the House. A Barnett House 'flyer' sent to colleges for all new undergraduates in autumn 1929 'desired to bring it to your personal notice at the outset of your university career. Oxford offers great opportunities for the study and development of all that is comprehended in the term "citizenship" and in the close interrelation of universities and settlements there lies one of the best hopes of the peaceful solution of our present social and industrial difficulties.' This flyer still faithfully echoes the earlier aspirations of the House. It also exposes its vulnerability. Associates had to be courted; Barnett House was not automatically 'on the map'. It remained financially vulnerable.

The work continued as before: the certificate in social training, the conferences, and the library. The students were attracted to work as volunteers in summer camps for the unemployed around the country, and recruited for a future in social work. Work on federation in the voluntary sector continued as well. In 1934 the new Oxford Council of Social Service (OCSS) started its life in Barnett House, just as the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) had a decade earlier.<sup>1</sup>

The council membership in Barnett House was changing, as vacancies arose, to include more economists and political scientists. The three first presidents were dead, as were the early Council members Professors Geldart and Edgeworth. Adams (president of Barnett House from 1930), Carlyle, Anne Thackeray and Violet Butler were the 'old guard', working with a new generation on the council. Professor David Hutchinson MacGregor, (the Drummond professor of political economy succeeding Edgeworth) had become a vice-president, and Russell Frederick Bretherton, AD Lindsay (master of Balliol) and A Barratt Brown of Ruskin College joined the council.<sup>2</sup>

The diploma courses and the social training certificate were both given new life by Oxford University's new-found interest in public

<sup>1</sup> This still exists, as Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action (OCVA), a hub for Oxford's large number of voluntary associations.

<sup>2</sup> AD Lindsay was an active supporter of adult education and university reform. Like MacGregor and Adams, Lindsay's father was a Scottish church school headmaster.

administration. Barnett House's annual report for 1931 records: 'the seed has been sown recently of what may prove to be a new and vigorous growth...Several small meetings have been held at Barnett House of persons connected with the University and the City and interested in the study of public administration, to consider the question of forming a branch of the Institute of Public Administration.'

After a large meeting at Rhodes House, it was decided to form an Oxford Group in Public Administration, and Barnett House offered to host the group. Oxford University also started to consider providing a course in public administration. It was a latecomer to this field. By 1935, eight universities were already providing diploma courses. Manchester even offered a BA in social administration. The government had been encouraging this professionalisation since the 1920s. In 1926, for instance, shortly after the General Strike, Baldwin, the prime minster, sent the following message to the National Association of Local Government Officers' (NALGO) annual conference: 'Local Government in this country is of growing importance, and on it depends much of the well-being of a country. ... The nation also owes much to the splendid service which has been rendered up and down the country by officials of local authorities during the critical time through which we have just been passing'. In the years that followed, representatives of the government attended Nalgo annual conferences to emphasise the message that high-level training of the senior and junior grades was imperative for the stability of the country. The Labour MP Arthur Greenwood's address was read out at the annual Nalgo conference of 1930. The 1929 Local Government Act was just beginning to take effect; it had amalgamated poor law and local government functions under local authorities, and given local authorities enhanced powers and responsibilities to plan, administer and co-operate with voluntary organisations. Greenwood explained he was 'specially interested in the measures which NALGO has taken for the education of men [sic] in the local government service'. In this national context, what is curious is not that Oxford involved itself in social administration in 1930, but how late it was in providing the training, and how little weight it was afforded in the university.

The Local Government Act ushered in a period which has been

<sup>3</sup> Nalgo papers, MSS 20/NAL/1/5/11, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick.

<sup>4</sup> Nalgo papers, MSS 20/NAL/1/5/11, annual conference notes, 7 June 1930, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick.

described as the 'zenith of local government' in Britain (Lee, 1988). It empowered local authorities to co-ordinate efforts by the poorlaw authorities, voluntary organisations and local councils – and in effect to create the local authority structure that endures into the twenty-first century. Many members of the Barnett House Council were intimately involved in local government already. There were seven members on either the city or the county council, the majority occupying seats allotted to the university, but some who had fought to be elected in the streets of the city. Others joined the various House committees though not the council; one was George Montagu Harris, who was appointed to a research lectureship in public administration by the University of Oxford's Social Studies Research Committee in March 1935.6 He was a great asset to Oxford; he had recently written on comparative municipal government across the world, and while in Oxford, in 1936, was elected president of the International Union of Local Authorities, the IULA (Harris, 1935).<sup>7</sup> He was an international figure in local government, who chaired the IULA conference in 1932 on the importance of training municipal officials across the world, which was held in London.

It was not until 1936, five years after the suggestion was first raised, that Oxford University, through Barnett House and the Committee for Economics and Political Science, initiated its social administration course for local government officials or those who wanted to enter local government. This was two years after the Hadow Report (1934) on local government officers' training and recruitment that emphasised the need to train local administrators and to ensure university educated men went into the senior jobs. It is worth reflecting that, by locating this course in Barnett House, the university was in effect keeping it at arm's length from mainstream learning, as it had so successfully with the diploma in economics and political science and its associated social training course. Vocational courses, with the

<sup>5</sup> The university had seats on the city council; Henderson, Bretherton, Maud and Hart-Synnot, Barnett House men, were all city councillors in the 1920s and 30s. In addition, several other Barnett House Council members were councillors in their own right, not through the university seats; Thackeray remained a councillor and alderman of the city for over thirty years, and Councillor (later Alderman) Hyde was on the county council.

<sup>6</sup> Harris undertook a book-length comparative study of British municipal government, published as Municipal Self-Government in Britain: A Study of the Practice of Local Government in Ten of the Larger British Cities, in 1939.

<sup>7</sup> We are indebted to Shane Ewen for this information from Ewen and Couperus' forthcoming article 'Whose "Urban Internationale"? Intermunicipalism in Europe, 1924–36'.

exception of education, were not a feature of Oxford University. The course was well subscribed from the outset. John Maud (later Lord Redcliffe-Maud), who was the first tutor, remembered the fruitful interchange between economists such as himself and the experienced officers he taught (Maud, 1976:73–77). While the new diploma was being developed, a number of other hopeful avenues opened up. The first was in 1934, a year before Barnett House 'came of age'.

### **Funding from the Rockefeller Foundation**

The big US philanthropic foundations – the Commonwealth Fund and the Rockefeller Foundation – played a very significant role in developing social science and social work in Britain. The Commonwealth Fund had paid for the psychiatric social work course at the LSE, although it was the Carnegie UK Trust that funded generic social work courses on the Younghusband model in Manchester and London (the LSE again). Rockefeller was prepared to fund Oxford in the same way, and was 'anxious to contribute on a considerable scale to the advancement of the study of social sciences in the University'.

Oxford was invited to apply for a grant, and had to develop a 'wish list' of social studies related projects and posts. Adams, Cole and MacGregor (all members of the Barnett House Council) were asked by the Social Studies Board to review library facilities for undergraduate study in the social sciences (Chester, 1986:53). It appeared that the Bodleian itself had many gaps – statistical yearbooks and census reports outside Britain were not available; All Souls and Barnett House were the only libraries in Oxford where such material might be obtained, and only the latter was open to women. So Barnett House library might be one possible recipient. The Social Studies Board was also asked to look at needs for new posts and institutes in the university. After discussion, it asked the Hebdomadal Council to request a chair in public administration, a chair of finance and currency, and a readership in statistics.

In the end, the Hebdomadal Council asked for funding only where the university was under no responsibility to continue funding later. Money was requested for a readership in statistics, which was guaranteed by secure ongoing funding from a college.<sup>8</sup> In May 1934, All

<sup>8</sup> College resources, which were, in rich colleges, very substantial, were entirely separate from the central university, which often painted itself as the 'poor relation' and had a more conservative budgetary policy.

Souls, where Adams was now warden and Professor MacGregor was based, offered 'to contribute to a satisfactory scheme for an Institute of Economic Statistics by the Establishment of a Readership in Statistics at a stipend of £600 per annum' (Chester, 1986:55).

The Rockefeller Foundation agreed in January 1935 to make a grant of £5,000 a year for five years to start in July 1935. The detail then had to be agreed with Rockefeller. Two research lectureships – one in colonial administration, the other in public administration – were suggested. Montagu Harris took up the research lectureship in public administration, and became active in Barnett House. Under pressure from Rockefeller to develop applied social studies, a grant was agreed to support training for social administration at Barnett House. Each of these three initiatives received £300 a year for five years from the Rockefeller grant. The importance of networks in Oxford at this time is underlined by the way these funds were secured. The Hebdomadal Council delegated responsibility for devising schemes to the Social Studies Board, which in turn delegated the work to a subcommittee of three – two of whom were also, coincidentally, on the council of Barnett House.

Bretherton and Maud (both actively involved in Barnett House) were given short-term research lectureships from the remaining Rockefeller funds. There was still money left over, and still pressure from Rockefeller to do some practical social research project, so in 1935, Barnett House secured £1,500 spread over three years for the Oxford Survey.<sup>9</sup> This was the first grant of any substance received by Barnett House for training or for research through the university. It allowed Barnett House to appoint two more people, both women, to paid roles, though these were temporary (they had three years' funding). Barnett House 'came of age' in 1935 – celebrating 21 years since its inauguration. It may well have felt the Rockefeller money had finally provided the traditional 'key of the door'.

# The Oxford Survey

The Rockefeller funding allowed Barnett House to forge ahead with its social research project started in 1934. This project was 'to study the social and administrative implications of the industrial changes

<sup>9</sup> Barnett House annual report 1936.

now in progress in one small district. Oxford itself was a microcosm of the new industrial landscape, with the rapidly expanding interlocking works at Cowley of Morris and Pressed Steel. Oxford was expanding eastwards, attracting workers from across Britain, and house builders were finding it hard to keep up with demand. This, surely, was worth surveying so that lessons could be learnt and communicated across Britain and abroad. This new project was very different from the rural regeneration project of Adams and Hadow, which had been a kind of social experiment, in which academics were both volunteer actors and managers, and the desired outcome was deliberately open and broad. It was intended to be 'tighter', and its outcome was to be reports with conclusions and lessons learnt, which would be useful elsewhere (Bourdillon, 1938:1).<sup>10</sup>

In retrospect it may seem an arrogant project, Oxford-centric, and doomed to the fate which awaited it – the two-volume survey sank without trace, not even widely used in Oxford itself. But its intentions were strong and honourable. It was to draw on the new expertise of the Institute of Statistics (begun under the wing of All Souls in 1935) under the direction of Jacob Marschak, who was made an honorary member of Barnett House in 1934). 11 Marschak according to Kenneth Arrow 'brought with him the quantitative skills that Oxford [economics] lacked' (Arrow, 1991:134). The survey also drew on the combined academic skills of economists, geographers, and political scientists to describe Oxford and the surrounding district, how its government worked, how its services were provided and what conclusions could be drawn. It deliberately avoided asking the general population what they experienced or felt – the kind of survey Llewellyn Smith (1930–35) was undertaking in The New Survey of London Life and Labour. The Oxford Survey was divided into different topics: geography, statistics on industrial immigration, occupations, agriculture, unemployment and population, sewerage, transport, electricity, education, health and local government. Each topic was covered by a different subcommittee, which ultimately collected both data and analysis; this contributed to the rather unwieldy text, divided into two volumes

<sup>10</sup> The significance of this survey is explored further in Chapter 11, together with a more general discussion about how the work at Barnett House illustrates the development of different research methods in the social sciences.

<sup>11</sup> In 1935, Jacob Marschak was made the first director of the Institute of Statistics. He was from Kiev but emigrated to Germany and then England as a refugee and then to the US in 1940 where he followed a highly distinguished academic career in New York, Chicago, Yale and UCLA.

without a clear guiding hand. Local people and economists, statisticians and social researchers from the university acted as researchers, as well as committee members of voluntary groups, councillors, officials and women from local voluntary groups. They were primed at special conferences and armed with lists of questions to ask, the results of which they wrote up and returned to the newly appointed Barnett House Survey Committee. Thanks to the Rockefeller grant, the survey was able to recruit a research assistant, Betty Ackroyd, a new graduate from the Institute of Statistics.<sup>12</sup>

Joseph resigned as secretary at this time. His successor Claudine Bourdillon, a young medieval historian, masterminded the Survey under Adams' guidance. Thanks to Rockefeller, her wages doubled, from £150 a year to £300, much to her delight. The various survey subcommittees (largely led by academics) wrote up the descriptions of services in the vicinity – listing their good features and their shortcomings, and suggesting remedies. For the reasons why this vast report has disappeared from history, we need to turn to Oxford University politics, new horizons in social science and the disruption of the second world war, which meant the final social policy recommendations to be written up by Maud were never published (Peretz, 2011). However, it would almost certainly not have been as far reaching without the funding offered by the Rockefeller Foundation to the university for the development of social sciences.

### Tensions in Barnett House in the 1930s

The numbers of students taking 'modern greats' continued to rise in the 1930s; it was now among the largest five degree courses studied in Oxford (Chester, 1986:53), and PPE undergraduates used the Barnett House library intensively. Leading social scientists in the university were almost invariably involved on committees in Barnett House and many were responsible for chapters in the Oxford Survey and indeed the management of the survey itself.

International visitors to Oxford were welcomed to Barnett House; in 1932 an 'educational mission appointed by the Chinese Government

<sup>12</sup> Later Dame Betty Ackroyd of the National Consumer Council.

<sup>13</sup> Letter from Claudine Bourdillon to Henrietta Barnett, Violet Butler papers, VB box 39, Bodleian Special Collections.



The Chinese commission studying higher education in Britain visit Barnett House in 1932; Adams is second from the right

paid a visit to the house during the year and conferred there with some of the Council and others interested on matters of urban and rural social service'. 14 There were conferences and lectures for those in Oxford wanting a career (or to spend a summer vacation) in social work; a social work club for undergraduates flourished; national and international social work and social administration figures lectured (Eleanor Rathbone on family allowances, Beveridge on unemployment insurance, and economic controls in wartime, Llewellyn Smith on 'the borderland between public and voluntary action in the social services' - most of these were given as Sidney Ball lectures and published). Violet Butler and John Maud organised a weekend conference on co-operation in the public services in 1939.15 It seemed only a matter of time before the work of the Committee for Economics and Political Science, so closely interwoven with Barnett House and its connected social training course, so long a poor relation, would finally come within the full remit of the Social Studies Board, rather than being treated as an arms-length appendage.

But there was increasing tension in the 1930s between the different functions of Barnett House – between its civic house role and its expanding role as a teaching and research centre. How did this affect the shape of the House, and the people who frequented it? The fruits of the rural reconstruction work were still alive in the rooms and staircases. The County Federation of Girl's Clubs, the Oxford

<sup>14</sup> Adams was a member of the Chinese University Commission at this time. The quotation is from a press cutting in Violet Butler's papers, VB box 39, Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>15</sup> Barnett House annual report 1938–39. See illustration, page 70.

Council of Social Service, the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and the Federation of Women's Institutes all had their headquarters in Barnett House in the 1930s. There were plans afoot for a 'Barnett House East' at this time, which continued to be discussed until the late 1940s. The secretary, Claudine Bourdillon, wrote about the plans to Henrietta Barnett in 1935, explaining it would happen in two or three years. <sup>16</sup>

A very significant proportion of the committee members of these organisations were women; the wives and daughters of dons and vicars, local schoolmistresses, and women councillors. Violet Butler, in her reminiscences of the first fifty years of Barnett House, describes this well: 'They might, indeed, meet on their way up to the library, visitors apparently irrelevant to their studies; Women's Institute members, bearing to their headquarters upstairs garden produce or model handiwork for exhibition; a group of country headteachers coming in to learn from experts how to direct neighbourhood surveys, of village blacksmiths in Oxford for a rural community council course on ironwork illustrated from college gateways, or of ICS<sup>17</sup> probationers considering how to adapt Oxfordshire rural schemes to the needs of the Punjab' (Butler, 1964:46).

Barnett House Council appears to have been perturbed by this influx of 'townspeople'. The annual report of 1934 notes that the 'attendances at conferences were decreasing, and that they appeared to appeal less to the classes for whom they were primarily intended than to what may, for convenience of distinction, be called miscellaneous residents of Oxford'. It goes on to suggest ways of attracting 'undergraduates and representatives of organised labour'.

Being a 'centre for citizenship', and a place for professional training, was increasingly in tension with the aspiration to be a centre for economic and social research. There may well have been competition for space; the House was so full that it had to find larger premises. There were also financial reasons for the move; the income was simply not adequate for the outgoings without substantial grant aid. Selling the rest of the Turl Street lease to neighbouring Exeter College paid off the mortgage. Barnett House would move to two elegant but cheaper houses, with a squash court attached and a balcony, at 34 and 35 Beaumont Street, on the corner of St John Street,

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Bourdillon to Henrietta Barnett, VB box 39, Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>17</sup> Indian Civil Service.

early in 1936. There was room for the library, lectures, a common room for students, the various voluntary groups and the growing 'secretariat' for the Oxford Survey and professional courses.

Another new venture for the social sciences in Oxford University was on the horizon. Plans for Nuffield College emerged in 1936. Although originally Lord Nuffield had suggested funding a postgraduate college for engineering and commerce, he had been persuaded that a postgraduate college for social sciences was a better cause. Lord Nuffield was told that it would be unwise to compete with Cambridge and provincial universities that already provided engineering; a social science college would provide that link he desired to see between academic thought and contemporary problems. It was fortuitous that AD Lindsay was vice-chancellor when the offer was made – he was absolutely in tune with the need for social science research in Oxford: but Lord Nuffield himself needed more than a little persuasion (Chester, 1986:68; Halsey, 2013). It was agreed that the planned college would 'bring people of practical experience in the world to co-operate with the academic people' (Chester, 1986:67). This sounds remarkably similar to the aspirations of Barnett House, expressed over the previous decades. What would be the relationship between the two institutions?

### **Barnett House and Nuffield College**

Once the funding of £1m had been agreed for Nuffield College, the academics continued to elaborate the plans. In 1937 Lindsay and Adams both thought it should be a 'school' where the right 'training' should be provided in social analysis 'to advance teaching and research'. Lindsay explained it would differ from the other colleges because it would be Oxford University's 'instrument of research into the facts and problems of contemporary society'; both men and women would be recruited and the other institutions in Oxford working on similar research could be attached – these included the Institute of Statistics and Barnett House (Chester, 1986:74–5).

Of the original ten-strong Nuffield College Committee, appointed by the Hebdomadal Council on 29 October 1937, five had strong connections with Barnett House. It is therefore not surprising that from the beginning there were discussions about the place Barnett House might hold in the new college. At a special meeting held on 8 June 1938, the Barnett House Council agreed that it would be 'advisable that the greater part of the work for which Barnett House is at present responsible should be transferred to accommodation within the College' and that the association itself, the company limited by guarantee, should transfer. The meeting concluded that it would be a loss that 'those who are concerned in studying social problems no longer share the same staircase as those actively engaged in solving social problems'. But the council members were clear that the advantages to be gained outweighed that loss. 'The objects of the College, although they may be carried out on a vast scale, are so close to the objects of Barnett House that it would not be possible for the Association to continue a wholly independent existence'. 19

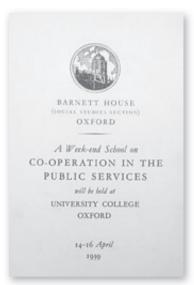
From this point in 1937 onward, it was expected by all concerned that the clutch of courses administered from Barnett House would transfer to the college – that is, public administration, social training, and the allied diplomas in economics and in economics and political science. Any research following on from the Oxford Survey would happen in the new college, which effectively halted any suggestions for further research undertakings at Barnett House.

When the second world war began in September 1939, staff and funds were depleted. The House again rapidly filled with wartime activity. But it was also expected that Nuffield College would change everything. It seemed just a matter of time before this happened. The war had been expected for a couple of years. Barnett House had held conferences on the coming emergency in 1938. And then came the so-called 'phoney war' – a quiet period from 1939 until spring 1940 when heavy fighting began in western Europe. The government made plans for manpower distribution in the armed forces and civilian life and the manufacture of munitions and goods for war, and prepared the home front for bombardment. This led to evacuation of the towns and relocation of institutions on a grand scale, which significantly changed the complexion of Oxford and many other towns in the south-east.

A letter dated 3 September 1939 from Violet Butler to her mother, who was spending the summer as usual at Birdlip in the Cotswolds, shows that she had accepted several evacuees to add to her domestic, voluntary and professional duties: 'The War has come on Norham

<sup>18</sup> Barnett House annual report 1939.

<sup>19</sup> Barnett House annual report 1939.



A weekend conference organised by Barnett House in 1939

Gardens deep in domesticities & child-care. You would be amused to see the occupants of (half) your house! Sheila 14 and a half, & Margaret, 14, Eluned (Linnet) & Monica, feckless twins of 13, Miriam, 6 (charming tho I wish she were a bit older) & an absentee called Olga. Forty of the children (with their headmistress) were sent by mistake to High Wycombe; & having been billeted there, the worried local official said he couldn't unbillet them for a week! They seem gentle well brought up children, not likely to do any damage. Norham Gardens is full of little girls in bright blue frocks. I hope to-morrow to see if I'm wanted otherwise than for bedmaking! But there is no hurry & there are plenty of people. It is very nice to think of you at Birdlip with good Nurse & 4 members of your family. Beloved!' This warm and loving letter helps round the picture of Violet Butler, the author, the economics tutor and the long-time director (in all but name) of the social work course.<sup>20</sup>

There was considerable movement of population around the country for reasons other than the evacuation of families. As in the first world war, institutions moved out of London, and some came to Oxford. Also, as men were called up, women took over their jobs, or civilians volunteered for air raid and other duties. Violet Butler became an air raid warden. Betty Ackroyd volunteered as a voluntary

<sup>20</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 67, Bodleian Special Collections.

aid detachment (VAD) worker, Gertrude Thorneycroft, treasurer of Barnett House, went to the War Office to supervise women's hostels, and John Maud to the Ministry of Food.

Barnett House played a significant part in Oxford's war effort. It was already the hub of voluntary organisations for both town and county, which were to play a large part in the war effort themselves. co-operating with the statutory authorities. The organisation of nurseries for evacuee children was managed from the House. The Oxford Council of Social Service and the Women's Institutes helped out with all aspects of the evacuation, and also with providing information through Citizens Advice Bureaux. The Barnett House Council offered its secretary's time to help, and soon the old squash court, at the back of the building, was full of clothes and gifts for the children. There was an energetic programme for the 4,000 evacuated children in Oxford: 'On Christmas Day the Library of Barnett House found itself transformed into a canteen for London parents visiting their children: Christmas parties in the schools were initiated, an entertainment for 500 children was arranged on Boxing Day in the Town Hall, 1,700 children were sent to a performance of the Pantomime given freely by the management of the New Theatre'. 21 But despite being swallowed up in helping with the influx of children, Barnett House continued to run courses, hold conferences, give lectures and carry out research. The influx of refugee academics from central Europe had already begun in the 1930s, but increased at this time, with the Grünhuts, the Krevers, Dr Burchardt, the Fasnachts and others who gravitated to Barnett House and stood in as secretaries or librarians, or gave lectures.

Nuffield College, still as a 'virtual college', with the trustees and Lord Nuffield very much in control, began its first, very ambitious piece of social research in 1940. Cole, fellow of Nuffield and acting warden while Harold Butler was called away on war duties in 1942–43, had helped with Chester and a young Harold Wilson (later UK prime minister) in William Beveridge's Manpower Survey in the early days of the war.<sup>22</sup> Cole now conceived the idea of using Nuffield as the hub of a vast survey to assist government in its postwar reconstruction of town planning, education, public health, social work and local government, and to review the role of voluntary organisations.

<sup>21</sup> Barnett House annual report 1939-40, page 4.

<sup>22</sup> For more information see William Beveridge: A Biography by Jose Harris, published in 1997.

Arthur Greenwood, then in the war cabinet as minister without portfolio, like Beveridge and Cole had frequented Toynbee Hall. Cole persuaded Greenwood to argue in Parliament for Treasury funds for this project in 1941, and received £5,000, which was increased to £10,000 in 1942–43. Cole used many of the same contacts across Britain who had helped in the Manpower Survey to gather evidence for this new survey. This new survey was called the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey (NCSRS).<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, the understanding that Barnett House would not only help with this research, but would itself become part of Nuffield College when it was built, returned to the agenda. In the 1941 annual report, it was noted that Barnett House would become 'largely auxiliary to the work of other bodies engaged in social service or investigation of present conditions as a preliminary to plans for reconstruction'. <sup>24</sup> The Barnett House Survey Committee itself 'stressed the importance of bringing to the notice of the authorities of Nuffield College the need for certain pieces of research which should follow on naturally from the present survey', and suggested a house-to-house survey of the economic situation of individuals as a potential follow-on for Nuffield to undertake. <sup>25</sup>

Barnett House agreed to assist in the NCSRS, which was described as a fitting successor to *Social Services in the Oxford District*. Its 'auxiliary' role was clear; and since Cole was leading the research, there must also have been a sense that Barnett House's role was cemented into the new Nuffield. The marriage was contracted, and Claudine Bourdillon, editor of the Oxford Survey, resigned in 1940 as general secretary to Barnett House, and moved to the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey. Thus Bourdillon was now on the payroll of the new college, and Cole remained on the Barnett House Council. From the outset Barnett House was involved in the Nuffield project; it was suggested that Barnett House should take up the question of local government areas and their relations with central government, but also it was made clear there were no extra funds for this work.

Discussions continued about the likely future of Barnett House in Nuffield College; these were cordial, and architectural drawings were prepared for the House's premises in the college. (These drawings

<sup>23</sup> All the research is still available in the Nuffield College archives. It is discussed in Chapter 11.

<sup>24</sup> Barnett House annual report 1941.

<sup>25</sup> Barnett House Council minutes, 26 May 1939, Barnett House archives, SC1/2/5, Oxford University Archives.

were hanging in AH Halsey's study in Nuffield in the 1960s, when he was director of Barnett House.) However, when members of the Barnett House Council met with the Nuffield Social Studies Committee on 2 February 1943 to discuss developments, they received a bombshell from Cole: 'Social Training is not a proper function for the college' and Barnett House would not be part of Nuffield after all.<sup>26</sup>

Why did this happen? One clue can be noted. At this time there were serious problems between Cole, Nuffield and the government that led to the withdrawal of Treasury funding for the huge NCSRS and serious criticism of its quality (Chester, 1986:101). There had been rumours about government dissatisfaction and the trustees of Nuffield College were determined to ensure the academic 'standing' of their college – all this even before the buildings had gone up. The college 'asked the government departments concerned whether the material supplied to them had been of the quality and nature, and in the form required', and received a confidential reply at the end of March 1943 in a memorandum to the survey committee: 'we received criticism which, particularly when addressed to an academic body, must be regarded as severe. The reports were said to be too diffuse, and sometimes rather superficial; and the opinion was expressed that the Survey had been too ready to take on new problems when it would have been preferable to deal more thoroughly with those with which it started; in other words that quality had been unduly sacrificed to quantity'. 27 Nuffield may have wished to blame Barnett House researchers in part for this criticism.

In the meantime the Nuffield trustees may have become particularly sensitive about including any practical training in their remit; hence the rapid move to dissociate the college from Barnett House and in particular from its training courses. Nuffield softened the blow by saying that while social training should be the continued function of Barnett House it was 'highly desirable to ensure close co-operation between Nuffield College and Barnett House' and that 'Nuffield College would do its best to provide accommodation for conferences etc'. Barnett House was to continue 'to help with the local end of any national survey undertaken by the college'. The survey continued, although starved of Treasury funds, and in the

<sup>26</sup> At this point the university had agreed that Nuffield College needed a leader in the absence of Harold Butler on war duties, and Cole was appointed acting warden, serving from May 1942 to September 1943; so in February 1943 Cole was in charge. Source: Barnett House annual report 1943.

<sup>27</sup> NCSRS papers, box J/1/9, Nuffield College archives.

end produced a number of useful publications – *Training for Social Work, The Reform of the Public Health Services, Further Education of Men and Women, Rebuilding Britain* and *Voluntary Social Services: Their Place in the Modern State.* 

Even though this was the middle of the war, Barnett House immediately reviewed its future. Yet again, it reiterated its request to the Hebdomadal Council to take more direct responsibility for the various courses. Second, it reviewed future directions. Edward Cartwright, who had been such an important part of the House when it housed the WEA, now back on the wartime council, wanted to reinstate the link with the settlements; Butler suggested creating a social and educational centre in Oxford for the region; Montagu Harris argued for the House to become part of a health centre, youth centre or community centre; Adams was determined that whatever happened, Barnett House should stay in the centre of Oxford.

### Business as usual – or in decline?

Meanwhile, the usual programme of work continued. Throughout the war the House continued its full programme of lectures and conferences. To give a few examples: in 1941 Barnett House co-hosted a conference on evacuation with Oxford City Council and London County Council, which attracted a hundred participants. Eileen Younghusband spoke on juvenile delinquency at a conference in the Town Hall in 1941 organised by Barnett House. Cole lectured on the Nuffield reconstruction survey.

Social training in the House continued and student numbers increased (though anxieties persisted about the qualifications of entrants), and the council continued to puzzle over how to secure its long-term future. The Rockefeller grant had come to an end. Funding was needed for the tutors and for the course management, which included finding and administering practice placements for the growing body of students as well as the usual work of an academic course. Although Violet Butler continued to carry out her duties on a voluntary basis, she needed assistants, who had become accustomed to being paid. In 1942, in the middle of the negotiations with Nuffield College, a request was sent to the Hebdomadal Council 'for the transference of responsibility for the course to a Committee or Delegacy directly under the University'. At that time it was suggested

that Nuffield College might take on the task – and it may have been that request which provoked the college's final rebuttal. Barnett House was left in a quandary: a not-for-profit company running a library, providing social training and administration courses, and hosting community organisations, but with no close association with Nuffield College, which seemed destined to take over social research in Oxford. No answer came back from the Hebdomadal Council; no firm course of action was determined.

Barnett House seems to have fallen largely out of sight of the rest of the university by the 1940s. By then the undergraduates who visited Barnett House came for three reasons: to use the library, to get involved in voluntary work, and to find out about careers in social work and public administration. They would have found a largely female establishment, with a common room for the women students and another for the men. They would have seen or heard the 'countrywomen' of the rural community council or the Women's Institutes. The president and council of the House would have been largely absent, in their colleges. The reputation Barnett House acquired, both in Oxford University and in the wider world of social work courses, of being a place where rather well-to-do young women were trained to go out and manage as social workers in hospitals and across the globe, may not have seemed entirely inaccurate to visitors to the House. There are certainly individual examples of this kind of young woman. A medical consultant at Guys is remembered to have despaired at being sent a 'Barnett House girl - very upper class and opinionated'.28

The public officials who studied for the diploma in public administration or took the social training course shared many of the lectures with the economics and political science diploma courses; and some of these lectures were open to undergraduates in the university. The public officials were tutored by university economist Maud, and when he left for Birkbeck College and the Ministry of Food, by John Fulton, public servant and economist, later Baron Fulton – both of whom had college fellowships and met their students in their rooms. The overlaps between the courses, and the waivers devised for Oxford PPE and history graduates, worked in practice because students had their own tutorials at this time, and worked out their own fields of study and special areas for research. But it was a complex and

labour-intensive system. Violet Butler and Dorothy Jackson, a former social training student who had been recruited in the late 1930s to assist Violet, devised the practical placements to fit individual needs and interests.

Barnett House library membership continued to grow. Students in Barnett House and in the extramural department nearby in Wellington Square used it regularly. A new club of voluntary and statutory workers met at the House, in addition to the Oxford Group in Public Administration which still met there. Connections with the Rose Hill Community Centre remained strong – it was used by students as an example of a community house. Jackson and Butler both hoped it might become a kind of settlement house, a modern version of a Toynbee Hall; Dorothy Jackson took on the role of warden at Rose Hill Community Centre in 1942, and arranged for many Barnett House students to undertake practical work there.

During the war Barnett House carried out one piece of its own research, which arose directly from its evacuation work and drew heavily on refugee expertise. This was the survey of the results of evacuation on the education of schoolchildren, which was begun in 1942. Barnett House Council appointed a committee of Violet Butler, AB Emden, principal of St Edmund's Hall, Max Grünhut and Adams, to see whether the experience of evacuation on the social and educational development of children would support a change in educational policy 'whereby a) town children would normally spend part of their school life in the country and b) children of all classes would as a normal thing receive part of their education away from home'. This work is discussed in Chapter 11.

Where did Barnett House stand at the end of the war? After the body blow of the rejection by Nuffield College, the financial crisis and the lack of positive response from the university, there must have been serious question marks against its survival. There was increasing tension between its role as a civic house on the one hand and its training and research on the other. And in the postwar fervour of social reform, citizenship was likely to be expressed through state action rather than voluntary endeavour. Did Barnett House look like something from the past rather than something for the future?

## Chapter 4



Leonard Barnes, director of Barnett House 1948-62

# From university delegacy to department: 1946–1962

In contrast to the dashed hopes and government cutbacks and austerity after the first world war, from 1945 the state set about steadily rebuilding infrastructure and industry and embarked on a major programme of nationalisation of key industries, particularly in transport and energy. Central government set an ambitious programme for reconstruction. Local authorities were overwhelmed by the demands of a huge council house-building programme and, in most places, by a timetable to rebuild and repair drains, roads and buildings damaged by bombing; in addition they had to deal with large-scale redistribution of population as families were reunited, institutions moved back to their original locations, and many women were taken out of the workforce and found themselves back at home.

Montagu Harris, who had come to Oxford with the Rockefeller grant-funded research lectureship in public administration and had been very active in wartime Barnett House, pointed to the reduction

in local government's power at this time with grave concern. He argued that this type of central government programme was likely to erode active citizenship; local areas would lose their autonomy and be reduced to acting on instructions from Whitehall. At the annual conference of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) in 1946 he produced the findings of the NCSRS subcommittee on local government (in which he had played a major part), which applauded the Russian 'soviet' and the French systems as those with most power focused in and devolved to the localities, and sounded the alarm about local government in Great Britain. This was discussed in lectures in Barnett House. The changes in local government, which came alongside nationalisation and the construction of the British welfare state, were reshaping the entire system of social administration and welfare in Britain. Over this period the radical reforms to social security in the wake of the Beveridge Report and the creation of the National Health Service (NHS) were massively strengthening the national structures required to deliver these nationwide services, and consequently reducing the scope for local initiatives.

Not only was local government set to lose autonomy in the blizzard of directions which Whitehall sent out, but voluntary organisations also felt threatened. Voluntary federations and their contribution to Oxford and Oxfordshire were a vital part of Barnett House. The wartime research with Nuffield College served only to emphasise the importance of voluntary public service. Yet the world in which they found themselves was heavily involved in building state structures, and recruiting to the new services as they mushroomed in new or requisitioned buildings. Voluntary associations, in this world, were obsolete.

Despite the widespread belief that voluntary organisations would be unnecessary in the new welfare state, there were some voices, including the National Council of Social Service (still chaired by Adams), which 'believed that considerations of public finance would limit the area of state action, and that there would always be new ground to till. Additionally, it believed there was certain work where citizens could best provide for themselves in free associations' (Coles, 1993).

Barnett House Council felt the same. One of the Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey publications in which it was deeply

<sup>1</sup> NCSRS papers on local government, B8/15, Nuffield College archives.

involved, Voluntary Social Services: Their Place in the Modern State (1945), spoke eloquently for the continuation of voluntary effort. This publication, edited by Claudine Bourdillon with contributions by Barnett House Council members Lindsay and Cole, had the same message as Lord Beveridge's Voluntary Action (1948) and a clutch of NCSRS postwar publications: the voluntary impulse needed to be preserved; voluntary action must continue. Evidence was from local and national organisations, such as the Council for the Preservation of Rural England, the Citizens' Advice Bureaux and holiday funds. These were examples of individual and community impulses to champion, preserve, support and pioneer organisations that were not engaged in profit, but simply engaged in ameliorating circumstances and developing society. Voluntary Social Services began by showing how the habit of setting up a voluntary society is deep rooted in Britain: 'Ouite naturally in Britain when a man [sic] has a new enthusiasm he buys a twopenny notebook, prints "Minute Book" carefully on the first page, calls together some of his friends under the name of a Committee – and behold a new voluntary society is launched' (Bourdillon, 1945:1). This was echoed by Cole later in the same volume where he commented that as state services grow, voluntary action changes from being something the rich do for the poor into a more democratic 'communal service' (Cole, 1945:29).

But most of those involved in social policy believed at this time that the voluntary organisation had been superseded. Later in the Barnett House story, Richard Crossman, in his 1973 Sidney Ball lecture, reflected that the voluntary organisation indeed has enormous value in the modern state – and that he had been wrong in 1968–70, when secretary of state for health and social services, to think otherwise (Crossman, 1976). Whether the modern world was to see diminished 'voluntary social service' or not, it was clear that the needs of the new welfare state and the nationalised industries, needs for welfare workers, administrators and personnel officers, were of utmost importance. This expanded workforce needed training. Government departments (the Home Office, the Foreign Office) pressed existing public and social administration courses. It was expedient for the University of Oxford to heed the request from the Barnett House Council to take over full responsibility for the social work and public administration courses rather than leave their administration outside the university, in the House.

### The Delegacy of Social Training

It was with enormous relief then, in 1945, that Barnett House Council heard from the Hebdomadal Council that the university would officially take over all the diploma and certificate courses, under a Delegacy of Social Training, which would report to the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies. News of the new delegacy was posted in the university's Gazette on 13 February 1946.2 The delegacy was to have a budget from the university; from this point, Barnett House would receive a payment from the university for space for the delegacy. This was good news for the diploma courses and for the not-for-profit Barnett House Association, which was facing increasing funding problems. Financially Barnett House could relax. On 14 June 1946 it was confirmed that the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies would rent ten rooms from the House at the 'substantial' annual sum of £525 (around £20,000 at 2014 prices). All the financial worries seemed to have been removed. Barnett House Council was only responsible for the salaries for the librarian and caretaker, and rents from the voluntary organisations would help cover these wages and pay for the running and upkeep of 34 and 35 Beaumont Street.



Violet Butler in the new delegacy with staff and students

2 SC 2/1 1946, Oxford University Archives.

The new delegacy was firmly embedded in the university structures. Its board comprised the vice-chancellor, university officials and members from Barnett House Council, the Social Studies Board, Nuffield College, the Hebdomadal Council, the Delegacy for Extramural Studies and the Delegacy for the Department of Education. Its reports would be sent to the Faculty of Social Studies Board and the General Board of the Faculties. The first delegacy board was chaired by Sir Frederick Ogilvie, president of Jesus College (who had been on the Barnett House Council in the 1920s when plain Mr Ogilvie), and included Cole, Adams and Chester.

Violet Butler was confirmed as secretary to the delegacy – in Oxford parlance this meant director – for one year. She indicated that she wanted to hand over these responsibilities soon; the delegates would need to look for a replacement within the next year. She was to receive £450 a year plus tutorial fees (which were understood to guarantee her not less than £600). This was the first formal pay that Butler had received in all her 33 years of directing the courses.

The delegacy at once set about securing more funding; it was finally as part of the university in a position to apply for a university quinquennial grant for 1947–1952<sup>3</sup>. In October 1946 Ogilvie presented the university with an application for £3,787 for 1947–48, and £4,160 for 1951–52. Ogilvie's report made it clear that work to date for the courses had been 'largely voluntary' – and how grateful they were for the past tutors' generosity – but from now on this should change. The application included £1,000–£1,200 for the secretary to the delegates, £700–£900 for a senior tutor, £600–£800 for a practice supervisor and funds for six part-time tutors. This was the first time anyone other than the secretary, the librarian and the caretakers had been paid.

There was tacit agreement that the 'old guard' would move on; Dorothy Jackson resigned to take up a full-time post as warden of the Rose Hill Community Centre, though she was soon to return to Barnett House. Violet Butler, who was now 65, declared that as well as relinquishing her position as secretary of the delegacy, she would step aside as the head of the social training course in 1947. She had developed this course unpaid, because she felt driven to provide

<sup>3</sup> The University Grants Committee (UGC), which was the principal route for public funds to UK universities at this point, worked on a five yearly ('quinquennial') basis. Universities themselves tended to budget in this way on a five yearly cycle.

the intellectual and practical grounding that she thought that the world of welfare required. She had been responsible for training well over 1,000 students and launching them on careers across the world. Her influence cannot be overemphasised. The men who had given their time voluntarily over the years to the venture and the courses had other spheres of work and were almost all funded from other sources, but Barnett House was Butler's main focus alongside her tutoring in economics at St Anne's College. She undertook extensive voluntary work in the town and sat on national committees and local school boards, but social work tutor and director was her defining role. Barnett House had benefited enormously from Butler, and her generous spirit. It had also benefited from her financial status; by remaining in the family home of her parents, she was not forced to make a living to survive. She was rightly described as the 'uncrowned queen' of Barnett House at her funeral.

As she stepped aside, she developed a metaphor about the history of the House, which undoubtedly helped her move into retirement – she talked of all the functions of the previous 30 years as 'children' who 'grew up and left home'. Although as an explanation of the history, this is not entirely satisfactory, it has some interesting resonances; it suggests that in her mind Barnett House up to the late 1940s more closely resembled a household in which women felt comfortable than a workplace; that as a space for voluntary action and public service, it was less formally constrained than a college or department might have been. It is also very helpful in explaining the ten-year period when Barnett House (the association run as a not-for-profit company by a group of senior academics in Oxford University) wound itself up, and 'Barnett House', as the delegacy styled itself with the blessing of the original Barnett House Council, began to take on the shape it has in 2014.

The older Barnett House, now without the diploma courses, looked initially as though it would survive; its finances were rescued by the rent from the new delegacy. The old regime of worrying about every penny and begging well-wishers to give their time voluntarily or for little monetary reward looked set to change. The annual reports of 1945 and 1946 paint a proud picture of the place of the House in Oxford. In 1945 a new local club is described – the 'Barnett Club' – for officials and workers in voluntary and state services, which it hoped would be copied in other towns and cities: 'The association of a centre of academic study with organisations and groups

engaged in the clinical work of social services is in line with the tradition which Canon Barnett did so much to initiate and establish.' In 1946 the annual report records that Barnett House was 'filled for the greater part of the day in term, and for a considerable part of the vacation, with a substantially increased number of Social Training students from many countries, in addition to the PPE undergraduates and readers who use the Library'. It noted that 'Barnett House is becoming more and more a meeting place for social and educational organisations and there is hardly one evening when the House is not used – not only for one meeting but for two simultaneously or for WEA courses'. The Oxford Social Studies Association made its head-quarters in the House, and organised weekly seminars and lectures.

The picture of a busy institution, still fully functional, does not anticipate the dissolution of the original Barnett House which was to follow. Although the House struggled on until its final dissolution in 1957, it was from 1950 little more than a formal committee structure, with intermittent activities. From 1946 a decade of two versions of 'Barnett House' begins, one on the decline, and the other on the way to becoming the university department it is in 2014.

### The original Barnett House: decline and closure

The story of the decline of the first Barnett House is fairly straightforward. Butler's metaphor of the children leaving the parental home can be further developed to explain the next move; Barnett House, the 'parent', became a lodger in the house of the 'child', the Delegacy of Social Training. When Barnett House moved to Beaumont Street in 1936 it had taken a short-term leasehold on the property. When the lease expired in 1949, the university negotiated an extension on behalf of the delegacy. The university asked the delegacy to charge the Barnett House Association rent for the library and its offices. <sup>4</sup> It also required the delegacy to give notice to the voluntary bodies and clubs that used the premises and until then had provided some revenue. The implication was that this type of voluntary activity had no place in a university setting.

<sup>4</sup> From 5 April 1947, 34 and 35 Beaumont Street was formally leased to the Delegacy of Social Training, and Barnett House became the 'annual subtenant'. Source: Barnett House annual report 1947.

The results were catastrophic for the old Barnett House. The finances ceased to add up. Despite having capital reserves of around £6,000, the income from this capital and from annual dues from associates could not cover the rent demanded for the library (£335 per annum), nor the cost of a secretary. Yet even then, in the face of these bills, the old Barnett House Council remained hopeful for a 'community house' of the future: 'when funds permit and a suitable building can be found – Barnett House might be able to open a new permanent community House which will house social agencies, and where new experiments in social work can be carried out'.<sup>5</sup>

At an extraordinary meeting of the full Barnett House Association on 22 January 1949, it resolved to hand over the library to a new body called the Barnett House Library Trust, run by a board constituted equally from the delegacy, the Barnett House Council and the Social Studies Board. Designated as a trust, it was offered university funding. The university offered a substantial grant to help it develop 'into the field of sociology and related subjects' and to allow it to rent premises. The principal of St Hilda's College, Julia Mann, who had chaired the library committee for some years, became chair of the library trustees. Maria Wagner continued as volunteer librarian and 'carried on the remaining work of the House from the library, with a small room reserved as an office. The Barnett flag was, metaphorically, kept flying by her abundant energies.'6 The library and the conference programme were still hugely popular: 16,000 books were borrowed in 1949, there were 543 undergraduate users, and enthusiastic audiences at the lectures and conferences by the undergraduates thronging Oxford after their war service. 'A set of evening lectures with film strip illustrations by Professor GDH Cole drew audiences that filled the staircase as well as the Library and formed a queue far down Beaumont Street' (Butler, 1964:23).

While the library continued in strength, providing a service for undergraduates and for social studies' academics, the original Barnett House went into decline. Adams stood down as president in 1948 (while retaining his Oxfordshire Rural Community Council role). Edward Cartwright had died. He had been a lifelong campaigner for adult education, a loyal friend and associate of the House

<sup>5</sup> Barnett House annual report 1947, page 5.

<sup>6</sup> Green Book 1950. Green Books were the annual reports of Barnett House Old Students Association, which began in 1948.



Opening of Hadow House in 1955; left to right, ORCC chair, Miss Hadow (sister of Grace) and Professor WGS Adams

who had returned in the second world war to be a member of the Council. Under first Professor David Macgregor's and then Julia Mann's presidency, meetings dwindled to one or two a year. Cole was a vice-president, and the connection with the delegacy was maintained by the new secretary of the delegacy becoming the secretary of the old Barnett House Council.

In 1955, the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council moved across the road to 20 Beaumont Street, with the Oxford Council of Social Service. They named these joint headquarters Hadow House after Grace Hadow. In this way, one aspect of the aspiration for a civic house remained in the centre of Oxford; but it is significant that the university had dissociated itself from the work. The idea of a 'civic house' where academics and civic leaders could engage in debate and exercise citizenship was over. Violet Butler's dream of a 'community house' never materialised. The city council was hard at work developing its own housing and community associations, recruiting their own volunteers, without voluntary intervention of the kind that Butler and Jackson envisaged. The carefully laid plans for a Barnett House East in Rose Hill, and the decades of work with voluntary-run community centres and clubs, were overtaken by the city council's plans for local authority-managed community centres in Oxford. Voluntary action was eclipsed by state activity.

In 1950, the annual report of the old Barnett House recorded that 'we should in the meantime conserve our resources against the chance of some important new line of advance in the spirit of Barnett'. However in 1957 the association was formally dissolved, leaving £7,000 for extramural studies and social work bursaries including a Toynbee Hall fellowship, to be administered by a joint delegacy and extramural studies committee on behalf of the university.

### Barnett House as a university delegacy

For the Delegacy of Social Training, which took over the name Barnett House, there were major new opportunities in the postwar world. State planning, state administration and colonial affairs (including preparations for independence) all brought possibilities for students, for grants, for research and for advice to government departments. Sir Frederick Ogilvie submitted detailed plans to accompany his request for finance. First, he wanted quality: well-qualified and interesting staff, to teach high-calibre students. High-calibre students meant graduates, and high-quality staff meant attractive salaries and opportunities for research. Second, he wanted to develop expertise in the study of society that was clearly needed in the postwar world, so that it could attract grants, scholarships, paid secondments, and do what Oxford had always liked to do – influence government and the outside world.

The advert for the 'Delegacy Secretary' to replace Violet Butler went out in May 1947. Eleanor Plumer, the principal of St Anne's, was asked to tempt Eileen Younghusband to apply. Younghusband was interested; she was seeking employment. She would have been a great catch for the delegacy. But despite tea at the Athenaeum with Ogilvie (being a woman, she had to use the side entrance) and a successful meeting with the delegates, she turned down the post. Her close confidante Violet Markham wrote to her with some relief, 'I didn't a bit like the idea of that Oxford job for you'. She went on to say: 'it was the sense of settled and established inferiority about the Oxford school which warned me. I couldn't bear that you of all

<sup>7</sup> The Barnett House Association wanted to keep the flexibility to 'use [its] funds...[in ways] that could not be foreseen in detail...for either large or small schemes of social work', Barnett House annual report 1950.

<sup>8</sup> A student at the LSE before the war, Younghusband had recently published *The Education and Training of Social Workers*, a report produced for the Carnegie UK Trust.

people should find yourself on a poor level in Oxford and I doubted whether you would be able to change the fundamental second rateness of the job. What might have happened in Oxford if Younghusband had taken the job cannot be known. As it was, Ogilvie and his colleagues were left without a candidate. They must have begun to worry about filling the post. The end of June was already late in the day to find someone for the autumn term. In the event, they recruited Leonard Barnes.

Violet Butler's final role in the new Barnett House was to begin an old students association, which neatly marked the continuity between the old and the new 'houses' through the diploma and certificate course alumni. She threw herself into this venture, writing to old students to keep them engaged, putting on summer schools in Oxford and publishing annual reports, which contained letters from old students now working across a vast canvas of 'welfare' work at home and abroad as well as descriptions of the evolving Barnett House. She published a volume of old students' experiences in 1949 and a fifty year history of Barnett House in 1964. She also contributed to work on a biography of Le Play (Herbertson, 1950). She continued, indefatigably, with her voluntary work. Until shortly before she died in 1976, she was on a local school board and a trustee of local girls' clubs. She frequented Barnett House until the end of her life and was celebrated in a book of essays in honour of her 90th birthday (Halsev, 1976).

### Leonard Barnes 1948-62

Barnes had a varied career before joining Barnett House. About to enter Oxford for his degree in 1914, he had instead joined up and fought throughout the war with a distinguished record, only surviving, he thought, because he had been badly wounded in the final German offensive. He was a published poet. After studying at Oxford, he followed the conventional route into the Colonial Office, but then abandoned this career to take up farming in the Transvaal with a wartime colleague. But he changed direction when confronted by a local Zulu chief over Barnes' right to come from England to take

<sup>9</sup> Younghusband papers, Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick. Markham's view of the Oxford course seems to corroborate the view of the Guy's Hospital informant cited in Chapter 3 (see page 75).

over his ancestral land. Barnes now moved to become a journalist in South Africa, campaigning for a better deal for the black population and working as a reporter on Cape Town newspapers. His first book, Caliban in Africa: an impression of colour madness, published in 1930, was described as a 'brilliantly written book...the most penetrating study of the African problem that has yet appeared'. 10 He became increasingly opposed to colonialism in favour of the independence of the nations of the empire. He was an active Fabian and Labour party member. He stood as candidate in 1935 in Derby. He was part of the Labour party advisory committee on empire. In 1935 he took up the post of lecturer in the education department at the University of Liverpool where he taught social and political theory and looked after the student hostel. His wartime book Soviet Light on the Colonies (1944), a Penguin Classic, praising the Russian colonial system was heavily criticised. He described his life in the 1940s in Britain as one of a shunned outsider, redeemed only by his second wife, and some research work with the King George V Jubilee Trust, surveying juvenile clubs in Nottinghamshire (MacAdam, 1977).<sup>11</sup>

He was not of the young cohort of economists and social scientists who had taught on the public administration course before the war, the young social researchers who also taught local government administrators, like Maud or Fulton, though he may have been known to them. He did know Barnett House people. His active Fabianism will have made him known to several relevant Oxford people. He contributed a paper on 'The uprising of colonial peoples' to a Fabian pamphlet Where stands democracy? (1940) edited by Harold Laski with contributions by GDH Cole and Richard Crossman, and another in 1945 What Labour could do with an essay on 'A policy for colonial peoples'. This pamphlet included a contribution from RH Tawney. Sir Frederick Ogilvie was a man of the same generation, also an author, also a first world war survivor. Ogilvie had lost an arm at the front, Barnes was permanently in leg irons. Ogilvie's four-year stint as director general at the BBC during the second world war had not been a success. Adams was still president of the old Barnett House until 1948; Barnes would have intrigued Adams, with his interest in farming and rural colonial life; and his research with the King George V Jubilee Trust working with Carr Saunders of the LSE would

<sup>10</sup> Clarke, review in Economica No 31, 1931.

<sup>11</sup> Barnes papers, SOAS.

have been a recommendation. His main research funder was the Jubilee Fund, whose chair, the newspaper man Sir Campbell Stuart, would have known Ogilvie. Barnes was a prominent Fabian, so would have known GDH Cole. For Butler – if she was consulted – his interest in youth and surveys, and his age, would have struck a chord.

The reasons why Barnes wanted to apply are probably easier to understand. His Oxford undergraduate years had been intense and formative, coming as they did after the nightmare of the trenches. He writes in his autobiography that, as a survivor, with so many dead comrades haunting his days, he felt for the rest of his life as though he were living for them as well as for himself. He had recently remarried, after a tragic first marriage with an invalid and increasingly alcoholic wife. And this new Oxford delegacy offered him a berth that he must have felt was safe. Later, he confessed to a colleague that he had hoped to have a fellowship at University College, where he had studied as an undergraduate and was still in touch with his tutor. The job offered a mixture of the academic and practical, contact with the colonies, and a mix of international and British students who would go out and run administrations at home and abroad.

He was offered the post late in 1947 and arrived in January 1948. He accepted the delegacy's offer to keep Violet Butler on as secretary until the summer, to give him time to settle in and learn the Oxford committee system, while beginning to plan for the future. He stayed 14 years until he retired. His view of his time in the delegacy was expressed by Anthony McAdam on his death in 1977: 'During this period he fought a lonely and ultimately successful battle at Oxford with the more conservative forces of the University in his attempt to introduce sociology and psychology into the post-graduate syllabus' (McAdam, 1977:50).

Ogilvie died unexpectedly in 1949. Cole took over as chair of the delegacy, to be followed by Chester, warden of Nuffield College from 1954, and ultimately by Dame Elizabeth Ogilvie, principal of St Anne's College. From the outset Barnes describes a certain perplexity about Oxford – 'generally feeling my way into the intricacies of a department' while following 'Miss Butler's nimble footsteps'. 12

The following description of the new delegacy from the 1949 Green Book of the Barnett House Old Students Association gives a vivid impression of 34 and 35 Beaumont Street in those first years of Barnes' leadership: 'On your right as you come up the steps and through the front door, is the office of the Director of Social Training, Mr LJ Barnes...On the left of the front door is the Junior Common Room, one of its walls papered with notices of seminars, society meetings, hockey matches and many things besides, its armchairs around the gas-fire almost always occupied...The second door on the right is labelled 'Miss DM Jackson'...Dorothy Jackson is full-time Supervisor of Practical training. Opposite her room is the General Office, where another old student, Anne Wallace, acts as Mr Barnes' secretary, and General Information Bureau.'

The delegacy was keen to establish both its academic and applied credentials. Barnes and his staff had no problem in recruiting students but they had difficulties to overcome, some peculiar to Oxford, some shared with other 'social training' departments charted by Younghusband (1947). Barnes' first task was to attract a high level of graduate student to the Oxford course. At this time, graduates who wanted to become social workers were steered towards the LSE. not to Oxford; two of the students from the late 1940s interviewed for this study explained that they chose Oxford because it was more sheltered and less academic: a view that accords with the views in the university that Barnett House was where you found girls to marry, or where women went for a kind of 'finishing school' after a degree – and where presumably useful social skills could be learnt. That was a view openly expressed in The Oxford Magazine in 1954. It even appeared in the background briefing notes for the Nairne Committee review of Barnett House in 1988.

The numbers of graduates steadily increased under Barnes. By the time he retired, the only non-graduates were from the workers' colleges, Plater or Ruskin, or from overseas. Those non-graduates who took courses at Barnett House regularly went on to take full degrees. The relationship between Barnett House and Ruskin College and the Catholic Workers College continued up until the end of the diplomas in economics and in economics and political science in 1968. This was undoubtedly useful to the workers' colleges, which could offer Oxford diplomas to their students, and to Barnett House, which benefited from the work and life experiences of these men. The varied student intake at Barnett House, which included a number from overseas in addition to the workers, would have sharply contrasted with the stock Oxford University student population at the time.

Barnes' second task was to recruit high-quality staff. The delegacy brought with it a small budget for academic staff for the first time. Barnes appointed sociology, social psychology and social policy academics to enhance the courses, thereby crystallising the structure of social work training in the department for the next 40 years. In Barnes' time the budget did not allow the appointment of many staff. However, over this period the records of the delegacy, and later the new department's standing committee, show some very strong appointments: Una Cormack, who later moved to a lectureship at Southampton; Peter Collison, who later became professor of sociology at Newcastle; Henri Tajfel, who went on to be professor of social psychology at Bristol and a key figure in the development of European social psychology; and Julia Parker in social policy. Both Tajfel and Collison had strong international links. Jerry Bruner of Harvard was a Barnett House visitor in 1960, through joint work with Taifel (some twenty years before Bruner became professor of psychology at Oxford in 1982). There was also John (later Lord) Vaizey, who taught English social history, though he resigned in 1960 and went on to become a key adviser to the Labour government and an economist widely known for his studies in the economics of education.<sup>13</sup> In 1960 Barnes also appointed Olive Stevenson to the social work side. She was to become a leading figure in the national development of professional social work training from the 1960s onwards, and later professor of social work at Keele and then Nottingham. Joan Woodward, later professor of industrial relations at Imperial College, was also on the Barnett House staff, listed as a full lecturer in 'industrial problems' in 1962. There was also Bleddyn Davies, who came from Cambridge to work with Vaizey. Davies later established the Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) and became professor at the University of Kent and the LSE.

Butler had been clear that research (data collection and analysis) was part of the necessary training for the social work students; the core of social work, for her, lay in the idea of community and in the social survey movement, and some intellectual study of society was a necessary part of being a good case or community worker. Barnes, additionally, wanted to increase the research in the department in its own right. His 1951 report foreshadows later, more successful

<sup>13</sup> Philip Abrams (later professor of sociology at Durham University) was appointed to replace Vaizey but took a post at Cambridge instead.

attempts to build large-scale research projects: 'One of the activities belonging to a school of social work which we are trying to develop in the Delegacy is research. It is not altogether an easy matter, since research work usually comes rather expensive, and our performance in this field (after all, we are only beginners) cannot yet be said to give us much claim to financial backing, either from the University or from any of the usual outside sources. What tends to happen at the moment, therefore, is that we get mixed up with research projects which other people start and take formal responsibility for, instead of starting and carrying through our own...Our immediate problem is to hit on some large issue in the field of social work, such as may form a durable framework within which a whole family or series of projects can be undertaken...In a year's time I shall be able to tell you something more, and something encouraging, about it'.14 Ten years later, in his last report before retirement, he wrote of his success in attracting enough medium-term grants to become what he hoped to call a research centre. 'Benefactors among the foundations and trusts...in 1962-3 their generosity will amount to some £10,000, half as much again as the part of our budget that derives from university sources...with such support we are able to carry on some very interesting work in the fields of psychology, sociology, and child-care'. 15 The research that was carried out at this time is described in Chapter 11.

On the social work side, what was referred to as the 'Oxford House' scheme began in 1960. Oxford House was another settlement house in Whitechapel like Toynbee Hall, also with an Oxford origin. A scheme for children's social workers which Barnes likened to medical training was begun in London as a five-year trial funded by the Home Office. A tutor would be recruited as supervisor, and ten students were to be resident in either Oxford House or St Margaret's (also a settlement house with Oxford origins) for a substantial part of their course. In 1961 Barnes notes that the first year of the arrangements in Bethnal Green had been successful, and that he had 'found an additional tutor with a mind well versed in the theory and practice of social work' (this was Olive Stevenson). This completed his plans for real practice-based research in conjunction with Oxford House and St Margaret's House, which would both be 'field work training

<sup>14</sup> Green Book 1951

<sup>15</sup> Director's report, Green Books 1961 and 1962.

centres'. He described this first year, with ten childcare students, as the 'thin end of the wedge' and noted that 'he is talking to Joan Woodward about getting an industrial administration group going' along similar lines. A probation stream was added in 1961. Barnes was confident that he had raised the level of incoming students, and was proud that they had a 'high level of academic ability with good honours degrees'. However, it is worth noting that this use of a settlement for residential practice placements was out of step with the current view, that the future lay in the statutory sector.

These achievements are substantial when set in the context of Oxford's complicated structures of colleges and departments, and the university's continuing worries about the respectability of 'social studies'. During the 1950s, as the old 'Barnett House' dwindled, the delegacy became more isolated - at three removes from the ruling university Hebdomadal Council, and in competition for funding within the university. The other contenders for research posts and funding included Nuffield College, St Antony's College, the Department of Experimental Psychology and the Institute of Statistics, all expanding institutions, which recruited economists, sociologists and psychologists. Persuading the Hebdomadal Council to accept the Delegacy of Social Training – even with the changed name of Delegacy of Social Administration – was no easy task. Professor Bleddyn Davies remembers coming to Oxford as a research student from Cambridge in the late 1950s and being astonished to be told there was only one computer in the whole university, and the key was difficult to obtain. His quantitative research relied on access to computing; finally, after asking around, he found that two were accessible, one in the Institute of Agricultural Economics and one in the Institute of Statistics.

Contemporaries in Barnett House record some very stormy confrontations between Chester, the chair of the delegacy, and Barnes – Barnes, protective of his territory and his staff; Chester trying to get access to information about what was happening. This led in at least one case to a heated stand-off where Collison, who had been Chester's doctoral supervisee, was criticised for attempting to act as a go-between the two parties during a spat over access to budgetary data (interview with Peter Collison for this study). Collison also reports two further serious clashes between Barnes and Chester though he was not personally in the firing line. The exact reason for this friction is not clear, but it certainly existed.

Chester and Barnes were from very different backgrounds, with very different approaches to social reform, and there was a difficult relationship between Nuffield and Barnett House going back to the prewar period. As secretary of the wartime Beveridge Committee in 1942, Chester might have expected to play a larger role in Barnett House after the war (he had lectured there at least once in the 1930s when a lecturer at Manchester). But as Jose Harris has pointed out (personal communication), he would probably not have been in sympathy with the Barnett House tradition of social and community work. Chester was also, unlike Barnes, a highly meticulous hands-on administrator, chairing virtually every committee in Nuffield College once he became warden. On the whole, Barnes was a distant manager and is remembered as having worked through an administrator, a recent social training graduate named Anne Wallace; staff at this period recall that everything had to go through Anne Wallace. He also apparently had favourites or confidents he leant on (John Vaizey was one) and others he kept at arm's length.

An early practical problem faced by Barnes was the move by Barnett House yet again to new premises. The lease of 34 and 35 Beaumont Street, which had been taken over by the delegacy in 1947, came to an end in 1949. The new Barnett House would have to move, and so would the library, and the few voluntary organisations still in residence. Unlike their previous move in 1936, which took only a few months from suggestion to fruition, the move from Beaumont Street to Wellington Square took years of uncertainty. From 1949 until the final move in 1955, the delegacy existed on an annually renewed lease from the university.

### The Committee on Radical Economies

As his final act with the delegacy, Barnes helped steer Barnett House through the crisis in 1959 when its existence was threatened by the university's Committee on Radical Economies. This was established at a time when the university appeared to be running into deficit; the committee was set up to review a number of institutions that appeared to be marginal to the overall structure and purpose of the university and which could possibly be axed. The arguments and counterarguments were powerfully expressed in the paper presented to the General Board by the delegacy chair, Mary Ogilvie,

principal of St Anne's College. She referred to the Younghusband Report published in May 1959 and the arguments for high-level social work training for the welfare services. Ogilvie pointed out that the delegacy 'has to do with matters of very great public concern in which university education can make a great contribution'. There was a growing emphasis on services for disadvantaged groups and for training skilled workers for these services. It would be the wrong moment for Oxford to abandon this element.

In June 1959, Barnes wrote formally on behalf of his staff to the education committee of the Social Studies Board: 'It is now more than a year since the abolition of Barnett House was first mooted. No progress, as far as I know, has been made towards a decision, and the staff of Barnett House remain in complete uncertainty as to their prospects and standing...The staff have been arraigned, and their work has been disparaged, behind closed doors...they havebeen afforded no opportunity of presenting a case of their own. No attempt has been made to ascertain what in fact their work comprises. The Social Studies Board, whose acquaintance, as a body, with the activities of Barnett House is of the slightest, has been invited to exercise a quasi-judicial function and to assess the value of these activities.' He goes on to suggest that the delegacy be abolished and a new Institute of Social Administration and Research created. 17 The staff of Barnett House at the time played an active part in arguing for its survival as well, although Tajfel and Collison had been on temporary attachment to universities in the United States, Harvard and Chicago respectively, during the critical period.

The Committee on Radical Economies failed spectacularly in its bid to rationalise or close down Barnett House (as with virtually all the other institutions it reviewed). The most important outcome of the General Board's decision to retain Barnett House was that it moved from being a delegacy to a full-scale university department in 1960. While this is, at first sight, no more than a name change, a delegacy in Oxford parlance suggests a way of dealing with a function that might be important but is not part of the mainstream: for example, the institution that dealt with school examinations was the Oxford Delegacy for Local Examinations. A department, however, is clearly a core part of the university structure and departments were

<sup>16</sup> UR6/BH1/File 7, 24 April 1959, Oxford University Archives.

<sup>17</sup> UR6/BH1/File 7, 4 June 1959, Oxford University Archives.

already well established in science disciplines.

The new department was unusual in two respects, both stemming from its Barnett House origins. First, it had its own building where its staff, students and teaching were largely based. And second, almost all its staff, while they might have had some attachment to a college (for example, as former students), were not formally part of any college as either teaching staff or college fellows. Nor were they yet paid on the standard university lecturer scale. Many of these anomalies took years to iron out, and college attachments, particularly college fellowships, tended to be restricted to the more academic posts, until the expansion of graduate colleges in the 1980s, particularly Green (later Green Templeton) College. These factors acted to keep Barnett House in vulnerable isolation, at one remove from much of the university mainstream, where college attachment was an important lifeline.

The structure of control set up in 1960 was also unusually precise. The new department was governed through a standing committee of the Social Studies Board to which the director was formally responsible. The standing committee was chaired by the chair of the Social Studies Board, a two-year rotating post held by a senior academic from each of the social studies fields in turn. All this locked Barnett House formally into the core structure of the university. It kept the new department under the close control and scrutiny of the Social Studies Board. This may well have been the intention, and certainly characterised the first two years while Barnes remained as director (1960–62). The tenor of the standing committee of the Social Studies Board, chaired from its first meeting by Chester, was distinctly controlling and managerial, asking Barnes to report back, provide papers for the next meeting, etc. As already related, the relationship between Barnes and Chester was tense.

The new department inherited the title Barnett House and all its functions. Its new name – Department of Social and Administrative Studies – was an attempt to encapsulate diverse activities under a common title. It covered its teaching programme – from personnel management and industrial relations to social work training and social administration. It also covered the very broad research canvas and policy interests of its staff. This title lasted for the next 30 years.

Barnes, in his 15 years as director, first of the delegacy and then of the new department, had laid some of the foundations for the achievements of his successor, AH Halsey. He had attracted rising academics to new posts, argued for a more coherent research



Students and staff at Barnett House in 1960

programme, increased the graduate intake and established a more rigorous approach to fieldwork practice for social work students. And on his watch Barnett House had survived the threat of closure. Yet he remains a shadowy and ambiguous figure. Students and staff towards the end of his time describe him as rather remote – recalled by at least one student as a detached but sympathetic figure in the Oxford tradition as he entertained Barnett House students for pre-Christmas drinks in his restored manor house, Water Eaton Manor, on the edge of the city. The links to the settlements, and a reputation for Christian public-spirited idealism, linked Barnett House more strongly to the past, not the future.

The Barnett House that was founded as a not-for-profit company in June 1914 closed in 1957. It had made a significant contribution to the life of the university during the 43 years of its existence. It survived many financial crises, and the rebuff by Nuffield College. It showed an extraordinary resilience in its continuing activities. The reasons for this, laid out above, include the strong tradition of Christian duty among its senior academic members; the willing voluntary work done on its behalf by a generation of women; the comfort and welcome of the House to a wide variety of supporters; and the continuing financial support from affiliates. As a legacy, it left a fine library, which is still a core part of the university's social

<sup>18</sup> John Dossett Davies, 'It was a very good year', Community Care, 29 March 1984.

studies library, a handful of research projects which contributed to the social policy of their time, and a generation of welfare workers, administrators and senior academics across the globe.



AH Halsey, director of Barnett House 1962-90

# The Department of Social and Administrative Studies: 1962–1978

By 1962, Barnett House had become a full university department and though very small, with just six academic staff other than the director, almost all of these were strong appointments; some of the groundwork for later developments in sociology and social psychology teaching was already in place. But its position in Oxford was still one of 'marginal obscurity' (Halsey, 1976). It needed a major figure to take it forward.

AH Halsey was a rising academic star, and one with a very different leadership style from his predecessor, Barnes. He was determined to raise and shape the profile of Barnett House both by his own example in teaching and research, and by very 'hands-on' direction of the overall programme (though not always its detail). Halsey remained director of Barnett House for the next 28 years. Throughout this period he was the dominant figure in the department and shaped

its development<sup>1</sup> – so much so, that the contribution of Barnes was largely and perhaps a little unfairly forgotten even by those who had been appointed at the tail end of the Barnes era, leaving just a fading pencil portrait with a rather fine profile in the room named in honour of Barnes' long-lived predecessor at Barnett House, Violet Butler.

Halsey was recruited in the reputedly classic Oxford manner. In 1961 the Social Studies Board set up a small committee to consider the future of Barnett House and consult with staff (presumably on the new post). The formal appointing committee was chaired by the economist, John Hicks, with Norman Chester and Isaiah Berlin among its members.<sup>2</sup> The post was advertised later that year. But Halsey himself suggests (Smith and Smith, 2006) that Alan Bullock, Isaiah Berlin and Evans-Pritchard were among those who had approached him informally to apply, though only Berlin was actually on the appointing committee.<sup>3</sup> Evans-Pritchard had been at Palo Alto in the United States at the same time as Halsey in 1956. Halsey was also visiting professor at Chicago during this period. This, as Martin Trow, one of his US co-authors, observed, made him not just a visiting British academic but a sociologist who 'knew American society and its Higher Education system as few Englishmen do'.

It may be that the move to talent-spot a rising academic star was a follow-up by Barnett House supporters within the wider university, to make sure that a significant academic figure was appointed director. Such methods sometimes fail, where early potential is not realised. In this case, it worked. Based on Halsey's doctoral work, *Social Class and Educational Opportunity* had been published in 1956. But it was probably the reader *Education, Economy and Society* (Halsey, Floud and Anderson, 1961) and his work on the OECD study (*Ability and Educational Opportunity*) in 1961 that brought him to much wider prominence. This latter work was presented at a landmark conference in Sweden, marking an important step in the gradual transition of the OECD, in the words of Ron Gass, from 'the somewhat narrow macro-economic and trade organisation of the 1960s'

<sup>1</sup> So much so, that as one staff member remarked to another, 'every conversation in the department or elsewhere between two or more members of staff inevitably – sooner or later – comes round to Chelly'. Chelly is Halsey's nickname, widely used by family, friends and colleagues.

<sup>2</sup> Hicks was then Drummond professor of political economics and later Nobel prizewinner in economics in 1972. Isaiah Berlin was then Chichele professor of social and political philosophy, later the first president of Wolfson College, Oxford.

<sup>3</sup> Alan Bullock was first master of St Catherine's College, Oxford; Evans-Pritchard was professor of social anthropology at Oxford.

where the focus on education was restricted to manpower planning. to the 'multi-disciplinary policy institution of today'. A Ron Gass had invited Halsev to act as its rapporteur. Halsev seized the opportunity to draw out the key messages for education and the OECD. Professor Lionel Elvin,<sup>5</sup> who had actually chaired the conference, notes diplomatically in his foreword that the final report 'is neither a statement of his [Halsey's] own views nor a mere précis of our debates, but...a personal formulation of the "sense of the meeting" (OECD, 1961:9). In addition to his academic skills, Halsey could be a master at summarising, usually in a consensual way, the underlying threads of what might have otherwise been a diffuse discussion. In most cases (though not always) participants quickly recognised this as somehow encapsulating what they had been fumbling to say. He was also an exceptional lecturer, speaking without notes, 6 engaging and drawing in his audience like an actor. At his peak like the best 'touch players' this usually worked, though there were lapses.<sup>7</sup> Allied with his academic record, these gifts help to explain why he became such a significant figure, not just in academia but in government and international organisations.

Why did Halsey come to Oxford and to Barnett House? It was at that point a small and marginal institution in a university with no sociological tradition and only two or three sociologists, though option papers in 'modern social institutions' and 'sociological theory' had been added to PPE (one explicit reason for seeking to appoint a sociologist to be director at Barnett House). An option paper in 'industrial sociology' was added in the mid-1960s. Equally importantly, we should ask why he stayed. His background had been in teacher training after the war, and then at the LSE, followed by sociology posts at Liverpool and Birmingham, all with much longer and stronger traditions in sociology than Oxford. The trivial answer to why Halsey came to Oxford might simply be that he was invited to apply. However, the post of director of Barnett House also carried a Nuffield College fellowship. Nuffield was the increasingly powerful centre of research in the social sciences in Oxford. In Halsey's own

<sup>4</sup> Ron Gass was later head of the OECD's Manpower, Social Affairs and Education Directorate.

<sup>5</sup> Then director of the Institute of Education, London; previously principal of Ruskin College, Oxford.

<sup>6</sup> A technique Halsey claims he learned from Arthur Lewis, the economist, at Palo Alto (Halsey, 1996:64).

<sup>7</sup> A New Statesman review by Halsey of EG West's Education and the State in 1965 required a published retraction and legal settlement.

view, stated in his autobiography and in interviews, having decided to turn down offers from the United States, he saw Oxford as potentially a better base for his wider concerns with social reform; bluntly, he felt that he would be taken more seriously and get a better hearing from an Oxford base.

Starting from a virtually clean slate meant that, in theory, there was more scope for the development of sociology at Oxford than in locations where it was already established. It should be underlined that Halsey's conception of sociology was always broad. The sociology of education in the UK at this point was very closely involved with practical questions of educational reform, particularly the effects of social class on access and on the 11-plus selection into the tripartite system of secondary schools, the focus of Halsey's own doctoral study. He was, as one academic colleague noted, 'anything but a purely academic sociologist'. And for Halsey, at least wearing his Barnett House hat, there was a close interaction between academic study, social reform and practical action: 'the challenge to become involved in policy for the academic is irresistible', he wrote of 'experimental social administration' (Halsey, 1970); 'to produce a theory of poverty and to test it in the very real world of the urban twilight zones' as he later wrote about the national Community Development Programme (Halsey, 1978). From this perspective Halsey fits securely into the Barnett House tradition of social enquiry, closely linked to social reform and social action.

His introduction to the Festschrift for Violet Butler's 90th birthday (Halsey, 1976) is both a strong endorsement of this tradition and a subtle restatement of the Barnett House remit. Regretting the way the expansion of sociology in British universities in the 1950s had been largely separated from social policy, he interprets the move by the Social Studies Board to plant sociology firmly in Barnett House as a way of linking academic sociology closely with empirical social enquiry and the professional training of social workers. This is a clear statement of his aims as director over the next 28 years – to develop sociology in an applied setting but 'without in any way restricting the development of the subject in its other orientation' (that is, more academically driven concerns). His conception of sociology also explicitly embraced social work, as the applied end of the discipline, thus linking the main teaching programme into his vision of the way Barnett House should develop. How far this was achieved frames much of the Barnett House history over the next 30 years.

There was the growing sense in the late 1950s and 1960s of a changing social policy climate as some of the darker undersides of the postwar boom began to be exposed with the 'rediscovery of poverty' in the UK and other developed countries (Abel-Smith and Townsend, 1965). From the 1954 white paper on 'early leaving' from school by disadvantaged young people through to the landmark educational advisory committees' major reports (Crowther, 1959; Newsom, 1963; Plowden, 1967) via Lady Albemarle's Boys (Gosling, 1961), there was increased emphasis on services for disadvantaged groups and on training skilled workers for these services. There was a shift, too, in policy towards the role that social factors and the social context played in creating and maintaining social disadvantage and deprivation. Halsey's work on educational selection and social class had brought him into conflict with the leading psychologist of the time, Cyril Burt, one of the strongest proponents for the genetic basis for such selection, whose research had strongly influenced the development of the so-called '11-plus' testing of children for education which underpinned the tripartite system of secondary schools.8

The early years under the new director suggest a modest shift rather than a dramatic surge in new activity. While Barnes emphasised the training of professional social workers in his final messages to Barnett House, 9 Halsey stressed the wider context where this was iust one of the Barnett House strands. By 1963-64, the intake of 54 students (all but four of them graduates) was in Halsey's view split into four different groups with those taking the 18-month childcare and probation course making up about a quarter of the intake. Staffing for professional training remained minimal; apart from the Olive Stevenson post which was directly dependent on Home Office funding, there was a single social work tutor, Dorothy Jackson, inherited from pre-university Barnett House days. This was later supplemented by a part-time probation teacher, replaced by Juliet Cheetham in a full-time post in 1965–66. Social work training had been a central part of Barnett House since it opened, but professional social work training had not yet become the dominant activity. Barnes, too, in his five-year plan for the 1960s, which Halsey largely took on, had also envisaged it as just one part of the programme.

<sup>8</sup> After his death some of Burt's research was publicly challenged as fabricated. See Mackintosh, NJ (ed) *Cyril Burt: Fraud or Framed?* (1995) for a balanced account of this controversy.

<sup>9</sup> In the Green Books for 1960–61 and 1961–62.

Halsey was also promoting new developments in Oxford outside Barnett House. He was central in developing the sociology option papers in PPE and the two-year graduate BPhil in sociology, which began as a pilot in 1965 with its first significant intake in 1966.<sup>10</sup> This was boosted in 1965, following the report of the Heyworth Commission, by the creation of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) with Michael Young as its first chairman. Michael Young (later Lord Young of Dartington), sociologist, social reformer and 'social entrepreneur', as Asa Briggs titles him in his biography (2001), had been running the Institute of Community Studies, which he had set up with Peter Willmott in east London. From the academic year 1966–67 SSRC studentships became available for graduate social science courses, enabling students to be funded for fees and living costs. Several of the Oxford BPhil intake in 1966 benefited from SSRC studentships<sup>11</sup>. But the BPhil and its students had few formal links with Barnett House; Nuffield College was its focus. In principle many apparent boundaries in Oxford were quite permeable, and Halsey's conception of his sociology domain sometimes compounded elements not formally part of Barnett House at all.

Research at Barnett House in the early 1960s followed the pattern established under the previous director. Tajfel continued to bring in very substantial grants, some from the US National Science Foundation (NSF) and the United States Air Force (USAF) for work on individual differences in social categorisation of individuals and groups, and on cognitive and social attitudes among the young to their own and other nations. Collison made use of small-area data from the 1961 UK census to assess ethnic segregation. A new component was the growth of industrial relations studies linked initially to Joan Woodward and Alan Fox (Woodward's successor when she left to become professor of industrial relations at Imperial College). By the mid 1960s there were studies on the effects of redundancies at a British Aluminium rolling mill, and research for the Prices and Incomes Board on wage policy (Fox, 1990:229-30), and industrial relations academics across Oxford were sufficiently numerous to be referred to as the Oxford Group. Later a small research group was

<sup>10</sup> While the Oxford BPhil was a taught graduate course with a thesis, in the social sciences it was then seen in Oxford as a better route into higher education posts and research than doctoral study, particularly where students were converting from a non-social science first degree.

<sup>11</sup> The original bid for sociology at Oxford was for 13 SSRC quota awards in 1966, though many fewer were ever granted.

assessing the effects of the relocation of a food factory from Birmingham to Banbury<sup>12</sup> and undertaking research on the working arrangements at British Motor Holdings, the then motor manufacturer in Oxford, successor to Morris Motors. In addition, the new director added his own research on cooperatives carried over from his Birmingham days (Ostergaard and Halsey, 1965), his current research on university teachers, and a series of reports of national policies on education and training for the OECD. Olive Stevenson was working on family casework, and Julia Parker's book on social services (Rodgers and Dixon, 1960) added to the range. While all this was on a larger scale than before, as sources of research funding developed, projects tended to be one-offs, involving the principal academic with some part-time help. There was a wide scatter of topics, reflecting the diverse individual academic interests across the department. Summing up the overall Barnett House programme in 1964 for the jubilee celebrating fifty years since its opening, Halsey's prospective claim was that with all these developments 'the department is on the way to becoming a centre for sociological study'. 13 This reflects Halsey's aims voiced explicitly to the standing committee in October 1964 that the department should become the focus of two-year graduate courses in sociology, social psychology and social administration, with social research staff and facilities 'that individual colleges are in no position to provide'.14

But perhaps more significant than these broad aims was a small item on the Social Studies Board minutes for March 1966 noting that leave had been granted to Dr Halsey to act as consultant to the Department of Education and Science in London. Anthony Crosland was appointed secretary of state for education and science in 1965 in the Wilson government and selected Halsey to act as his consultant. While in Halsey's terms, he was a late arrival to the group of Oxford (and other) academics who acted as advisers to the new Labour government from 1964, this was the first, at least in the modern era, of such links for Barnett House, but others soon followed with significant impact on the next phase of development.

The changing style of control and relationship between the

<sup>12</sup> Funded with a grant from the General Foods Corporation, the manufacturer of Bird's Custard.

<sup>13</sup> Green Book 1964-65.

<sup>14</sup> Standing Committee, 22 October 1964.

<sup>15</sup> More information on the background to this appointment is provided in Smith and Smith (2006).

department and the university once Halsey was in post should be noted. If the standing committee was ever intended to be a way of controlling the department and keeping it in line, its role was gradually transformed into becoming more a forum for ideas and developments where the new director wanted support. Later its meetings were quite frequently cancelled as there was 'no business to transact' (even when quite major changes were in the offing). The Social Studies Board, with two meetings a term and an extraordinarily large agenda (frequently more than 40 items) had little time to consider the detailed working of one small part of its bailiwick. The minutes of the standing committee were typically no more than noted, and decisions taken only when wider changes or additional funding or posts were at issue. In these cases, the board was often likely to refer the matter up to the General Board, which was still virtually the sole body for deciding on expenditure-related decisions – on even quite small items – what one vice-chancellor later described as 'delegation upwards'. This extraordinary level of central control of funding continued until the formation of the divisions. including social sciences, in 1999–2000. Halsey joined the Social Studies Board as a permanent member from 1963–64 and was its chair in the 1970s.

# Years of expansion: 1967–1978

The 1960s, as is sometimes fondly remembered, never really got going until the second half of the decade. This was certainly the case with Barnett House. If the first few years of the 1960s had strengthened the existing foundations and shape of the department, rapid expansion took off only in the last three years of the decade. The move to make the diploma in social and administrative studies a two-year course, for which Halsey had pressed, came into effect in 1967–68. One unforeseen consequence was to make the general diploma (without the social work element), previously achieved in one year, much less attractive (other universities were already offering full MSc courses in one year and grants were difficult to obtain for a two-year course) and the intake fell rapidly. The industrial relations/management stream ended at this point, with responsibilities transferred to the newly emerging Oxford Centre for Management Studies, later Templeton College. By contrast, the childcare and

probation stream, which had been an 18-month course, continued to expand, partly because the pressure for qualified social workers in the field was increasing, making it an attractive prospect for graduates, and partly through direct intervention by central government pressing the university to increase training places. This was the year the Seebohm Committee published its report on the future of social services, recommending the creation of social services departments by local authorities that would employ social workers covering a range of services to replace the separate welfare departments for children, the elderly and other client groups. The student intake for the new diploma reached 29 in 1969 – almost all for the professional training course. Social work teaching posts rose very modestly to match this increase, but there were other appointments as well. Tajfel and Collison had both left for professorships. Rod Martin took on the sociology teaching and for a time Alan Tyson taught social psychology. Tyson was a fellow of All Souls who had formally qualified in medicine and as a psychoanalyst, contributing to the editing of the complete works of Sigmund Freud in 24 volumes, but his developing interest in the 1960s was in musicology, becoming a world authority on Beethoven and Mozart; he was visiting professor of music at Berkeley in the 1970s. Other appointments included Keith Hope in research methods and John Ridge in sociology. With 11 permanent staff members in 1969, there were only three social work tutors, though five others in academic posts were involved in the discipline teaching for intending social workers. It was only in the next year that the social work tutors were increased with the appointment of David Millard and Phil Evens. From being just one part of student admissions in the early 1960s, professional training now provided virtually the complete student intake by the end of the 1960s. This marked a significant change from the pattern in the previous decade with its rather more varied intake on different courses with local authority officials and students from overseas; it was now a largely UK graduate group, though the number on secondment meant more variation in experience and age than on many other graduate courses.

If the shift in student intake was gradual, developments in research were much more dramatic. The creation of the SSRC in 1965 brought sociology graduate studentships for the sociology course from 1966, but was also a new source of research funds. Social research was suddenly much in demand, not least by government departments

seeking guidance for new social policy directions. This was reflected in the spread of special advisers in Whitehall. Halsey took on this role in late in 1966, nominally working at the Department of Education and Science (DES) for one day a week. This brought him into close contact with Michael Young, the first chairman of the SSRC (whose ministerial link was also through the DES and its secretary of state Antony Crosland), though links between Young and Halsey probably went back to the LSE in the 1950s and certainly to the early 1960s. Halsev regularly recommended his sociology students to read Young's fable, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (1958). One thing clearly leads to another, and by 1967 Halsey was also working for the Fulton Committee on the Civil Service on the first major survey of civil servants (Halsey and Crewe, 1969). Nearly 5,000 civil servants, sampled from staff records, completed questionnaires. This study clearly made waves within the civil service – there are now more catalogue entries in the public records office at Kew for this survey than for any other Halsey enterprise. But more immediately Halsey and Young were working closely together in the wake of the Plowden Report on Primary Education, received by the DES in late 1966 and published in 1967. Young had served on the Plowden committee and drafted two key chapters on the role of parents and on what he termed 'educational priority areas' (EPAs). These were socially and economically disadvantaged areas with poor educational achievement. The committee made the creation of EPAs its top recommendation.

The initial response to Plowden was overwhelmingly positive with all-party support in the parliamentary debate, particularly for the EPA proposals. But against a background of financial crisis the immediate response of government was to take no action. Both Halsey and Young were centrally placed in government by 1965 in the DES, and in a position to influence developments. Using the context of the so-called 'Plowden seminar' held with Crosland in his house, Young and Halsey put forward an 'action-research' initiative to test out the Plowden EPA proposals on a pilot basis. This had, in fact, been a recommendation in the Plowden Report, probably stemming from Young's drafting, which fitted closely with Halsey's idea of 'experimental social administration' (Halsey 1970). <sup>16</sup> The original proposal

<sup>16</sup> An unconscious echo perhaps of Adams' efforts in the 1920s at 'experimental rural regeneration' with Grace Hadow (see Chapter 2).

for £5m (then an enormous sum, equivalent to some £70m at 2014 prices) was finally whittled down to £175,000 (£2.8m at 2014 prices) for a three-year programme, with £75,000 coming from the SSRC and £100,000 from the DES (in both cases the largest grant each had made up to that time). It was quickly agreed to run the full grant through Barnett House under Halsey's direction; this got round the problem that it was not apparently then possible for central government to directly fund local government for local pilot projects. This subsequently changed following legislation introduced by the Home Office in 1968 to cover the new 'urban programme'.

Once agreement had been given, Halsey and Young worked rapidly to enlist local authorities willing to host and support the projects and local universities to host the research and evaluation, and then to recruit staff. Though there were some precedents, this was essentially the first development of its kind and scale in the UK, though there were many examples in the United States. Many more soon followed in the UK as, with variations, it became a favoured model for piloting developments, either as a toe-dipping exercise to test the water or alternatively as a way of heading off pressure for more comprehensive action.

The EPA action-research programme was launched in Oxford in late 1968 and ran for three years in four small pilot areas in England and one linked project in Scotland. Most staff were directly employed by the University of Oxford, though all except the national research officer worked outside Oxford. The effect at its peak was to add nearly 30 staff to Barnett House, more than doubling its complement. Most project teams raised additional funds from their local authorities or from charities, and were quick to take advantage of other initiatives launched by central government to target disadvantaged areas as funding began to flow for EPAs and similar areas.

More or less at the same time as the EPA programme was being developed, the Home Office community programmes department, then run by Derek Morrell, was hatching a much larger scheme to cover not just education but a range of local social and welfare services in disadvantaged areas, again using the model of local pilot action projects with a linked research team. This was the community development projects (CDP) programme; but it needed a central government funding stream on which to draw. The catalyst was unexpectedly provided by Enoch Powell's shock 1968 'rivers of blood' speech (an apocalyptic vision of the consequences of ethnic minority

immigration into Britain's inner cities).<sup>17</sup> The government's immediate crisis response was to announce a new 'urban programme' to strengthen services initially in areas with large ethnic minority populations. The CDP programme coat-tailed on this initiative as the related legislation allowed the government to fund local authorities directly for specific projects.

Halsey had been active in helping plan the CDP initiative - Morrell had previously been at the Schools Council, linked to the DES. As it was launched, there appears to have been government unease at cabinet level over Morrell's all-encompassing 'cathedral' vision of the CDP programme, which involved virtually every branch of central government in addressing urban deprivation. The outcome was the appointment of Halsey to act as overall national research director of the CDP programme, specifically requested in a letter from Callaghan, then home secretary, to the university in autumn 1968. Halsey was, it seems, viewed as a safe pair of hands to restrain the wilder plans of a reforming civil servant. Thus for a time Halsey was director of the two main social action-research programmes in the UK, one run directly though Barnett House, the other by central government. The CDP programme, which ran from 1969 to 1977, was a far more complex local area-based 'action-research' initiative than EPA. First, it was set up and run directly by the Home Office in Whitehall, until the Home Office began to distance itself from the local projects as these became increasingly radical in the mid 1970s. Second, action and research teams were always separate organisations; action teams were appointed by local authorities and research teams were based in a university. The national CDP programme was weighed down from the start by a complex set of Whitehall committees. Central government departments had shamelessly freeloaded on the project to argue for more central staff as the price of providing the necessary co-ordination at local and national level. After the initial development phase Halsey passed the role of national CDP research director to Professor John Greve but Barnett House retained three of the local research teams.18

But it was not only Halsey who was developing strong links across government. Olive Stevenson was granted leave of absence

<sup>17</sup> Powell had been shortlisted to give the Sidney Ball lecture at Oxford in 1967, but Sir Edward Boyle, a moderate conservative, was chosen.

<sup>18</sup> See Marjorie Mayo (in Lees and Smith, 1975) for a fuller account. See Chapter 12 for more detail on the research.

in 1968 to act as government adviser, first to the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) and then a further year with the Supplementary Benefit Commission (SBC), the agency responsible for the administrative organisation of all national means-tested benefits that had replaced the National Assistance Board. This clearly strengthened her position as one of the country's leading social work researchers and, to her surprise, on Halsey's recommendation she was promoted to a university readership on her return to Oxford (Stevenson, 2013). Her time in Whitehall was closely followed by a series of research projects in Oxford funded by the DHSS, first on the position of long-term unemployed men, using official records to select the sample (Hill et al. 1973), and then a major study of the new local authority social services departments that were set up from 1971 following the Seebohm Report (1968) and the resulting Social Services Act 1970 (Stevenson and Parsloe, 1978). The research team she developed at Barnett House was headed by Michael Hill, later professor of social policy at Newcastle University.

There were also developments outside Barnett House. Halsey, who had been active as a consultant for the OECD, was closely involved with Ron Gass in setting up a new centre within OECD, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). In 1968 they gained a major grant of \$1m from the US Ford Foundation to set up CERI and then grants from other national governments. <sup>19</sup> CERI took off and has remained an important part of the OECD's shift from treating education as simply 'manpower training' to detailed work on the nature and organisation of education and schooling at all levels. Halsey served as chair of CERI in its early years. There were a few spin-offs for Barnett House, particularly for the initial phase of the EPA programme, that drew on a review of US programmes to tackle educational disadvantage as part of the US 'war on poverty' (Little and Smith, 1971).

Another initiative launched at this time with a grant from the SSRC in 1969 was the pilot stage of the Oxford Social Mobility Study. This developed into a major research study in the 1970s, involving several members of Barnett House. Halsey laments in his autobiography that this was always seen as a Nuffield College rather than Barnett House project. But it was always based in Nuffield and grants ran through

<sup>19</sup> For more details of what are described as 'buccaneering' trips to raise funds see Smith and Smith (2006) and Halsey (1996).

Nuffield, not Barnett House. While Halsey himself, Keith Hope, John Ridge, Anthony Heath (appointed to replace Rod Martin in 1970) and Kenneth Macdonald (appointed to a fellowship at Nuffield in 1976), were all counted as Barnett House staff, other key figures such as John Goldthorpe were solely Nuffield based.<sup>20</sup>

The effect of these efforts was to raise staff numbers steadily, with research numbers roughly matching teaching staff after the surge linked to the EPA programme had fallen back at the end of this project in 1972. The size of the budget expanded accordingly, though all costs for the teaching side of the department were still paid centrally by the university. The university grant to the department simply had to cover the immediate administration and direct running costs. Thus in 1974–75, the grant from the university was just £14,000 but research income raised this to some £100,000 per annum (£900,000 at 2014 prices but more like £1.4m on a labour cost basis).

Outputs were increasing steadily. Trends in British Society since 1900 (edited by Halsey) was first published in 1972; this was the first of three volumes pulling together social statistics and commentary on data for the major aspects of British society, with 10 of the 16 sections written by Barnett House members. The first of five research volumes on the EPA programme also emerged in 1972. As the first intervention of this type in the UK, this received very considerable coverage in the national media. The DES, after initial wariness about its message, changed its tune as the then secretary of state, Margaret Thatcher, pressed officials to set up a meeting with 'Dr Halsey'. One by-product was an opportunity for the research team to comment on the government's draft white paper 'Framework for Expansion', particularly the section covering preschooling in disadvantaged areas, one of the major recommendations of the EPA research. Halsey and many members of the EPA team expounded the project's findings in seminars and meetings across the country, particularly in teacher training colleges which were setting up training programmes for those intending to work in disadvantaged urban areas. With the urban programme providing local funds for further developments and the much larger CDP programme just getting into its stride with a number of similar initiatives across Whitehall, this looked to be a very effective way of piloting ideas and getting them taken up more widely.

<sup>20</sup> More than 30 years later, in 2013, John Goldthorpe did join the research staff at Barnett House to continue work on social mobility with Erzsébet Bukodi.

While research at Barnett House and the linked social mobility study at Nuffield were very significant beneficiaries of SSRC funding in this early period, Halsey did not have a monopoly on success. From 1970 the SSRC began to establish a limited number of research. units in UK universities – the first at Warwick in industrial relations. The third of these units was the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies at Oxford, set up in 1972 and attached to the law faculty. Halsey does not appear to have been closely involved in this initiative. Certainly once it was set up, relations were distant at best. It raised two problems for Halsey's growing empire. First, it demonstrated that while his stated aim was to make Barnett House the de facto centre of sociology, the dispersed and federal nature of the Oxford system meant that he could in no way monopolise developments elsewhere that should, in his view, have come within his orbit. It was not a department of sociology de iure. Second, it was clear that SSRC funded research units were likely to be spread evenly across UK universities. A second unit in Oxford would be most unlikely in the medium term.

But in the early 1970s there was plenty of research money to go round. To host the growing research wing at Barnett House, the Social Evaluation Unit (SEU) was established in 1972 to cover the continuing work on CDP, the follow-up to the EPA programme and other linked research with a policy evaluation element. But this proved a difficult structure to operate from the start. Olive Stevenson held on to her research team, unwilling to place it under anybody else's control, and found another building elsewhere. There had been a history of friction between Halsey and Stevenson for some vears<sup>21</sup> – a social work student from the 1960s recalls full volume exchanges between the pair, one at the top and the other at the bottom of Barnett House stairs. Both were powerful figures in their own right with decisive views. While Halsey tended to operate with a loose rein over groups working within the department and even in his own research outfits, he reacted very strongly to any perceived attempt to challenge his overall position. His mode of management was sometimes described as that of a 'patriarch' or 'benevolent autocrat', though the benevolence was not always applied evenly across his staff; as one lecturer commented, 'not autocratic but open to argument' though more often in a small group or one on one. A

<sup>21</sup> Stevenson charts this in detail in her extended personal history interview (British Library Sound Archive, C1155/01 2004) and in her memoir (Stevenson, 2013).

kind of *modus vivendi* had developed with social work tutors from an early period. They operated more or less as a self-contained group, meeting regularly to review their teaching programme. By the early 1970s this was a sizeable group and covered almost all the students in Barnett House. But the move by Stevenson's group into research on a substantial scale following her return from Whitehall again raised boundary questions. In practice the SEU, nominally headed by Keith Hope, never had any access to separate funds. It proved an empty shell, housing researchers working on their own studies, and gradually faded away.

Attempts to strengthen the overall organisation of research across the department, particularly ways of providing more continuity for research staff between one project and the next, and ways of making the research effort more than the sum of individual projects, were regularly raised throughout the 1970s but never made progress. Other universities which had developed similar levels of social policy research at this period managed to consolidate these into centres and units funded by government departments or the SSRC on a longterm or rolling basis. Barnett House held back from any move in this direction, perhaps because the traditional idea of research as primarily the individual activity of a permanent staff member was still very strong. But in social sciences it was increasingly the era of research teams and groups. This route could result in the 'research tail' (of short-term contract research staff) pushing for further funded projects on their own, but this occurred anyway. By the time Barnett House did make an effort in this direction in the late 1970s with a major programme application to the (by now) ESRC it failed; and the window of opportunity had closed.

The SEU stayed on in the crumbling Wellington Square, with the building literally falling to pieces. The main department had moved to Little Clarendon Street in 1971. The reason was the proposed demolition of the whole of the west side of Wellington Square and adjacent houses in Walton Street in the early 1970s to make way for a major new building. This was intended to house the expanding social studies library then in St John Street, and the growing number of social science groups, including Barnett House. Halsey had been central to the proposed social studies centre to bring together the scattered social science resources into a single location. By 1971 this had been approved, despite strong opposition from a group arguing that the new centre should be built in Manor Road near

the Institute of Economics and Statistics. The project reached the stage of a building design and outline planning application. This was turned down by the city council on the grounds that the proposed building was out of scale with the row of private housing on the west side of Walton Street. By now economics and statistics had dropped out, preferring to remain in Manor Road, and the project was finally abandoned in 1974 in the face of heavy government cuts to university funding, particularly for any new building. As with the decline in research funds at the same period, particularly for graduate training, this provides another marker of the way that enthusiasm for the social sciences and social research was falling rapidly from the heady days of the late 1960s. The university instead slowly refurbished the west side of the square. The social studies library moved to George Street, which became the nucleus of the social sciences centre until its move to the present social sciences building in Manor Road in 2004.

Perhaps in response to pressure on the main UGC funding, which had been cut across the board in 1973, and other uncertainties.<sup>22</sup> the central university moved in 1974 to introduce a more formal system for retaining an element of external research grants (other than those from the national research councils) in order to fund the central administration and other university overheads. Research funds had been increasing rapidly, particularly in medicine and science. Until then in social studies, external research grants had been individually reviewed by the Social Studies Board and no fixed charges were levied by the university to meet overheads. Now, the initial move was to deduct a fixed proportion from each grant, to be split between the department for its costs and the university for its central overheads. It was possible to argue for mitigation from this impost, particularly where projects were based outside Oxford and had to be self-sufficient already. As the overheads were in part explicitly intended to support the Bodleian Library and Ashmolean Museum, it became a standard Barnett House response to argue that funds from anti-poverty programmes could hardly be taxed for this purpose. This was normally accepted. This move to levy overheads coincided with a prolonged period of very high inflation, making it extraordinarily difficult to estimate future costs and increasing the risk of substantial over-commitment if grants could not be adjusted to reflect cost increases. The result was that central control in these

<sup>22</sup> The quinquennial funding cycle was abandoned by the UGC at this point.

areas tightened significantly. No longer did the university administration simply endorse any expenditure financed through grants as in the 1960s, but instead it applied increasingly strict accountancy principles of what could be spent and when. This was the early stage of a long road to the introduction of 'full economic costing' for all funded research after 2006 and much greater central control.

But some research expansion was still going ahead. Jerome Bruner, who had become the Watts professor of psychology at Oxford in 1975, set up the Oxford Preschool Research Group (OPRG), a five-year collaborative research programme funded by the SSRC (1975–79). Though based at the Educational Studies Department, the OPRG involved several Barnett House researchers, particularly Kathy Sylva, who had been appointed to the social psychology post with a fellowship at Jesus College, and Teresa Smith. They each conducted significant parts of the OPRG study.

### **Teaching developments**

The diploma course for social workers and probation officers was upgraded to a full MSc in applied social studies with the first year of entry in 1974. An expansion in the intake from 25 in 1973 to 50 in 1976 was also approved. As a two-year course with typically more than 50 MSc students on the books it was easily the largest graduate course in the social studies faculty. In practice, the intake increased to around 30 per year, but that was its effective peak. With the growth in job prospects in the newly developing social services and the press for more qualified staff, the MSc generated an impressive intake of high-level graduates, most of whom were supported by full-time grants from the DHSS or Home Office, or were on full-time salaried secondment from their local authority. As the new course came into full operation there were several key changes. Olive Stevenson left to take up a chair in social work at Keele University and her research team either moved with her or took posts elsewhere. On the social work side Jane Aldgate and Pauline McDonnell were appointed, and there were other appointments: Tony Crowle became the second research methods lecturer and Kenneth Macdonald joined as lecturer in applied social studies. The aim was to develop a second MSc to balance the growth of social work training. Though staff numbers had increased overall, those primarily responsible for the social work course were still outnumbered by those with broader academic responsibilities including in some cases very major contributions to the social work course but also to undergraduate teaching and research. Almost all students attached to Barnett House were by now graduates on the social work course.

In the same year that the social work course was upgraded, Phil Evens, who had been recruited to develop the community work strand in the social work course, set up the 'Barton project' on one of the two then most disadvantaged estates on the periphery of Oxford. His argument was that the work of other parts of the department, for example the EPA and CDP programmes, were part of national initiatives and Barnett House should sponsor something similar in its own home area. The Barton project, after initial vicissitudes, lasted for many years, successfully raising funds from charitable grants and winning financial support from Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council. At its peak it employed several staff working in Barton and for many years operated a CCETSW student training unit for social and community workers. This unit transferred to Ruskin College in the 1990s. Some of the institutions that developed during the Barton project era still exist in 2014, helping ensure that while Barton still remains one of the more disadvantaged parts of Oxford, it is rather less the 'forgotten community' that was the focus of the original project (and the title of Evens' book), and better resourced. Teresa Smith was appointed to a half-time post to take on the community work teaching in 1975. George Smith, who had been fully on the research side, took on a half-time teaching post in 1976.

By 1976 there were 16 full-time and two part-time teaching staff, including six full-time equivalent social work posts. Five of the academic posts were heavily engaged in providing teaching (in sociology, psychology and social policy) for the two-year MSc course. A lecturer recalls feeling 'very privileged...to teach very talented students' who were 'innovative and imaginative'. Other teaching staff focused on research methods (Hope and Crowle) or industrial sociology (Fox). From 1976 a new appointment (Michael Teitelbaum) was made in demography linked to the development of the human sciences undergraduate degree, which Halsey had played a central role in establishing with a strong sociology and demography component. Staff on research contracts peaked at about 20 in 1975–76, but then fell back sharply with the ending of major projects such as CDP and the departure of Olive Stevenson and her research team.

The Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) had been established in 1971. One of its major functions was to review and certify courses that carried the national professional qualification, the certificate of qualification in social work (CQSW), in addition to any academic qualification. The Barnett House course was within its remit. The first visit by the CCETSW review team took place in spring 1977 with very unfortunate timing, as it coincided with a bitter dispute over the results of the assessed fieldwork examination. While this was a difficult passage, the course continued with CCETSW approval. The episode pointed up both the arrival of new external players with a role in assessing and inspecting what a university department was achieving, and also the tension between practice-based assessment and an academic panel, though the panel contained professional assessors to review the written accounts provided by student and supervisor. It also demonstrated the ambivalence on how to handle graduate students. Some were on secondment, already had families and viewed themselves as fully independent adults, but the director's position was that they were still 'junior members' and not entitled to participate in decision taking.

In 1977 plans to set up 'Radcliffe College', primarily for clinical medical students with fellows drawn from medical academics entitled to college attachment and senior NHS staff from the clinical school, were rapidly transformed by a major donation from Cecil and Ida Green to become Green College. Under its first warden Sir Richard Doll, the focus was expanded from clinical medicine to cover a range of disciplines concerned with 'human welfare'. Juliet Cheetham became a founding fellow and Green soon absorbed other social work lecturers (David Millard, Barbara Hudson) and took on a significant number of social work students on the MSc. This was the first significant move to provide college attachment for social work staff. Previously this had been restricted to single appointments (Olive Stevenson to St Anne's when she became a university reader, Jane Aldgate to St Hilda's). This step underlined the fact that staff were perfectly capable of taking initiatives in the university on their own account, where Halsey had previously acted as the main intermediary in the belief that others 'did not know how the university worked'. The growth of graduate colleges such as Green also shifted the pattern of student attachment, which until then had been scattered across many colleges. From then on there were concentrations at Green, and later St Cross and Wolfson, all graduate colleges.

In 1978 Halsey was given a personal chair and was invited to give the annual BBC Reith lectures, then among the most prestigious public lecture series in the UK. These were delivered early in 1978 and later turned into a book, *Change in British Society*, which went through four editions over the next 20 years.

Looking back over the previous ten years Halsey might have reflected with some satisfaction on the progress achieved. From a small marginal department with a handful of teaching posts and virtually no research staff, Barnett House had become a graduateonly teaching institution with the largest number of MSc students in the social studies faculty. At its peak in the mid-1970s, there were 17 teaching and up to 20 research staff. The aim of creating essentially a department of sociology, broadly defined to include social work, was well under way. At least five staff had a sociology background, not counting two methods lecturers and a demographer. And a counterweight to the dominance of the social work course, the MSc in social research and social policy, had been launched in 1977. The foundations had been laid for a strand in PPE with sociology and social policy options and, from 1971, the new human sciences first degree and also the BPhil in sociology. These routes were providing potential recruits to the teaching and research base. At least six of the then teaching or research staff had come up through one or other of these routes. While attempts to create a separate research unit had largely failed, there was still a significant volume of research, though once the large government programmes such as EPA and CDP had faded away by the late 1970s, the biggest project at this point was the Oxford Social Mobility Study run through Nuffield College though it involved at least four members of Barnett House staff. But the reality too was that there was always a disjunction between much of the research thrust of the department and its teaching programme, which was heavily focused on social work training. This was bridged in many ways, by specific teaching – for example, in social problems, in academic lectures and by visiting speakers – and by 'the social sciences milieu' of a 'research-active' department. It was also a 'two way street', with one sociology lecturer underlining the way that 'social work is grounded in real problems and as such part of my professional development'; and another the links between teaching and research, pointing out that 'researchers are prevented from going into the clouds by the need to teach students what people are going to offer and practise in real life'. But it remained a central problem as

research was driven by other agendas and needs than its contribution to social work training. The original aim that social work would be one part of a broader teaching programme had been undercut by the buoyant recruitment of high-quality graduate students for the social work course and the failure of other courses to develop or attract enough students. However, the staffing balance still tended to reflect the aim of a broadly based but not purely social work department. Thus there were some appointments that were specifically not linked to the Barnett House teaching programme but to other courses such as PPE, human sciences or research methods.

The chequered history of the CDP programme serves as a marker for the growing lack of national consensus over social policy and reform. CDP began as a programme to strengthen the co-ordination of specific social services in disadvantaged areas. But conditions in such areas declined rapidly after 1972, with cuts in public services and rationalisations in service provision against a backdrop of sharply rising unemployment. This no longer harmonised with the view that such areas had somehow missed out on the general spread of prosperity in the 1960s, and simply needed better co-ordinated social services to be transformed. In response, local CDP teams began to redefine their objectives into a wider and more radical programme, encouraging campaigns and local groups to press local and national services for change, or campaign against job losses. This fitted uneasily with a government-funded programme, where research was to evaluate service effectiveness. By the mid 1970s, the EPA prescription of better targeting of educational services for a few highly disadvantaged areas, which had been widely supported across the policy spectrum, even by Margaret Thatcher in the early 1970s, no longer appeared to fit the bill. The agenda had moved to housing, employment and social security. Here the scope for local action was very limited. The very conditions which had created the context in which academics like Halsey had flourished as advisers and stimulators of national policy development by using research and pilot projects as a way forward had by this point largely evaporated, with the civil service and local authorities much more wary of involvement in such experiments. While the government's 1977 white paper, Policies for the Inner Cities, included some of the approaches developed by CDP and the raft of similar projects in other parts of central government and proposed major changes in future urban policy, it was more like the end of a chapter than a new beginning.

## CHAPTER 6



Barnett House in winter

# Losing ground: 1979–1990

When Barnett House finally returned to the refurbished building in Wellington Square<sup>1</sup> in 1979, to be formally opened by Lord Redcliffe-Maud, it might have seemed like a new beginning. For the first time for nearly 10 years the whole department was under a single roof after being scattered across different buildings. Teaching numbers still remained high at 16 or 17 staff. The retirement of Alan Fox was quickly followed by the appointment of Eric Batstone to carry forward work on industrial sociology. Michael Teitelbaum returned to the United States to take up a post with the Sloan Foundation but was replaced by another demographer, David Coleman. Most established teaching staff now had linked college fellowships after the founding of Green College. While research numbers and research income had fallen from the heady days of the late 1960s and early

<sup>1</sup> Still its base in 2014.

1970s, there was still a strong research strand, ranging from evaluations of a network of community schools and colleges in Coventry, the Manpower Services Commission's (MSC) programmes to reduce youth unemployment, Joan Payne's SSRC-funded research on youth employment, Juliet Cheetham's research on social work with ethnic minorities, Halsey's study of university and polytechnic lecturers, and Kathy Sylva and Teresa Smith contributing to Bruner's preschool research programme.

The start of 1980 was marked by several major publications stemming from research carried out in the 1970s. Though the mobility research was formally a Nuffield College based project, the three authors of one of its major outputs were all at Barnett House. Drawing on data from the 1972 national social mobility survey,<sup>2</sup> Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1980) published Origins and Destinations: Family Class and Education in Modern Britain. This volume was explicitly placed in the Barnett House tradition of 'political arithmetic', a tradition that runs through much of Halsey's output during his tenure at Barnett House, including research on educational priority areas, on university teachers and on civil servants. In this volume the authors link the tradition to the Webbs. Charles Booth and earlier: 'these writers were concerned to describe accurately and in detail the social conditions of their society, particularly the more disadvantaged sections, but their interest in these matters was never a disinterested academic one. Description of social conditions was a preliminary to political reform' (Halsey, Heath and Ridge, 1980). Together with the companion volume – John Goldthorpe's Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain, also published in 1980 – these studies quickly became the benchmark for the analysis and understanding of social mobility in Britain and the model for work elsewhere, replacing the earlier study by David Glass and colleagues at the LSE in the late 1940s. They still remain a major reference point 30 years later.

In the same year Bruner and colleagues published six volumes based on the Oxford Preschool Research Group (OPRG) programme (Bruner, 1980). These were intended to attract a wider audience, as one of the central aims of OPRG was to disseminate widely what was known about the effects of early education and the various forms it could take. The original purpose was to take forward the earlier

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 12 for more details of this study.

studies such as the EPA programme with its message on the importance of early education on children's subsequent development (Halsey, 1972b), which had been successfully lodged in Margaret Thatcher's 1972 white paper, Education: A Framework for Expansion. The original intent of OPRG had been to inform the major national programme of preschool expansion that should have followed in the 1970s. There was some growth in early education in the first phases of the national urban programme, but it was always limited in scale and focused primarily on disadvantaged areas. By the time the OPRG reported in 1980 the climate had changed, with education no longer the favoured mechanism for social reform in the face of major structural changes taking place in the economy as employment fell sharply in many older industrial areas. There was an emerging new agenda for educational standards and quality, rather than questions of access and equality of opportunity. The stress was now on individual (or parental) responsibility to make the running rather than on 'social engineering'. This agenda for standards and quality had been building up since the late 1960s, in opposition to the growth of Plowden style 'progressive education' at primary school level and the move to comprehensive secondary schools in place of selection at 11 plus, and had been set out in the series of Black Papers in Education (Cox and Dyson, 1969) published from the late 1960s onwards. 'Standards and quality' became the dominant educational themes of the 1980s and lav behind the major educational reforms in England and Wales after 1987.

OPRG at least kept the flag flying for the idea of expanding early education, but it was 15 years before the climate began to change again. Bruner returned to the United States in 1980, and the other researchers moved to further research studies in Barnett House or elsewhere on aspects of the education of young children. Though the thread is a slender one, it stretches through to the revival of national interest in this policy area in the mid 1990s, when for example Kathy Sylva, then professor of education at the Institute of Education in London, and colleagues began a major evaluation of the effects of early education (EPPE, later EPPSE when the cohort reached primary and secondary school). EPPSE became the longest running and most authoritative study in the UK on this topic and in turn generated several further studies and evaluations, some of which involved Barnett House from the late 1990s and are still going strong in 2014. Whether or not research actually influences policy, in

this case it certainly helped shift the agenda, and keep alive a focus on the effects of early education during a bleak period.

Nineteen eighty-two was marked by the death of two central figures in the Barnett House story. The formidable Violet Butler died. aged 98, in May. At her funeral Lord Redcliffe-Maud described her as an outstanding example of the 'British volunteer, not only of the Edwardian period in which she was brought up, but in our own contemporary times when the volunteer has become the indispensable ally of politician and bureaucrat...So I think of her as a great pioneer not only in the beginnings of St Anne's College...but as the genius loci and uncrowned gueen of Barnett House which between the wars was the fairly disorganised friendly foundation on which was to be built the great professional Social Studies Department of Oxford University'. But 'more than a pioneer or an academic, I think of her as a saint...doing good with unquenchable vitality for 98 years'. Halsey picked up these themes in the first Violet Butler memorial lecture given in 1988, particularly the role of the volunteer in an increasingly professionalised and administrative-bound world.4

Redcliffe-Maud himself died later in the same year. Appointed in 1929 as the first full-time politics fellow at Oxford, his field was local government. He had gravitated to Barnett House, teaching local government officials on the diploma in public and social administration (Maud, 1976:73–77). He carried out research on local administration in Cape Town in the 1930s. In 1939 he became principal of Birkbeck College and was drawn into work in the civil service, initially in the Ministry of Food during the war. From then on he followed a distinguished civil service career, becoming permanent secretary, first at the Ministry of Education in 1945 and later at the Ministry of Fuel and Power, which then covered the nationalised electricity, gas and coal industries. In 1959 he became the UK High Commissioner in South Africa with some involvement in Harold Macmillan's 1960 'winds of change' speech in Cape Town. In 1963 he returned to Oxford as master of University College, also chairing the Royal Commission on Local Government from 1966 to 1969 (Redcliffe-Maud Report, 1969). He remained a strong supporter of Barnett House and its traditions. Though not strictly a Barnett House product, he exemplified what it aimed to promote between the wars; part academic, part

<sup>3</sup> Green Book 1982-83, pp 26-27.

<sup>4</sup> Green Book 1988-89, pp 10-18.

researcher or practitioner, informed by research evidence,<sup>5</sup> with an optimistic and 'progressive' view, in Sidney Ball's sense of the word, of what could be achieved through education, social and economic policy, very much a 1960s vision, as, for example, set out in Britain's *National Plan* published in 1965.

### A difficult decade

The 1980s were to be very different. At one level, it would seem, nothing dramatic occurred at Barnett House. An outline of the programme over the decade shows a continuing successful social work training course, steadily recruiting up to its maximum number of 30 graduates per year, with visits and reviews by CCETSW, as well as regular clashes with that body. However the number of seconded students was dropping as local authorities moved to curb their expenditure. This gradually shifted the nature of the course intake towards more early entrants to social work. The MSc in social research and social policy, which had been intended to balance the social work course, never succeeded in attracting more than a small handful of students as there were virtually no grants available. There still remained a substantial funded research programme across a range of topics. New research continued to develop. Anthony Heath, for example, took a central role in the British general election survev for the 1983 national election. These studies have taken place at every election since 1964, initially by David Butler and Donald Stokes at Nuffield College and from 1974 at Essex University funded by the ESRC. Heath's involvement in this series of studies continued for the next three general elections. But closer inspection of the overall Barnett House research programme suggests that apart from a share in this major study, the pattern of a wide range of research studies across a diverse field seen before the expansion of research in the late 1960s was re-emerging. There were no longer any major research groups, and the source of research funds for policy-related studies was rarely government departments. There were more grants from the SSRC and other sources for more detached, academic studies. And there were grants from charities; for example, a grant

<sup>5</sup> The Royal Commission established a significant number of research studies including attitude surveys on how people identified their local area (highly relevant to drawing local authority boundaries).

was obtained from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to look at the impact of the 1985 Social Security Act. This study was the first of a series growing into a significant strand of research at Barnett House.

Universities may in principle seem 'buffered' from the immediate effects of changing national policies and climate; but some sources of funding, such as for student grants or research studies, can change very quickly. The Rothschild Report on social research in government in 1981 argued bluntly for a very applied focus with an 'engineering model' for research directly funded by government departments – 'the customer says what he wants; the contractor does it (if he can); and the customer pays' (Rothschild Report quoted in Smith and Smith, 1992:248). This quickly generated government research commissions that were often too cut and dried to attract academic interest. At the same time, while it survived, funding for the SSRC, now renamed the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) through the intervention of Sir Keith Joseph when secretary of state for education and science, was substantially reduced. Postgraduate training awards were cut back heavily.

One source of research funding that seemed, for a time, to buck this trend was the Manpower Service Commission (MSC). The MSC had originally been set up in the 1970s as a joint national body involving government, industry and the trade unions to promote a more efficient labour market, by shifting from the old employment exchanges to high street 'job centres', and to improve the training of workers. It responded quickly to rising unemployment, particularly among the young, in the 1970s and early 1980s by expanding its special programmes department to fund job creation and training schemes across the country. By the early 1980s under its chief executive, Sir Richard O'Brien, the MSC still maintained an interventionist and consensual approach to policy increasingly out of step with the main thrust of Margaret Thatcher's aim, in her first phase, of rolling back the state and reducing state intervention. The MSC operated rather like a New Deal agency, springing forward to offer short-term schemes each year to mop up the increase in numbers of school leavers without employment. By then it had become the major funder of a raft of national and local voluntary organisations, local community groups and institutions which provided training or job placement for those on MSC funded schemes. It was also a major funder of social research, principally to evaluate its own schemes but also to study employment-related skills in a rapidly changing

labour market. After the heady days of EPA and CDP, researchers at the Social Evaluation Unit were funded by the MSC to assess the progress of young people enrolled on MSC programmes, the training they received and the outcomes in terms of employment for young people. The results showed a massive deterioration over the two cohorts studied (1979 and 1981) as employment prospects in the West Midlands slumped (Jones et al, 1983; Greaves, 1983). These studies led to further research at Oxford funded by the ESRC studying cohorts of school leavers, focusing both on local studies and data from the national youth cohort studies. But O'Brien was removed as chief executive in 1982 and replaced by David Young (later Lord Young of Graffham), a close associate of Margaret Thatcher. The MSC continued until 1987, though it finally collapsed as the concordat between government, industry and the trade unions broke down amid the increasingly confrontational politics of the late 1980s. This coincided with the 'about-turn' in the government's approach to social policy in Thatcher's second phase after her victory in the 1987 general election, with a burst of major legislation for direct intervention by central government.

Serious impact on the university's overall funding took more time to come through. As late as 1984 Halsey could report that the vice-chancellor had announced that 'there would be no further reductions in resources for the time being', though he wisely concluded that 'the outlook remained uncertain'. In 1983 Halsey had been elected to the Hebdomadal Council, the central board for the overall affairs of the university. But in June 1984 the General Board cut its annual grant to Barnett House by £7,500 for a five-year period, the equivalent of about a 9% reduction. Barnett House was not singled out; physics for example was also cut. While this was an immediate blow, this budget only then covered the administrative costs and some of the running costs; academic salaries were still directly covered from the central university budget. However, the move to place certain academic posts on the list of posts that would not be refilled in the event of a vacancy was a much more serious threat. As was forcefully pointed out when these decisions were announced, to declare a post superfluous was hardly encouraging for the present holder. Until then, Barnett House had a very stable academic staff complement, with new members added and staying. Only a few had actually retired or left for professorships elsewhere since the 1960s, and these had been quickly replaced. But in 1985 three teaching staff left and only one was replaced, and even that only after a struggle, since the probation stream on the professional course could not continue without a further appointment. Juliet Cheetham left on her appointment as director of the Social Work Research Centre at Stirling, Pauline McDonnell moved to a senior position with the Catholic Children's Society and George Smith, who had a joint teaching and research role, expanded his attachment as research adviser to HM Inspectorate of Schools in London.

In 1985 proposals by CCETSW to change professional social work training to a single qualification and provide an internship system rather than an academic route brought a punchy reply from Halsey including a parting shot about possible withdrawal from training if such proposals went ahead. In due course, as this wended its way through government, there were concerned letters from Priscilla Young (director of CCETSW) and from Andrew Rowe (a moderate conservative MP, active on select committees) nervously enquiring whether universities were likely to withdraw from social work training.

Another marker of the sharply changed environment was the government's dismissive response to the archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Priority Areas (published as *Faith in the City*, 1985). The commission was chaired by Sir Richard O'Brien after his stint at the MSC. It included senior bishops, academics, including Halsey,<sup>6</sup> and other professional and lay people. This would have been a very conventional 'blue ribbon' group in the 1960s and 1970s with a message that would have been fully in line with government policy - identifying and targeting poorer areas. While Faith in the City's message was uncompromising ('a growing number of people are excluded by poverty or powerlessness from sharing in the common life of our nation', p 359), its recommendations were aimed at the contribution of the Church of England as well as central government. Here the prescription was for an increase in targeted programmes, such as the urban and community programmes and improved benefits for children. Hardly very radical stuff; but in a government then keen to restrict the term 'poverty' to emerging countries and not the UK, it proved far too much. The report was dismissed anonymously by a senior government source as 'pure Marxist theology', underlining how far the consensus of the 1960s and early 1970s had

<sup>6 &#</sup>x27;The best bishop the Church of England never appointed', according to one former head of an Oxford college.

evaporated. Halsey, having been welcomed by Thatcher when he carried a very similar message on educational priority areas in 1972, was clearly now outside the gates, but in very good company. The report was launched by the archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, and O'Brien, both with outstanding war records, each with a Military Cross<sup>7</sup> – so their patriotism could hardly be in doubt even if their politics were now suspect – and David Sheppard, bishop of Liverpool and former England test cricketer. All three would certainly on their record of public service have qualified as 'progressives' in Sidney Ball's lexicon. But this was definitely not the flavour of the late 1980s.

The problems of the inner city the archbishop's commission identified were real enough. Thatcher herself, immediately after her landslide victory in the 1987 election, made 'those inner city areas' the focus of her flagship domestic policy for the next few years; but she had a rather different analysis, underlining the way that planning restrictions had stifled new employment, and encouraging businesses to take part in the necessary redevelopment. Rather than pointing to low incomes and deprivation among existing residents, the move was to make such areas more attractive to investment and job creation. Shiny new developments, particularly in the former dockland areas of London and, to a lesser extent, Liverpool, became the symbols of progress, with a new population of office workers and affluent waterside residents.

The climate was also changing closer to home. Halsey had been extremely skilful since the 1960s in gaining additional resources for Barnett House. As one former head of another department commented, this required a strong sense of who 'is currently important and who can pull one of the many levers' in the university system. But the central university administration at Oxford was gradually working towards a more explicit form of 'shadow budgeting', working out notional income and costs per student in different settings. These preliminary estimates showed that the cost of graduate students at Barnett House was apparently very high in comparison to other settings across the social studies faculty. These estimates probably would not yet have been able to take account of the complex cross-subsidies of college and university funding for undergraduate

<sup>7</sup> O'Brien, then on Montgomery's staff in May 1945, had acted as the liaison officer to deliver the unconditional surrender terms to Field Marshall Keitel, head of the Wehrmacht.

teaching posts. And they may not have taken into account the central government funding that Barnett House received: at that point Barnett House was still in part funded by an earmarked DHSS grant to the university for the social work and probation training. However the perception that Barnett House had somehow gained more than its fair share of resources based on its notional income was an issue that some non-departmental members of the standing committee were made aware of, though the standing committee itself had little effective power to intervene and therefore its capacity 'to clip Barnett House and Chelly's wings' was limited.

Over the same period some senior members at Barnett House had been discussing ways that the internal management of Barnett House might be reformed. Some departments in other faculties were moving towards rotating fixed-term headships. Until then Barnett House had been run essentially by the director with a finance committee and a departmental meeting as forums that involved other academic staff. But these had no powers other than to comment or put suggestions forward. A proposal to review possible ways of reforming these arrangements, looking forward for the incoming director in 1990, was tabled at a departmental meeting. But this was rejected outright on the grounds that the director was solely responsible for running the department, as indeed his contract and the contracts of all academic staff made clear. No change could be contemplated, and attempts to broker further discussion went nowhere. One of Halsey's extraordinary strengths was his ability to represent Barnett House effectively in any setting in the university or outside. 'Wheeling out Chelly' was almost always a very effective weapon widely and willingly deployed by all parties in Barnett House. But the consequence was that those outside Barnett House tended to view it solely as Halsey's outfit. In the 1960s and early 1970s with a largely young and inexperienced staff this might be understandable, but by the 1980s this had changed. As academic staff left, in many cases to senior posts elsewhere, this demonstrated their underused capacity in managing their own department. As one remarked, 'I don't want to be a minnow for ever'. Management reform was never raised again and the system continued unchanged for the new director in 1990.

The next few years saw further reductions in teaching staff

<sup>8</sup> This was subsumed into the main university grant from 1992 and had thus disappeared as a separate item when funding issues became critical in the late 1990s.

numbers. Keith Hope left in 1986 to take up a post in the United States; Anthony Heath was elected to a professorial fellowship at Nuffield College in 1987, taking him out of the Barnett House orbit; Eric Batstone, who had taken on Alan Fox's role in industrial and trade union research, died very suddenly in June 1987. None of these posts was refilled at the time, though the appointment of Jonathan Gershuny in 1990 as professor of economic sociology covered some aspects of both the Heath and Batstone posts. Kathy Sylva was appointed professor of child development at Warwick in 1988, and in 1989 Tony Crowle and John Ridge resigned their posts; these had both been scheduled for abolition. After an interval, Mansur Lalljee was appointed to take on Kathy Sylva's psychology post. This loss of staff, particularly lecturers with expertise in sociology and research methods, left Barnett House with very limited capacity to conduct much else other than social work and probation training.

Though little remarked at the time, the first national research assessment, then known as the 'research selectivity exercise' was rather hastily organised by the University Grants Committee (UGC), with results announced in early 1987 (Martin and Whitley, 2010). Sociology, social policy and social work at Oxford were all rated 'outstanding' (on a four point scale). This first exercise had nothing like the coverage of later exercises or their impact, as it was based on a very small number of selected outputs. But it was the shape of what was to come.

#### End of an era

The General Board review of Barnett House's overall teaching and research programme was announced in mid-1986. This was a standard procedure at the end of tenure of any long-established director – more than warranted by Halsey's 28 years in the post by 1990, the year of his retirement. The Nairne Committee was formed during 1987, met 14 times and reported to the General Board in 1988. In essence the outcome was a reprieve and indeed endorsement of Barnett House largely in its existing format: the review 'did not favour any substantive change in the structure or character of the department'. There was a proposed name change from the now outdated 'Social and Administrative Studies' to the equally cumbersome and rather nebulous 'Applied Social Studies and Social Research'; the

director's post should be made a statutory professorship rather than *ad hominem* as in Halsey's case. There were 15 other relatively minor recommendations. But behind the scenes there had been a much more basic struggle, reflecting many of the tensions within the social studies faculty. This, like many other parts of the university (and other universities), was facing steady erosion of its overall resources but with no corresponding reduction in the overall workload, a classic 'dragon's teeth' scenario<sup>9</sup> in which internal squabbles are likely to break out.

Sir Patrick Nairne had become master of St Catherine's College. Oxford after a distinguished career in the civil service, mainly in the Admiralty and Ministry of Defence, serving as Denis Healey's private secretary in the mid 1960s. In 1975 he was appointed to head the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS), one of the mega departments in Whitehall. The DHSS combined responsibility for both the health services and social security – by far the largest proportion of total UK public expenditure. The DHSS also included responsibility for social services and thus a very small part of its bailiwick covered the funding of professional training for social work. More recently Nairne had been one of the six privy counsellors on the Franks Committee set up by Margaret Thatcher to review the way the government had 'discharged its responsibilities' in the run up to the Falklands war in 1982. The Franks Report to parliament was published in 1983. Reviewing a small university department must have been by comparison a less formidable and public undertaking.

Nairne was assisted in the Barnett House review by a small team including one academic from outside Oxford, Professor Abel-Smith from the LSE. The review was to consider the future role of the department in the light of the director's forthcoming retirement, the changes in the national organisation of social work teaching, and the resources available to the social studies faculty. The secretariat's background note outlined the history of Barnett House since 1960 and its unusual structure as the only department in the social studies faculty, apart from economics and statistics. It was essentially a graduate teaching institution with a heavy emphasis on professional social work training. The note rather underlined that Barnett

<sup>9</sup> In the legend Jason has to sow the 'dragon's teeth' which change into 100 armed men spoiling for a fight. On Medea's advice he hurls a rock into their midst. Not seeing where the attack has come from, they turn on each other and fight to the last man.

House's contribution to undergraduate teaching was limited. Since the early 1980s there had been a significant loss of staff. Little coverage in the background note was given to the research function, with most emphasis on Barnett House's unusual structure ('something of an anomaly') and, as a teaching institution, its lack of contribution for undergraduates.

Predictably, submissions to the committee reflected a wide range of views about the present and future role of the department. Outside bodies were particularly supportive of the social work teaching role. The DHSS 'would be alarmed if the university were to contemplate reducing it'. The ADSS (directors of social services) hoped the review would lead to its 'strengthening and expansion'. And the chair of CCETSW stated firmly that maintaining the social work course was a 'national responsibility', though a CCETSW review of the course was actually in process during the committee's enquiry and the potentially threatening CCETSW proposals that social work should be a full three-year degree were out for consultation. The committee was notified informally that the social work course would gain continued approval and the three-year requirement could be waived for graduate courses. The Home Office was possibly a little cooler in its support ('the course is well thought of') – perhaps reflecting the internal discussions about the location of probation training, which emerged in the early 1990s.

The department itself was broadly for a continuation in the same guise, with the outgoing director arguing for a restoration of posts lost in the 1980s and for all sociologists across Oxford to be moved under the Barnett House umbrella. He also favoured closer links with the Criminological Research Unit. Other groups took a different line. The sociologists, through their sub-faculty, endorsed the highquality social work training offered in the department, as well as the research methods teaching. But Barnett House could not become a 'department of sociology' in view of the dispersed nature of the discipline across the university; it could be 'a clearing house' or centre for research support for sociology. Another set of proposals from politics was more radical. While rejecting the idea of a sociology department, this argued that the combination of social work training and sociology had proved unsuccessful. The second MSc course had never taken off, leaving unacceptably high levels of staffing and costs based on the current student load. (CCETSW, however, had pointed out that while overall student-staff ratios were within its guidelines, if staff not involved in social work teaching were excluded the ratio was well below its recommended level.) The submission from the politics sub-faculty floated two possible ways forward; first, the creation of a social work training department that in time could combine with the training courses at Oxford Polytechnic and Ruskin College and become a separate institution; or second, subsuming the Barnett House programme into a wider 'Institute for the Study of Social and Public Policy' with additional graduate courses attracting international students. This would include more social policy teaching, which would fit more closely with the social work training if floating off the social work training to a new setting was not possible. If these options were out of the question, then closure had to remain 'the residual solution', which, it noted, would at a stroke solve the problems of staff cuts required across the social studies faculty.

It is not clear how seriously the Nairne Committee took these proposals. Certainly Ruskin and the polytechnic were approached and asked for their views about combining their social work courses with that at Barnett House. In response, they pointed to the very different nature of the three courses: an MSc course restricted to graduates with high-level degrees, at Oxford Polytechnic a first degree course, and at Ruskin a post-experience course for those without necessarily any formal educational requirements. Other responses saw these proposals as an indirect way of cutting back sociology or relying on Nuffield College to step into the breach; they underlined differences in the understanding of 'research', on the one side seeing it as primarily a 'lone scholar' activity that did not require any significant infrastructure (apart from libraries), and on the other requiring largescale data collection and analysis that needed substantial research support. Sociologists at Nuffield pointed out that the ESRC was likely to favour these more applied large-scale research studies in which Barnett House had played a major role. They contrasted Nuffield ('a collection of autonomous social scientists') with Barnett House, which was more like a research institute with a research programme developed under the director's supervision.

A highly experienced high-level civil servant like Nairne would have been concerned to make practical recommendations. This

<sup>10</sup> Oxford Polytechnic became Oxford Brookes University in 1992. It may have been unintended, but linking the university's MSc course for social workers to a first degree at a polytechnic and a pre-degree course outside HE at Ruskin, might have indicated that such vocational courses should not be part of the Oxford University profile.

would have ruled out most of the radical options requiring either substantial restructuring not just of Barnett House but also other parts of the university, or even changing two external institutions over which the university had no control. The Nairne Committee's recommendations were simply for a departmental name change to the 'Institute of Applied Social Studies and Research' and the creation of a statutory professorship of 'social research and social policy' for the incoming director, plus a number of smaller changes. These were reviewed by the General Board in 1989. This resulted in the reinstatement of 'Department' and, after a letter signed by most Barnett House staff, a revised title for the professorship of 'social policy and social research'. While these seem purely nominal changes, they were hotly debated at two social studies faculty meetings with the matter passed up to the General Board for final approval. This may have reflected the much more fundamental options placed before the Nairne Committee. What was also discussed at the committee was the requirements for the new director. Halsey had been not only the formal head of Barnett House but also over a very long period the leading sociologist in Oxford. For any successor to fill both roles might well prove difficult; but the committee concluded that finding a similar top-flight academic should be possible.

Almost at the same time as the Nairne review was finalised in early 1988, to be generally welcomed by the department, CCETSW formally notified the university that its review had approved the social work course and also commended the proposals for a part-time MSc – the first on the Oxford university statutes. CCETSW itself was now under some pressure. The government finally rejected its proposals to extend social work training to a three-year course, pleading lack of funds. The Nairne and CCETSW reviews specifically focused on Barnett House or its main teaching programme. Two other reviews at the same period covered more of the university. First the UGC review in early 1988 of social studies at Oxford covered both the sociology programme and Barnett House overall, and in 1989 there was the second 'research selectivity exercise' covering the whole university, this time under the auspices of the Universities Funding Council (UFC). <sup>12</sup> Again this research assessment was still a 'light touch' affair

<sup>11 &#</sup>x27;Round robin' letters signed by all or most academics proved surprisingly effective with the General Board, as they had in the past and would do in the future (see Chapters 4 and 7).

<sup>12</sup> The UFC took over from the UGC in 1989.

in comparison to its successors. With slight exaggeration, no doubt, the then chair of the Social Studies Board claimed to have put together the whole submission for the faculty (economics, politics, sociology, social work and social policy) with the help of just two secretaries, though presumably drawing on contributions provided by each discipline.

In 1989 the Home Office announced a review of probation training commissioned from David Coleman, who was on the Barnett House staff. The concern was whether probation training was too widely dispersed, and the aim was to assess course coverage, interview students and canvass views of senior local probation staff across the country. The review of the Oxford course was undertaken by another academic. Its conclusions, available later the same year, raised questions about the close affinity between probation officer training and recruitment, and social work education. It also questioned whether the appropriate location for training for probation officers was on university social work courses. While the Home Office took no action at this point, it was not welcome news.

This series of uncoordinated reviews by different bodies created uncertainty at Barnett House over at least a two-year period. Each review or assessment required information and data to be supplied, and in many cases site visits. While the results were apparently successful, each review came up with its own recommendations. All academic social sciences departments would have been subject to a similar battery, but for Barnett House there were the two additional reviews of professional training and the overall Nairne review.

Meanwhile the main programme of teaching and research continued, but with a depleted number of teaching staff. In 1988 a second collection of papers edited by Halsey, *Trends in British Society since 1900*, was published, with many chapters written by Barnett House staff. Halsey's book on *Ethical English Socialism* was published in the same year. Funded research included a new ESRC project on the educational progress of children in care run by Jane Aldgate and Anthony Heath. This study aimed to assess the educational experience of young people in medium or long-term care and their careers in comparison to a matched group of similar aged children in the same areas that were living in their own families but were in contact with local social services. There was also research work on family centres by Teresa Smith with a government grant from the newly formed Department of Health, studies of the effects of changes

in social security on disadvantaged groups funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation and a personal grant from the Spencer Foundation to Halsey for further study of university teachers, published in 1992 as *Decline in Donnish Dominion*.

Halsey formally retired as director of Barnett House in October 1990, and his replacement, Professor Stein Ringen, arrived soon after. Halsey, of course, did not actually retire, but continued to teach, lecture, research and publish. Apart from his work on university teachers, these included his autobiography *No Discouragement* (1996), a further reader in educational sociology (with Lauder, Brown and Wells), *Education: Culture, Economy and Society* (1997), a millennium edition (with Jo Webb) of *Twentieth Century British Social Trends*, and *A History of Sociology in Britain* (2004) – to list only some of his publications.

### Taking stock: the Halsey era

Halsey's own description for the Nairne review of Barnett House when he took it over in 1962 was 'a small, marginal and dispirited adjunct of Social Studies'. Small and marginal it certainly was, and dispirited maybe, but the prior stage under Barnes had established some of the necessary groundwork. What it needed was the academic leadership and vision to take this forward. Halsey provided this ingredient and maintained it over many years. Through his prodigious output and high profile in the university and outside world, for much of this period he tended to overshadow the rest of his department. So much so that the history of this period is inevitably dominated by his activities. However, members of the department were all active in their own right: for example, in addition to those already discussed in these chapters, there was Alan Fox on industrial relations (Fox, 1974, 1985), Anthony Heath on rational choice and social exchange (Heath, 1976), Jane Aldgate on adoption and fostering and children in care (Aldgate, Heath and Colton, 1987; Heath, Colton and Aldgate, 1989), David Millard and Barbara Hudson both continuing as practising professionals in adult psychiatry as well as teaching and researching. Halsey's style was to get things up and running but not necessarily be involved on a day-to-day basis, though there could be intervention in a crisis. At its peak Barnett House had up to 20 teaching staff and, for a time, as many or more research staff. This was a far remove from the handful of academic and no research staff in 1962. Over the 1980s numbers fell back from this peak and morale fell from the high point, but even in 1990 there were around 20 teaching or research staff. Professor Jones (on the 1988 UGC review panel) could remark that Barnett House still was 'curiously non-visible in the University', but this was in the context of drawing attention to its 'remarkably well integrated' academic programme which fitted the social work training. Part of the reason may have been that Barnett House's best-known enterprises were identified with the director rather than the institution. Another was that the university and colleges were still very heavily focused on undergraduates (still some 75% of the total student body) with largely college-based teaching; from this viewpoint, a small selfcontained graduate teaching and research department was indeed very marginal. One of the underlying criticisms that ran through the Nairne review was the limited contribution that Barnett House made to undergraduate teaching: this was unfair, as it was always primarily a graduate department, though it contributed to sociology and social policy teaching in PPE, and demography in human sciences.

Though technically a university department, Barnett House had some elements of a college, which were partly a residue of its preuniversity days. The contract for the head of department (as in all university departments apparently) specified 'warming the building' as one of the prescribed duties even in the 2000s. Until the 1980s many colleges made very limited provision for graduate students despite the substantial course fees. Barnett House maintained a common room, which was open for long hours, and this together with its library became the *de facto* centre for many of its graduate students. Social work students typically had very close and intense links with their social work tutors, which included visits to their practice placements – sometimes very stressful settings – throughout the two-year course. For many students, this was a far more important link than the termly 'sherry and chat' offered by their colleges. This began to change as the number of graduates rose, graduate colleges expanded and other colleges strengthened their graduate provision.

Rewley House, now the Department of Continuing Education across the square from Barnett House, had been very successful in the 1980s in raising funds from the Kellogg Foundation to redevelop its buildings and subsequently to form the linked Kellogg College. Why did Barnett House not explore a similar college-linked route?

There is no evidence that this was ever considered. It might have been dismissed as a 'category mistake' (Ryle, 1949:16) – 'departments can't become colleges' – until it happened. But the reason was that Barnett House focused on establishing itself within the existing college structure, rather than reshaping itself.

The Halsey era covered more than a quarter of Barnett House's 100 years and more than half of its time as a full university department. It covers an important part of the twentieth century social trends mapped in the three volume study produced by Halsey and colleagues – the millennium edition brought the story up to the end of the century (Halsey and Webb, 2000) – and even more relevantly the changes in universities and university administration charted in Halsey's own studies of the changing position of university teachers. It needs an interim assessment.

On the teaching side, the social work and probation course had by the mid 1960s become the core part of the Barnett House programme. It remained the bedrock, as it was upgraded and expanded to become one of the best regarded courses in the country. The availability of grants or secondments and the attractiveness of potential employment helped to sustain a high-quality intake even when other social science courses were being cut back. While this course was primarily run by the social work tutors group, the academic input from Halsey and others gave it a 'tone' that was powerfully recalled by many students years later. But attempts to match this course with another MSc, in social research and social policy, failed to recruit more than a handful of students. One reason was lack of grants for the two-year course and limited prospects of secondment.

The growth of the social work course justified the increase in staffing and paid the department's way on a day-to-day basis; it also helped support Halsey's stated aim of creating more sociology and research methods posts to meet academic needs in these areas. As his definition of sociology was exceptionally broad and included social work, these went ahead. However, they were not matched by additional appointments in other relevant disciplines, particularly social policy. There was one staff member apiece for both social policy and social psychology in 1962 and the same number in 1990. The university did not at this point formally link overall departmental costs to notional income generated; academic priorities were the principal drivers for academic appointments, but this was emerging in a shadow form in the 1980s. On this basis Barnett House looked

to be very expensive and the teaching and supervision workload very unevenly distributed. It was a difference in perspective between appointing staff on the basis of what was ideally needed to meet the department's overall academic goals, and staffing more directly linked to actual workload. During the 1980s almost all Barnett House students were on the social work course, which meant that the sociologists and research methods lecturers had lighter teaching commitments on this degree although heavier commitments elsewhere.

On the research side, from a diverse collection of small-scale studies linked to individual academic staff in the early 1960s, Barnett House hosted or was closely involved in several major landmark research studies. Halsey's close links with both the political and administrative sides of central government created opportunities that he was both exceptionally quick to take up and skilled at turning into practical ventures. These included 'experimental social administration' on the EPA programme in the late 1960s and projects run under the more cumbersome Community Development Programme and, at almost the same time, the Nuffield social mobility study. Surprisingly Oxford's structure made these rapid moves easier than in more centrally directed universities. As Eric Midwinter, who directed the Liverpool EPA project, commented in response to the forceful lesson conveyed by US 'poverty warriors' that the worst thing to do was to involve a university, 'Oxford was the rule-proving exception'. Halsey was extraordinarily quick at picking up openings and opportunities, and this was a very successful strategy in the 1960s and early 1970s. Smith and Smith (2006) draw the analogy with the fly half or stand-off in rugby<sup>13</sup> who, like the quarterback, is the key pivotal player in the team. But this position is heavily dependent on getting good possession of the ball to make the openings. These openings dried up in the 1980s in the sharply changed social and political climate.

The rapid growth in funded research at Barnett House in the late 1960s and 1970s required some form of overall research structure but the one attempt to do this in 1971 was a failure. There were tensions about how far this would be a form of overall control over otherwise independent research projects. It was never attempted again. As a result there was no long-term research funding. One of

<sup>13</sup> Halsey had in fact played in this position in his younger days.

the charges levelled against the department in a submission to the Nairne review was that it had not conducted any research on the radical changes taking place in welfare state provision through the major reforms in social security, health and education during the second, more interventionist, phase of the Thatcher administration after 1985. There was in fact some research on social security reform, but funding for this type of critical or evaluative study had virtually dried up in the 1980s, apart from charitable grants. Since the Rothschild Report in 1981, central government departments were under pressure to direct their research budgets to very applied objectives within tight constraints. There was no money for free-wheeling or wide-ranging evaluations or critiques of policy, which would have been very high risk for any civil servant involved. The consensus under which Barnett House research had expanded in the 1960s and 1970s had been replaced by a much tougher response. Halsey and his distinguished colleagues effectively found the door closed when they launched Faith in the City in 1985.

The other aspect that had scarcely developed at Barnett House was any kind of internal management structure. All committees were defined as advisory to the director. Concern was expressed about the Nairne review's recommendation formally linking the new statutory professorship to the director, but there was no structure in place to provide any checks or balances. Halsey had also been unwilling to involve students formally in any management structures. The other feature that had changed dramatically was the growth of external agencies with an increasing say over Barnett House's programme. These had hardly existed in any form in the early 1960s. By the end of the period one external group after another was conducting reviews or making recommendations, with on one count six different reviews or assessments of Barnett House between 1987 and 1990.

Social policy development had also changed at national level. Traditionally there had been a long and semi-public gestation period for new national policies, allowing time for academic and other inputs. By the 1980s the MSC particularly had developed the mechanism of the special 'task force' to develop new policies very rapidly to provide an instant policy response. This became a widely accepted model within government, where ideas and reforms were quickly hatched and applied with very little time for outside consultation or thorough research review. The 1988 Education Reform Act for England and Wales was a good example, effectively bypassing the traditional

educational and teacher union lobbies to leave them flat-footed by the speed of the reform. One key component here was the idea of 'quasi-markets', where funding was directly linked to policy objectives. This was a very powerful tool – whether or not an institution agreed with the goals or changes, it could hardly ignore the funding imperatives. It had been used in the past to encourage specific innovations and new developments (for example, in the urban programme), but was now being linked to basic provision. For example, under the local management of schools (LMS) provisions in the 1988 Education Reform Act, school budgets were directly linked to the numbers of pupils enrolled, not to some notional idea of how much each school needed in principle.

During the Halsey era Barnett House was an essentially UK focused institution. There were few non-UK staff or students. Research by Halsey, Heath and others included other countries, particularly the United States and other OECD countries, and the research by Coleman and Sylva often had no national boundaries. However, the social work and probation course was a UK recognised professional qualification and almost all students were from the UK. Another aspect that was almost wholly absent at Barnett House was doctoral students. While some senior members did indeed supervise doctoral research students, these were not attached to Barnett House. Students formally registered at Barnett House were solely those on the two-year MSc courses.

Halsev left the department, though weakened by nearly a decade of cuts, in a far stronger state than in the 1960s and with a massively enhanced reputation. The Nairne review had largely endorsed his overall aim of developing sociology in an applied setting, but perhaps not quite in the way he might have envisaged in the 1960s. The Oxford system meant that he could be 'thwarted a bit or just outvoted' on appointing committees, as a colleague pointed out. Though there were more sociologists they were not concentrated in Barnett House, but in Nuffield College. And social work, the applied part of his conception, had also changed, with a more tightly prescribed set of purposes, reducing the scope for more wide-ranging community-based initiatives that might have better fitted his sociological perspective. It was now a very different world and a much more hostile climate for the social sciences than in the 1960s. While welcoming his successor in his final report to the department, rather than trying to outline possible future ways forward he turned back

Chapter 12: Research at Barnett House: 1965-2014

to the origins and moral purpose underlying the foundation of Barnett House in 1914: 'The challenge to respond to social ills can and should translate for every student in the question posed by Barnett of "What can I do?" For some a convincing answer is provided by Oxford's training of social workers...For others it is training in the same department to equip oneself for a career in social research. For many more, and indeed virtually all, there is the opportunity for both giving and learning which is still available in the University Settlement houses – so much nearer to that education in modern citizenship that no specialised honours degree could ever pretend to provide. There is work to do in the inner city, a citizenship to be completed, and an Oxford education to be justified.'14

<sup>14</sup> Green Book 1989-90.



Stein Ringen, director of Barnett House 1990-96

# Transition, survival and change: 1990–2002

The new professor of sociology and social policy, Stein Ringen, became director of Barnett House immediately after Halsey retired. Despite the department's new name and new director, it is hardly surprising that there would have been some difficult transitions to make after 28 years under a single director; as a former head of another department commented 'he is bound to do things differently from his predecessor'. All but one staff member had been appointed during the Halsey years; Julia Parker, still in post, had been appointed by Halsey's predecessor. But the new director was welcomed as an opportunity to develop new directions and to tackle problems that had been building up over the 1980s retrenchment. There was no interregnum. Unlike the appointment of Halsey, where he was unofficially singled out and encouraged to apply, in this case a formal appointing committee, reflecting the range of requirements for the post, was set up with a particularly strong representation

from sociology, including the chair, Lord Dahrendorf, then warden of St Antony's College, Oxford.

The requirements for the post were for sociology and social policy with, ideally, experience of social work or social work research. This had been strongly backed by Barnett House staff (see Chapter 6). It proved difficult to achieve. Halsey, despite being a leading internationally recognised sociologist, had never been formally 'professor of sociology' at Oxford. At this point the title of 'professor' at Oxford was very tightly controlled and Halsey's was a personal chair. This new appointment would be the first statutory Oxford 'professor of sociology' or indeed social policy. Finding applicants who could fill both roles to the level required proved a very serious stumbling block for many potential applicants who might have been strong in one aspect but not the other. The recruitment process took time, and some likely candidates had been appointed to other posts and dropped out of the running. As time ran on, several of the external members of the committee pressed for the process of shortlisting and interviewing to be completed.

Oxford typically tended to look beyond its boundaries for applicants for senior posts, concerned to add to its range of talents rather than reposition the existing set. Strong local candidates do not appear to have applied or been very actively considered. Both Halsey and Cheetham had recommended to the Nairne Committee that the new department should be closely linked to the Centre for Criminological Research, then headed by Roger Hood. But this does not seem to have entered the equation.

International academic networks had also been canvassed to identify suitable candidates, on the grounds that such an appointment would help widen the department's focus. As a result, Stein Ringen, then working as assistant director at the Norwegian Ministry of Justice, was approached and invited to apply. Ringen had previously been at the University of Stockholm teaching welfare studies and had also worked as a consultant to the United Nations in the 1980s. His book, *The Possibility of Politics: A Study in the Political Economy of the Welfare State*, had been published by OUP in 1987. Its analysis reaffirmed the case for the state's role as an effective agent for combating social and economic inequalities 'via legislative and administrative measures of a piecemeal kind' (Ringen, 1987:207), striking out against the prevailing tide of the Reagan/Thatcher era of 'rolling back the state' and relying on market mechanisms. His

background of academia mixed with public service including international work, and his approach to social reform, seemed to fit well with the Barnett House tradition. Intrigued to be invited to apply out of the blue, Ringen met informally with Barnett House teaching staff, and later the formal interview panel, and was duly appointed.

Part of the package provided by the university to newly appointed chairs and heads of department is typically a so-called 'dowry'. In Ringen's case this included funds for two time-limited appointments to develop work on social policy in developing countries and research on older people, and funds to undertake minor building work to provide a better library and more teaching space. This was used to remove the common room and large kitchen, which had been a popular informal meeting point for staff and students at the centre of the building. These became the library. There was also some easing back in the previous retrenchment of posts; Gershunv had already been appointed to a sociology post; and more sociologists were to follow - Diego Gambetta, for example, who specialised in mafia studies (The Sicilian Mafia, 1993), the idea of trust in social relationships and signalling theory, was appointed in 1991, but moved out of the department in 1995 when he became reader in sociology to a fellowship at All Souls. Michael Hechter, a leading sociologist then at the University of Arizona, was appointed to replace Gershuny when he returned to Essex as professor of sociology in 1994; Hechter's post carried a fellowship at New College. Hechter's interests were in nationalism, group solidarity and rational choice theory. In 1995 Roberto Franzosi was appointed as a department lecturer in sociology; his work lay in the study of social protests and violence particularly in prewar Italy, using quantitative content analysis of textual narratives. Thus by 1995 all but one of the lost sociology posts from the 1980s had been restored.

On the social work training side, Michael Noble was appointed to replace David Millard on his retirement. Noble, with George Smith, had developed a research programme on social security changes in the UK, starting from his base in the Barton project, which by then included strong welfare rights and advocacy, and one of the earliest computer programs to calculate UK welfare benefits. Noble was a trained and experienced professional lawyer, a qualified social and community worker via the Barnett House course as well as a self-

<sup>1</sup> Developed jointly with John Ridge at Barnett House in the 1980s.

taught computer programmer. In 1994 Ann Buchanan was appointed to replace Jane Aldgate, who had left to become professor of social work at Leicester University. Buchanan's interests lay in services for children and child well-being. Additionally Anne Gauthier had been appointed to a fixed-term lectureship in European social policy jointly with the European Studies Institute with interests in comparative family policy.

On the teaching side, the social work course continued to recruit a steady 25–30 students per year. A further external review in 1993 rated it 'excellent'. By 1991-92 Ringen had established a new oneyear MSc course to replace the two-year MSc in social research and social policy.<sup>3</sup> This was the one-year MSc and two-year MPhil in comparative social research (later amended to comparative social policy). From the start comparative social policy proved to be much more attractive than the predecessor course and recruited many more students, rising quickly to a peak of 18 students by 1993–94 before falling back sharply the next year. Significantly, students on this course were increasingly from overseas, particularly the United States, but also developing countries, including initially two from Africa funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation. The comparative element proved a major attraction to overseas students keen to analyse social policy developments elsewhere for their relevance to policies in their own countries. In turn, the varied and sometimes experienced and highly qualified<sup>4</sup> student group itself became a major resource. In 1991–92 the first doctoral research student (Janet Hendron) joined Barnett House, attached specifically to its social work research programme.

On the research side Ringen brought in a range of new areas. These included comparative social policy, where there was a joint study involving several members of Barnett House compiling a review of UK family policy for an international comparative study (Kamerman and Kahn, 1997). The social transitions in eastern Europe, newly emerging in the post-Soviet era after 1990–91, were

<sup>2</sup> This review was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), the successor body to the UFC.

<sup>3</sup> A one-year MSc in sociology was set up at the same time to complement the existing MPhil, with a course structure similar to the comparative social research degree, though these sociology degrees were not under the department. This meant that all these courses followed an identical research methods training in the first year.

<sup>4</sup> Over the years these included several fully qualified doctors coming to study comparative health policy.

another fruitful area for comparative research as these countries opened up. This led to several volumes of collected papers by Ringen, for example with Claire Wallace then at the Central European University in Prague (Ringen and Wallace, 1994), and links with scholars in the region, as well as workshops and seminars, in Prague for example, and an international conference organised at Wadham College, Oxford in September 1994. Ringen also gained ESRC support for his study of 'Full Income in Britain', seeking ways of quantifying informal unpaid domestic work. The build-up of staff members and the expanding areas of research produced an increase in research income and research staff, though this was also driven by the development of existing research areas, now supplemented by Ringen's programme. Jane Aldgate provided the largest component, with a range of research projects funded by the Department of Health – on respite care, child abuse and aspects of the 1989 Children Act – as central government departments slowly began to increase their research support. Aldgate's move to a chair at Leicester University in 1995 substantially reduced the department's overall research income, and more importantly took out a major section of the specifically social work research.

Noble and Smith were supported by the ESRC and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to study disability benefits and make the first moves into geospatial mapping of social deprivation as their contribution to the Joseph Rowntree Inquiry into Income and Wealth (1995). Joan Payne was supported by ESRC grants to study labour market trends and David Coleman also had ESRC and other support for his demographic programme. Colin Robert had joint research projects on probation with the Centre for Criminological Research and Ann Buchanan was beginning to build up her research on families and children; Teresa Smith continued to work on early years provision. In addition there was a range of other research on mafiarelated topics, rational choice theory and nationalism. With Federico Varese working on the Russian mafia (Varese, 2001), Barnett House temporarily became the centre of mafia studies in Oxford, leading to some nervousness among staff whenever large black vehicles with darkened windows parked nearby.5 In terms of its overall profile

<sup>5</sup> Interview with an admin staff member. Wellington Square was for a time a contact point for local drug dealing, which might explain some of the unusual vehicle movements in the square; they were unlikely to be visiting the vice-chancellor whose offices were immediately opposite Barnett House.

the department was recovering some of the momentum lost in the 1980s. But there were also serious strains and tensions.

Halsey had been unfamiliar on his arrival in 1962 with the complex decision-making structure of Oxford, but had played himself in carefully and then became a highly skilled and powerful operator within the university. Ringen, by contrast, started almost immediately on many fronts, opening up new areas of research and the new comparative research degree where he was the principal (and virtually only) teaching resource until Anne Gauthier arrived. He also had plans for expanding the building and for developing new funding streams. Almost from the start there were difficult encounters with the central university administration, which had by now built up a complex system of checks and balances, carefully monitoring direct approaches by departments for central or external funding. Attempts to bypass this system were very firmly pulled back into line. Building work also had to be approved centrally and wait its turn in a priority queue across the university, which could not easily be waived or overturned.

Perhaps prompted by the latest round of CCETSW proposals for social work training, Ringen approached senior figures in the central administration in 1991–92 to raise the possibility of closing the social work training course. He then informed the social work tutors of this move. The wider social work network was quickly alerted and very senior figures in the social work profession rallied round to raise their concerns directly with the vice-chancellor, and the idea was dropped. At that point it seems very unlikely that the proposal to close the social work degree could have been accepted by the university. It still had the largest number of students on any graduate course in the social studies faculty and was highly regarded as a national resource. Its importance had been confirmed by the 1988 Nairne review. To close it would have massively cut the central grant to the department, as the new comparative MSc degree had a fluctuating number of students, quite apart from the fate of the tenured staff who were dedicated to teaching social work and nothing else. This episode is discussed in more detail in Chapter 10.

There was also a running dispute about the level of central funding of the department, where the student per capita grant had been reduced, possibly as administrative memory had been lost over its origins as an earmarked grant from central government for social work training. This may well have been a justified complaint, but

the response at the centre was increasingly to see this all as special pleading for a department that had on some counts more than its fair share of resources. This ramified into a dispute over the numbers of students actually at Barnett House, with 90 students claimed by the new director, but this number was pulled back significantly (to 76). This and other interventions, for example on the methods teaching of the MSc degrees which came partly under the sociology sub-faculty, raised questions about boundaries and how far the director's remit covered areas that in practice had to be agreed by the sub-faculty. The sociology sub-faculty included many academics who were not part of Barnett House; the sub-faculty had been set up as a way of representing this wider group with a direct link to the Social Studies Board through its chair. Its remit included teaching matters and examinations. Putting pressure on the centre to override decisions or procedures legitimately made by other parts of the structure, as if the system was a straightforward hierarchy or the director of a department could bypass these systems by going straight to the top, ran the risk of being not just ineffective but potentially counterproductive.

These events marked a significant shift in the relationship between the director and senior members of his department, with a loss of trust in his willingness to back them. They also generated unease at the centre, anxious about the speed of proposed changes, the need for greater staff support and the way they were handled.

The previous director had acted as a 'benevolent autocrat' with virtually no internal checks or balances, but because of his seniority, range of academic skills and willingness to put himself on the line when needed, Halsey wielded both formal and informal authority over the rather diverse enterprise under his (sometimes rather loose) control. He also gave it a powerful cover story, when needed - drawing strongly on the 'Barnett House' tradition, now encapsulated in the Violet Butler room with its bookcase of leather bound minute books from the 1920s and pictures of the Barnetts and other luminaries. The new director inherited the same absence of management structure but struggled to develop the same authority at any level over what was an increasingly diffuse operation. The management style was sometimes reduced to rather formal administrative and management circulars to staff imposing set rules and procedures, which traditional academics found an unacceptable and irritating constraint on their role, though administrative staff felt the

management was now more responsive to their interests. It was, perhaps deliberately, no longer drawing on the Barnett House tradition.<sup>6</sup>

Another marker of the new director's departure from earlier Barnett House tradition can be seen in his inaugural lecture in October 1992 (Ringen, 1993:13): 'although we should claim the domain of information as ours, we should, as social scientists, not transgress into the domain of decisions...we have no competence on questions of what should be done, and therefore no special right to influence... As social scientists we have no other expertise than information to offer.' This is a far more detached position than the previous era or indeed the Barnett House tradition.

The new posts in sociology created after 1990 extended the range of work in the department into new fields, but these were only indirectly related to the core social work training programme; as one of the old guard remarked of one of the newcomers, 'he couldn't see the links between rigorous academic sociology and practically oriented social work'. Previously sociologists based at Barnett House had been closely tied into the social work programme through teaching and were in many cases heavily involved in its administration (admissions, examining, etc). The new appointments also had alternative space in their colleges and spent less time in Barnett House than their predecessors. The sociology courses continued to lie outside the Barnett House orbit under the sociology sub-faculty as before and the director's writ had always been mediated through this complex mechanism. Ringen was the central figure in the new developments he had introduced, but these did not necessarily bind in other academics. There was much activity and development to report, but it was not welded together, nor was a new overall cover story developed to provide an umbrella under which all could feel comfortable. Part of this was of course the emphasis on comparative and international work, while the social work training and much existing research was still predominantly UK-focused. The department had always been a series of loosely co-ordinated operations, but it was becoming increasingly fragmented.

In the mid 1990s Stein Ringen and Ottar Hellevik, a Norwegian colleague, began to challenge a key part of the measurement of social

<sup>6</sup> On one occasion a skip was observed outside the building in which there were many box files, old but serviceable, grabbed by passing students and their contents tipped back into the skip. These confidential records from the past had to be quickly rescued.

mobility that was central to the flagship Oxford Social Mobility Study. In brief, the method developed in the Nuffield study was to look at changing rates of intergenerational social mobility using occupational grading scales while controlling for changes in occupational distribution over time. In principle, if there had been an increase in the number of higher level professional occupations in recent years this would mean more opportunities to enter these occupations. The method developed in the mobility project was designed to take these changes into account so that 'true changes' in the social mobility of different social groups could be assessed over time. Ringen and Hellevik's attack was twofold: first, a challenge to the technical methods employed – did these actually and appropriately control for changes in the occupational structure over time? But it was also more basic, questioning whether this relative method was the right way to measure social mobility in the first place. Certainly the relative method was a much tougher test and tended to produce a fairly stable degree of social mobility over time – that is, social class chances had not altered dramatically over time once occupational changes were controlled.

To say this methodological and conceptual challenge was unpopular with the core group of quantitative sociologists mainly based in Nuffield College would be a massive understatement. They felt they had comprehensively demolished the arguments put forward and they continued with the same methods, which had become the international standard approach. Marshall and Swift gave a short and sharp summary of what they took to be the position in an article a few years later: 'we argue that [Ringen and Hellevik] adopt an arbitrary and essentialist view of what constitutes inequality, and have either misunderstood or misrepresented the aims and methodology of the research programme they deride. Ringen, moreover, explicitly concedes all of its major substantive results' (Marshall and Swift, 1999:241–50). Ringen, however, continued to publish versions of his critique over the next decade or more, most recently in 2013.

But it was changes outside Barnett House that now came into play. The sociologist Colin Crouch became chair of the Social Studies Board in 1993–94 for a two-year stint. But he was offered a post at the European University Institute in Florence and decided to accept. Almost his last action as chair of the board was to propose that there should be a General Board review of Barnett House, as its calls on his time over the previous year had been wholly disproportionate

to its size in the faculty, with issues raised by a cross-section of staff rather than one aggrieved group. This fitted with the board's schema for five-yearly reviews, and also with concerns expressed by the director himself about the management of the department, indeed its 'unmanageability'. The review was announced in 1995 under the chairmanship of Roy Goode, then professor of English law.

With Colin Crouch's departure, the Social Studies Board could have decided to bring forward the appointment of the next chair, but it was agreed to stick to the two-vear rotation principle. This meant that Teresa Smith, who was already on the board as chair of the sociology sub-faculty, became the new chair for the residue of the Crouch term. At that point Teresa Smith had held a half-time university lectureship in social and community work in Barnett House since the 1970s, but without college attachment. While the board chairmanship was a default appointment, she was the first woman to chair the board and almost certainly the first to be half-time when appointed. Normally holding the chair gave sabbatical relief from full-time posts, so she had to be quickly raised to full-time and in due course given a college attachment. In addition to her experience in university work, she had had substantial outside experience. She had been an elected Labour county councillor representing South ward in Oxford city for eight years. This was a period when the county was technically 'hung', with the three main parties (Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats) having more or less one third of the seats each; there were no formal pacts or coalitions, meaning that every decision had to be decided in open and often very lengthy debate. She had on occasions chaired the sometimes very fractious and public full county education committee, which would probably have been rather more taxing and certainly more in the public eye than the normally more sedate and secluded Social Studies Board.

This change in the chair of the Social Studies Board created a problem for the management of Barnett House. Ringen was also a member of the board, but the chair of the board was formally the chair of the standing committee to which the director reported. In Halsey's time he had held both positions. But this was rather different, as Teresa Smith was a member of the Barnett House staff, with a contract making her responsible to its director. The problem was dealt with by appointing an additional chair whenever departmental business was raised on the board and at the Barnett House Standing Committee. But it marked a shift in the balance.

Other changes were also in the pipeline. In 1991 the Home Office had asked the department to take on more probation students (rising from 10 to 15 per year). This was accepted; but by the end of 1994 the Home Office had changed its position totally. A report for the Home Office (Dews and Watts, 1994), in effect restating the views of the earlier report by David Coleman (see Chapters 6 and 10), proposed a fundamental change in probation training, removing it entirely from university courses of social work. By 1995 the decision had been announced. Though contested by many groups, debated in parliament where the government was temporarily defeated in the House of Lords, and the subject of heavy pressure from the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) nationally, the change went ahead. It was confirmed by the incoming Labour government in 1997 on the grounds that probation was more about 'public safety', as an arm of the courts and the prison service, than part of social work. While the department was quickly assured that the Department of Health would make up the shortfall in funded places left by the withdrawal of probation grants (as indeed it did) and many probation departments were still keen to recruit Barnett House students even after this change, it was a heavy blow. This was part of the long-term transition in probation training away from higher education to vocational work-based training with a very different entry profile. Probation had been a mainstay of the Barnett House social work course since the early 1960s with even longer roots into the prewar period.8

## **Research Assessment Exercise for 1996**

The national Research Assessment Exercise for 1996 (RAE1996) more or less set the pattern for the next two exercises (RAE2001 and RAE2008), though each had varying rules covering, for example, the way to handle academics who had moved in the intervening period. All assessments, however, retained an ambivalence between assessing, as it were, the team 'on the field' at the fixed assessment

<sup>7</sup> These places were funded by the Home Office.

<sup>8</sup> The very first Barnett House paper published in 1917 by the then HM chief inspector of reformatory and industrial schools was on 'The Problem of Juvenile Crime'.

<sup>9</sup> Tricky, as it could and did result in 'transfer deadlines' to get star players into your team by the deadline.

point, or the track record over time since the last RAE. As the RAE panels were largely discipline based, multidisciplinary institutions such as Barnett House always had difficulty in deciding how best to pitch their submissions. In 1992 a single submission had been made covering sociology, social policy and social work, but the assessment was passed to three separate panels. In 1992 the research assessment was still viewed as a side issue with little wider implication. This was not to be the case for RAE96.

In RAE96 each unit of assessment had to be submitted to a single panel, with 'cross-referencing' to other panels where necessary. This appeared to rule out the 'big wing' (of sociology, social policy and social work). Entirely separate submissions for sociology and social policy/social work (a joint panel) were agreed by the sub-faculty at the outset. This arrangement was accepted by the director even though several of the leading academic staff in Barnett House would be submitted in the sociology group. How far this decision reflected the growing gap between sociology as a discipline and the rest of Barnett House is unclear, though the gap was undoubtedly widening. Ringen himself, though the professor of sociology and social policy, took the lead in putting together the social policy/social work submission in the early months of 1996 and did not feature at all in the sociology bid despite still being the only professor of sociology.

Preparation for RAE96 exactly coincided with the Goode review, now in full operation, and calling for written submissions and oral hearings. The lead time for RAE96 was very much shorter than in subsequent exercises. RAE96 covered not only research activity, but also placed more emphasis on 'research strategy' and 'research groups'. While there was much activity and a fair volume of research at Barnett House, Jane Aldgate's departure had taken out a substantial chunk of the social work research; her replacement, Ann Buchanan, had only just begun to build up her own research at Oxford. As some elements in the department were submitted under other disciplines, the submission for social policy/social work struggled to present the remaining rather diffuse and varied collection of activities as a coherent package. The RAE96 results were released at the end of the year, coming after the Goode review had reported and in the wake of its immediate aftermath.

#### The Goode review

The Nairne Committee, on the surface, had proposed few major changes (though there had been sharp debate behind the scenes); the Goode review fundamentally changed the direction of Barnett House. The small review team included three academics from outside the university, representing sociology, social policy and social work. One of these, Juliet Cheetham, then professor of social work at Stirling, had worked in Barnett House until the mid 1980s, and Professor Jonathan Bradshaw from York was a longstanding contact. The review team's brief was very wide, covering teaching and research, staffing, finances, resources, organisation and management. Hearings and submissions inevitably harvested a very wide crop of concerns. Ringen saw the review team as a potential ally in his battles with the central university for more resources; he argued that Barnett House should become the 'centre of sociology' in the university. In its interim report the review team, as had Nairne before, very firmly rejected this idea as a possible future for Barnett House in view of the distribution of sociologists elsewhere, and the sociologists' very strongly expressed view that Barnett House could not be the centre of their work. This would have exactly coincided with their move to develop a separate RAE submission for sociology. They were also critical of the management and direction of the Barnett House but, to be fair, were also very critical of the way sociology itself was organised in the university. One consequence was that Goode recommended that sociology should also be reviewed. This was agreed by the General Board following the Goode review and took place in 1997–98 (the Fleming review).

Goode was very specific in its recommendations for Barnett House and its management. The social work degrees were deemed to be very successful, well regarded and popular, but the new comparative policy course received widespread criticism, with comments on the 'overwhelming volume of didactic teaching' based on student submissions to the review. This ran counter to the Oxford tradition of more open and varied material, leaving students to develop their own perspectives. The new degree, Goode recommended, should become a more social policy focused course, with numbers rising to 25. Both courses should be run by a graduate studies committee (GSC) rather than be under the direct control of the director. On the overall management side, though it was not possible to abolish

the directorship and move to a 'facilities based' approach (meaning the department should offer its resources, for example in methods teaching, to other departments), there should be an internal set of structures with a central department committee. This was a major change from the existing arrangement where the director carried full responsibility and any committee could act only in an advisory capacity. As Ringen was willing to stand down from his post, planning to take a sabbatical, this gave the opportunity for a change.

Once Goode had reported and the review had worked its way through the system to the General Board, its recommendations being endorsed at different levels, events moved comparatively quickly for an organisation not traditionally noted for its speed. Julia Parker and Teresa Smith would in turn act as heads of department over the next academic year during Ringen's sabbatical. Both Hechter and Gauthier decided to move on, and the Social Studies Board endorsed the proposition that Barnett House should focus on 'the analysis of social problems through social policy, social work and relevant sociology'; courses should come under a departmental graduate studies committee and there should be a rotating headship.

By the end of May 1996, a collective letter signed by all academic staff (except those holding positions on the Social Studies Board or the Goode review team) proposed that the change of headship should be permanent and the director should leave. In June the General Board endorsed Goode's arguments against possible closure and instead set about providing additional resources, particularly to expand the social policy element, which at that point was formally restricted to a single teaching post. On the management side, Ringen's offer to stand down as director was accepted, to take effect on his return from sabbatical.

The RAE96 results were released at the end of the year. If they had been available a few months earlier, it might have affected the Goode review outcome. They were very discouraging. The social policy and social work submission was awarded a 3A, in effect a rating at national rather than international level, one rank lower than the previous assessment. This was the lowest assessment received by any of the 40 units submitted by Oxford University; though the result would have been more or less the average across the country. Barnett House had submitted some significant pieces of research but the overall package was poorly presented and lacked overall coherence. Research groups were sometimes more virtual than actual. The

result came at the end of a very difficult year, with the prestige and standing of the department significantly weakened, even though the RAE results had as yet no direct impact on its resources or funding.

Barnett House had survived by a narrow margin. The Goode review might have recommended closure. The RAE results were very poor. But from a longer perspective it is only fair to underline what had been achieved, not least in the comparative social research and policy focus introduced by Ringen, both as a teaching programme and as a research focus. Student numbers recruited to the new course fluctuated, but it was clearly tapping into a demand that its predecessor had never reached. This formed the basis for major future development. The social work training survived, despite the nagging pressures from CCETSW and the complete withdrawal of Home Office support for probation training by the mid 1990s. There were also significant strands of research under way that would flourish as funding opportunities returned. These included the growing Social Disadvantage Research Centre, which had pioneered the use of administrative data and social mapping techniques and had used this to contribute to the landmark Joseph Rowntree Inquiry into *Income and Wealth.* The final report of this national study (1995), described in a review as 'a monumental achievement in the grand tradition of empirical social inquiry, 10 marked the turning point where concerns with poverty and social inequality returned to the national agenda as legitimate topics for research and policy debate, even though government had not yet responded to the turn of the tide. But as Paul Johnson of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) wisely remarked at the launch of the Rowntree study – it had taken just 15 years to reverse the postwar downward trend in income inequality, 11 but it would take very much longer to recover the ground lost.

#### **New directions**

The Goode review and its outcomes gave Barnett House a breathing space and a new set of directions. By the end of 1996 the apparent budget deficit had been resolved as, it emerged, research items

<sup>10</sup> Miller, S and Baldock, J (1995) Journal of Social Policy, 24(03) p 444.

<sup>11</sup> See Goodman, A and Webb, S (1994) For Richer, For Poorer: The Changing Distribution of Income in the United Kingdom 1961–91, Institute for Fiscal Studies.

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Teresa Smith, head of department, 1997-2005

had been misclassified under the main department account. To strengthen the social policy base two existing posts, Michael Noble and Teresa Smith, were converted to social policy; a bid to the General Board resulted in additional fixed-term posts for the social work and comparative social policy teaching – filled by Rebecca Surender and James Sandham, who had both been graduate students at an earlier point, and Jo Warner. Jane Lewis (then head of the Oxford Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, who had previously been professor of social policy at LSE), very successfully contributed to the core teaching for the MSc in 1996-97 while Ringen was on sabbatical leave. It quickly became clear how strong the student intake was; in a small group of students, there were two that year with Marshall scholarships (Derek Kilmer from Princeton, who went on to a doctorate at Barnett House, and a political career in the United States, being elected as a Democrat to the US House of Representatives in 2013; and Daniyal Zuberi, who later completed a social policy doctorate at Harvard and by 2013 was professor of social policy at Toronto University). This set the pattern as the course expanded in later years, with Rhodes, Marshall, Chevening and later Weidenfeld scholars in a very strong international intake.

There were also moves to change the internal management at Barnett House. The professorship was formally detached from the headship of the department in 1997. After discussion of possible ways forward, the Social Studies Board agreed to appoint Teresa Smith,

the acting head of department, as interim head for three years as a way of bringing the department together in the wake of the traumas of the Goode review followed by the poor RAE result. As the professorial post was filled though no longer based in the department. there was no scope for another major appointment. After her stint as chair of the Social Studies Board, Teresa Smith started from a strong base, with contacts and knowledge of how the Oxford system operated; she had taught in Barnett House for 20 years, and had been a postgraduate student in Barnett House after an undergraduate first degree at Oxford. This was part of the move to develop a formal constitution for Barnett House, with a rotating head who would act more like a committee chair, rather than an imposed director who had complete control. Terms would be fixed for three or five years and decided by internal election by senior academic staff, to be confirmed by the Social Studies Board. These arrangements were endorsed by the board.

## The Fleming review and the Department of Sociology

The Goode review triggered a move to review sociology across the university. This review, set up by the General Board, was chaired by John Fleming, then warden of Wadham College, Oxford, again with external members, including the sociologist Garry Runciman, 12 then at Trinity College, Cambridge. The Goode review's dismissal of the proposition that Barnett House should be the centre of sociology, and the sociologists' criticism of the way Oxford sociology was organised were the explicit triggers for this review, but a major issue was what might be called the 'Nuffield problem'. Since the 1960s Nuffield College had built up a very strong sociology group, particularly focusing on social stratification and social mobility, and it was strongly quantitative in method. Nuffield was by far the largest group of sociologists in Oxford, with the rest scattered across several different colleges. The emerging solution was to create a new 'department of sociology' as the university centre to which all sociologists would belong, reducing the impact of separate college attachment.

The idea of separate university departments in the social sciences, rather than a single faculty with sub-faculties, was rapidly gaining

<sup>12</sup> Formally, the third Viscount Runciman of Doxford.

ground in the 1990s. Until then, only the Institute of Economics and Statistics and Barnett House were in effect 'university departments' with their own buildings and directors. But plans were in the pipeline by the 1990s to build a new social sciences centre to house all social science departments and the library in a single complex. This development on the St Cross site between the Law Library and St Catherine's College echoed the earlier attempts in the 1970s to create a social studies centre in Wellington Square but this time the St Cross site won out. These initiatives were given a substantial boost in 1997–98 by the North Commission's review of the university's overall organisation, management and financing. Proposals from this commission were taken forward by North's successor as vicechancellor, Sir Colin Lucas. These created a new Council to take over as the central body from the Hebdomadal Council and the General Board, with four supporting central committees; 13 in addition faculties and sub-faculties were to be replaced or grouped into five major divisions each headed by a full-time senior academic appointment.<sup>14</sup> One of these was the Social Sciences Division. These changes came into effect in October 2000.

In its submission to the Fleming review, Barnett House argued against the creating of a separate sociology department on the grounds that sociology was an important part of its programme; the creation of two departments would potentially leave two rather small units. But the tide was running strongly the other way towards departments with a strong disciplinary centre. The creation of a separate department was one of the main outcomes of the review. The new Department of Sociology was set up in 1998, initially in temporary premises but it moved to the new social sciences building in Manor Road in 2004–05. Some, but not all, of the sociologists formally at Barnett House transferred to the new department.

# The Department of Social Policy and Social Work

At other periods the loss of such a key component might have been a heavy blow, but the move by sociology to form a separate

<sup>13</sup> The Council was, like its predecessor, in principle subject to Congregation, in effect 'the demos' (in the Athenian sense) of the senior members of the university in Oxford.

<sup>14</sup> This was later reduced to four divisions.

department helped focus the next stage of development. Moves to recruit Jane Lewis to replace Julia Parker on her retirement in 1998 were initially unsuccessful. Jane Lewis became professor of social policy at Nottingham University. But in the negotiations the post had been upgraded to a readership. A request from the new sociology department to appoint a professor was the opportunity to press for a comparable professorial post to be added to Barnett House. This was made possible by a substantial bequest out of the blue to Barnett House from a former Australian Barnett House student. As a result, the social policy post was further upgraded to a full chair – the Barnett professor of social policy.

The departure of sociology was followed by another change of name, this time from the circumlocutious 'Applied Social Studies and Social Research' to the more directly descriptive 'Social Policy and Social Work', the first time that its main teaching programmes were recognised on the Barnett House nameplate. These changes and the new Barnett House constitution were formally approved by the General Board in 1999. Jane Lewis was appointed from a very strong field to be the first Barnett professor of social policy, taking up the post in early 2000. Her arrival strengthened and extended the comparative social policy teaching and research particularly in its European coverage with her links to academic networks across Europe. In other changes Mansur Lalljee moved to the psychology department, and Frances Gardner, who had briefly held the social psychology post ten years earlier, transferred from psychiatry. Colin Roberts, who had been the mainstay of the probation course since the mid 1980s, joined the Criminological Research Unit as probation training was ended, freeing up a further post for social work.

By the turn of the millennium Barnett House was recovering on many fronts. The social work training course continued to recruit its target number of students, despite the loss of the probation stream. There were further tensions and run-ins with CCETSW and its requirements, as well as an ominous study commissioned by the Department of Health concluding that graduate social work (which was more expensive) provided no measureable additional benefit. Numbers recruited to the comparative social research/policy courses continued to rise, reaching 16 students on the MSc/MPhil by 2001; a significant number of these held Rhodes, Marshall or other international scholarships. And doctoral numbers were on a rising trend too, with 18 doctoral students attached to Barnett House, now

that the allocation was done by the social policy and social work admission panel in the department. As social policy moved up the political agenda under the new Labour administration, numbers of undergraduates selecting the social policy option in the PPE degree also rose.

Research after ten or more very lean years was also on a sharply rising trend. The incoming Labour government in 1997 accepted the tight overall budgetary constraints set by its predecessor, but it could begin commissioning new social research and considering policy developments in preparation for later expansion. These focused on disadvantaged groups and disadvantaged areas in a way that had not happened since the late 1960s and early 1970s. The Social Disadvantage Research Centre (SDRC), which had previously survived on a diet of charitable grants, now began to win major government research contracts. In 1999 it won a government research grant to develop a new national index of multiple deprivation (IMD) for England covering the country at a very local level. The new index was able to draw on national administrative data as this became available from central government. The result, published in 2000, was accepted after some very public controversy<sup>15</sup> and at least two tense parliamentary debates. It has since become the standard measure for local deprivation across England and the benchmark for other studies. Revisions were commissioned by government in 2004, 2007 and 2010, but the basic format has remained the same. The national administrative data developed by SDRC was one of the building blocks that formed the new Office for National Statistics (ONS) neighbourhood statistics system launched in 2003. By 2005 the new IMD/ID was being used to allocate approximately 1% of total government social spending (some £5bn per annum) (ID, 2000, 2004). Similar indices were commissioned by the devolved assemblies for Wales (2001), Northern Ireland (2001) and Scotland (2002). By 2001 SDRC had just begun to develop a major research programme on South African social policy.

New arrivals to the department were strengthening and extending research coverage. In addition to Jane Lewis with work on social

<sup>15</sup> Particularly from London, where Ken Livingstone, in his campaign to be the first mayor of London, had planned a demonstration against the new index and other government incursions, though it had to be called off as a May Day protest the previous day had got out of hand leading to damage to buildings and daubing of Winston Churchill's statue in Parliament Square. But even Ken Livingstone came to love the new index after a time.

policy, family, health and community care, these included Fran Bennett, who had been national director of the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), Eirini Flouri (later professor of developmental psychology at the Institute of Education in London) working with Ann Buchanan on family and child well-being, Sarah Harper who had moved from the Wellcome Unit and specialised in research on ageing and was later to set up the Oxford Institute of Ageing, and Mavis Maclean, who had switched from the Socio-Legal Research Unit and, with Joan Hunt and Julia Brophy, formed the nucleus of what was to become a major research programme on family law and policy.

By the next RAE submission date (April 2001) Barnett House's research income had risen very sharply (to £570,000 in 1999–2000), and the number of research staff employed was back in double figures. Many of these later went on to distinguished academic careers elsewhere, including Tarani Chandola (now professor of medical sociology at Manchester University), Jane Barlow (professor of public health in the early years at Warwick), Elaine Sharland (professor of social work research at Sussex) and Lucinda Platt (professor of social policy at the LSE). The 2001 submission was more coherent than the RAE96 effort and was intended to show a department that had been extensively restructured with four principal research themes (social disadvantage, family, population, and health and community care) where there were organised clusters of research active staff.

#### The resource allocation mechanism

Until 2000 departments received funding to cover administration and running costs but not rent or premises costs, or the major budget item, academic salaries. Academic posts and salaries were handled centrally. However, following the North Commission, the move to create five academic divisions required a mechanism to apportion overall resources to each division. The method adopted was to develop a standard formula, the resource allocation mechanism (RAM). Oxford was a relatively late convert to the idea of formulaic budget devolution. Maintained school budgets in England and Wales had been based on formulae worked out by each local authority and approved by central government as required in the 1988 Education Reform Act. The method was an example of what later came to be termed 'fair funding' where the same rules covered

the main budgets of all schools in an authority with very limited scope for special pleading or favouritism. But it was also a form of 'rough justice' as, for example, a school with older staff on higher pay scales received exactly the same funding as a school with a younger staff and lower salary costs.

The RAM<sup>16</sup> formula in Oxford allocated overall resources to the five divisions. As these had very different constituencies and profiles, some very research intensive and some essentially library-based disciplines, any formula would be likely to have an element of rough justice in its application. Divisions came formally into operation in October 2000. Apart from the new structures and in some cases new groupings, <sup>17</sup> one of the early decisions to be made was how to distribute the division's share of central resources to the next level. In the case of social sciences, a decision was made at a very early stage to use the overall RAM formula to devolve funds to the next level – that is, to departments – and retain only a minimal amount at divisional level. This would avoid pressure on the division to allocate more resources to one department or another from a central pot; instead it would be based on an explicit and open formula. The decision to devolve funds in this way was endorsed by the Social Sciences Board, which included heads of all departments in the division, but it was clear that there would be very significant winners and losers once the formula was finalised.

The results of applying the RAM formula to Barnett House were disastrous. From being a surplus department, where income based largely on student numbers was enough to meet the administration and some running costs, it faced a massive deficit under the RAM formula, with an income not much larger than before but now required to meet the full academic salary and building costs. The deficit was virtually equivalent to the full academic salary bill (then more than £700,000 a year). There were two principal reasons for this dramatic change. First, the majority of students in Barnett House were still from the UK; the formula rate per student for UK/EU graduate students was fixed at some £2,700, but from that the department had to pay a fee for central services of £1,400 per annum, and fixed fees for each academic and administrative member of staff (£5,600 and £2,900). Non UK/EU students by contrast paid a fee of around

<sup>16</sup> Later JRAM, when it was extended to colleges as well.

<sup>17</sup> Law, for example, joined the new Social Sciences Division. Previously there had been a separate law faculty.

£7,200 with the same deduction for central services. Second, many of the other elements in the RAM formula were weighted by the most recent RAE score (RAE96). Here the university's own simple but very steep scale gave a punitive '0' to a department with a 3A result. Thus for each staff member based on the number submitted as 'research active' in RAE96, departments were allocated a fixed amount which was then multiplied by the RAE scale. Barnett House only received any funding at all for staffing because a few academic staff had been entered in units other than social policy/social work. Clearly teaching a social work MSc degree with a largely UK intake and getting approximately £1,300 per student was not remotely viable, whereas overseas students contributing £5,800 clearly were. There were also no more than nugatory amounts for undergraduate teaching on the PPE and human sciences degrees. While the department argued that the student rate was too low, as it had a fieldwork element rather than being a pure academic course, this would have added about \$500 per student at best, nothing like enough to cover the full teaching costs. The other factor was that all academic staff on Barnett House's books (including the former director) had to be paid in full. Other departments mostly had joint university and college appointments where salary costs were shared with colleges.

The effects of a devolved budget to departments on the universitywide RAM formula were, as intended, quite dramatic. The argument made was that income and costs for each department would be clearly established, and that any redistribution from that pattern would have to be justified. Departments were given a three-year time window to adjust their income and expenditure to fit this new allocation. In practice this was not rigidly applied and the department was not suddenly cut back after this date; but deficits then built up and had to be repaid in due course. One major problem was that the RAE score was fixed until the next exercise – however much the department improved its research profile in the meantime. RAM also had some unforeseen effects; for example, grants from charitable foundations had their rate of overheads weighted by the RAE score. Thus Barnett House, with significant funding from charitable sources, had very substantially less research overheads added by the university than if exactly the same proposal had come from a top-rated 5\* department.

One clear message from the RAM allocation for all departments in the Social Sciences Division was to identify starkly which items would generate the most additional revenue, and which to avoid. The major positives were clearly non UK/EU students, and in the case of Barnett House, research funded from sources that paid full overhead costs, particularly UK government (rather than charities or research councils). Clearly teaching UK/EU students or undergraduates was a major loss maker.

In the university at large, overall numbers of undergraduates had risen steadily since the war, reaching more than 11,000 by the late 1990s but then plateauing at more or less that level during the new millennium. In 1961 the proportion of graduates was around 17% of the total student body; by 2013 this had reached 46%, with nearly 10,000 graduates to 11,770 undergraduates. The growth in graduate numbers was particularly marked in the new millennium where numbers virtually doubled (from 4,931 to 9,850) between 2000 and 2013. While this switch to graduates occurred across the university overall, it was particularly marked in the hard sciences and even more so in the social sciences. One of the likely drivers for these quite rapid shifts was the influence of the RAM allocation. In the case of Barnett House, which had always been predominately a graduate teaching centre, the increase in overall size was less dramatic in terms of overall numbers; it was more a question of switching to new courses and changing student intake away from UK students.

### Social work training

The formal decision to close the social work teaching course was made in autumn 2001–02 with the 2002–04 cohort the last to be admitted. While this was a very difficult decision, and bitterly contested by at least one academic within Barnett House, by then the majority of teaching staff, including many of those directly involved, had moved to support the change. The reason for this shift of view, even since the mid 1990s when the attempt to close the course had been quite easily rebuffed, was that there were now several other factors in play. The result of the RAM formula was undoubtedly the trigger that precipitated the decision, but it might not, on its own, have been enough.

One contributing factor was that some of the social work teaching staff had not been entered for the RAE2001 assessment as they did not have the required number of publications. The final RAE score

was a combination of the overall rating achieved, weighted by the number of staff submitted. It was always a gamble whether to submit more players and get a higher multiplier or to restrict the number to get a better overall grade. The pressure on social work tutors to teach and supervise students reduced their capacity to generate the required research and research publications. If this were to continue to be the pattern, it would inhibit the chance of improving the RAE rating or staff numbers in future assessments.

Direct pressure from CCETSW had also taken its toll; the course had been reviewed at exactly the same time as the Nairne and Goode internal reviews, and throughout the 1990s a series of further requirements was introduced, including the proposal (never implemented) to make social work training a three-year course. CCETSW raised some questions that the university strongly viewed as within its jurisdiction rather than that of an outside body – raising issues of university autonomy. The episode underlines the way that unreasonable pressure from external agencies can be counterproductive; in this case contributing to the closure of a highly regarded and successful social work training course for UK students.

Some ways of improving the financial viability of the course were considered. One option might have been to seek some direct government support for the course, but a government-sponsored research study had concluded that graduate courses gave no additional benefit. This closed off one possible funding solution. This way out was adopted by educational studies, which had exactly the same problems with its PGCE course. With predominantly UK students, it received equally low income under the RAM formula. The solution in its case was to get a special grant from the Department for Education on the grounds that the prestigious Oxford PGCE would otherwise certainly have to close; when this government support came to an end, the PGCE was able to continue with additional funds from a small levy across the whole university in the current JRAM formula.

A further option might have been to rejig the course to attract international students but this would have directly conflicted with its recognised status as a formal UK qualification in social work. Further, two of the central staff involved in the social work course were about to retire, and others were on short-term contracts, leaving just one permanent staff member in post. If the course were to continue there would have to be several new appointments, but these could have been blocked at divisional level until it could be shown that the

course was viable under the new budgetary formula. As arguments in favour of taking radical action built up, ideas for a replacement course were beginning to emerge. When the decision was taken to make the 2002 intake to the social work course the last, a possible alternative was already there in outline, with a tentative timetable. This was for an MSc in evidence-based social work (EBSW), developed by Frances Gardner, James Sandham and Craig Morgan who were all closely involved with the social work teaching.

Perhaps for this complex array of reasons, though the decision had been difficult, it was accepted by the department (albeit with some very strong objections) and approved by the division with little debate. The 'logic' derived from the RAM formula effectively determined what counted. In Barnett House's case the deficit was so large that something dramatic had to be done. The fact that this proposal for closure had emerged from Barnett House rather than being imposed from outside was also a factor. Surprisingly there appears to have been little outside pressure in contrast to what had happened in the 1990s; a few letters of protest were later sent to the university. There were as one administrator put it 'no banners in Wellington Square' outside the main university administration building, the usual target for demonstrations. CCETSW does not appear to have responded very forcefully, even though what its chairman had termed a 'national responsibility' in his evidence to the Nairne Committee a decade earlier – certainly a flagship social work course – was coming to an end. Other universities had already taken this route, including the LSE where social work had already closed.

The final cohort of the MSc completed in 2004. A reunion of those who had been through the social work training over the years was held in the summer. There was a very large turnout and considerable upset and anger over the decision, despite careful explanations of the background; but it was more like a wake or celebration for Barnett House's social work training than a protest meeting to reverse the decision. By then the new course, the MSc in evidence-based social work (later evidence-based social intervention) was already up and running. While student numbers dropped briefly as the two-year course was phased out and the new one-year course developed, the comparative social policy degree was expanding and doctoral student numbers growing. The key difference was the constituency – from a predominantly UK student body, to an international intake with a minority of UK students. It was the end of an era.

This marked the end of a difficult decade for Barnett House, but there was one last sting in the tail. Shortly after the decision to close the social work course had been made, the RAE2001 results were released. Though Barnett House had moved up one grade to a 'national' level (grade 4), it was still one of the back markers among Oxford departments, which were largely rated international (grade 5 or 5\*). This at least gave it a score on the university RAE scale for RAM, but a higher grade was required to generate anything like enough funds to cover the academic salary bill. The RAE96 results had been poor, but accepted as fair, reflecting the fragmented state of the department at the time and the weak submission. RAE2001 looked a very tough judgement given the range and volume of research recorded, and also the international work of academics such as Jane Lewis, David Coleman, Mavis Maclean, Frances Gardner, Michael Noble, Stein Ringen and others. In the period since RAE96, external research grants received by Barnett House were on average the highest per capita of any of the social science departments at Oxford. On more detailed inspection it appeared to be the case that some panels, including the social policy and social work joint panel, had worked to something like a normal distribution of results with relatively few institutions rated 5 or 5\*; other panels, such as law, were heavily skewed towards the top end with more than 60% of law departments across the UK rated 5 or 5\* compared with 21% in social policy and social work. Attempts to question these differences ran into a cast-iron defence; each panel was largely composed of academic peers – so any differences must reflect the considered judgement of academic peers. However it was noticeable that in the next RAE (2008) interpanel consistency was given much more weight. But in the meantime Barnett House had to operate under this constraint, and in effect remain 'on probation' until the next RAE.



Aerial photo of Wellington Square, 2007

### Stability and change: 2000–2014

Historians are naturally reluctant to cover very recent events as their relative significance may be difficult to discern; as one former Barnett House lecturer commented, 'history has to wait at least fifty years'. But for our purposes it is important to bring the centenary story of Barnett House up to date, if only in outline, rather than truncate it at the end of the twentieth century, leaving the reader to guess at the rest.

The start of the new millennium set down a number of markers. Jane Lewis, the first Barnett professor of social policy, took up post early in 2000; her inaugural lecture (Lewis, 2001), delivered in June 2001, was titled 'Pictures of Welfare' – echoing perhaps Asa Briggs' contribution to Violet Butler's Festschrift some 25 years earlier (Halsey, 1976). And the university recognised the new century by abolishing the Hebdomadal Council and grouping departments and faculties into divisions, under the overarching resource allocation

mechanism (RAM). By 2000 Barnett House was probably the only department in the Social Sciences Division, with its own constitution written by staff and accepted by the university, and governed by a departmental committee of all senior members.

After the rapid twists and turns of the previous decade, where Barnett House came close to closure on more than one occasion, the next decade was to be much more stable, allowing new programmes and existing courses to build up, doctoral numbers to rise steeply and a wide range and very high volume of externally funded research to develop. In 2001 Teresa Smith was reappointed head of department and, with an extension, continued to 2005. Note that this was as 'head of department' not as director, signifying a change of role from the traditional central academic figure. As the previous director remained in the university, though not in Barnett House itself, there was in fact no scope for a further appointment. But the pattern had been set for the head and deputy head to be elected for a fixed term by the established academic staff at Barnett House, and this then to be confirmed by the division. The appointment did not necessarily have to be the leading academic figure 1 but an academic prepared to take on a very substantial administrative load, particularly with the move to devolve budgets and other administrative responsibilities to departments after 2001. George Smith was elected in 2005 to take on this post until autumn 2007.

The explicit strategy set for Barnett House at this period was to broaden the teaching and research base on which the department had depended. The move to devolved funding made this imperative. While there were temporary subsidies and central funds available for 'restructuring' in the short term, it was necessary to respond to the move to link funding directly to 'activity' – however important other criteria or objectives might be on purely academic grounds. Barnett House had for much of the 1980s and 1990s depended very heavily for its departmental income on the social work course, particularly when research funding was cut back. With the almost overnight change in funding under the RAM in 2001, Barnett House's income was nowhere near sufficient to cover its full staffing and other costs. As the university had virtually ruled out any redundancies to established academic staff, the only way forward for the department was to expand.

1 Later heads of department were indeed leading academic figures.

The intention, as set out in the 2001 five-year plan adopted by the department and agreed by the division, was to continue its 'multi-disciplinary and comparative focus (including social policy, demography, social work, family law)' and develop thriving MSc/MPhil courses, recruiting high quality graduates from across the world, with a large doctoral programme partly sourced by those coming through the masters programmes and a substantial and wide ranging funded research programme. There were already moves to introduce a new masters degree focusing on evidence-based social work, and through the 1990s there had been a much greater international focus, not just of the comparative policy work but of the research more generally, reflected in both the number of non-UK staff and the increasingly international student body.

The research programme was recognised in the division as one of the largest compared to the number of established staff (one consequence of this was the number of short-term research posts). The breadth of coverage and range of sources for research funds would act to cushion any sharp changes in the external world, such as a cut in UK government research funding. The intake of students from across the world acted in the same way; a significant proportion of students from outside the EU/UK was essential in view of the wholly uneconomic fees then paid by EU/UK graduate students, exacerbated by the flat rate levy taken from the departmental budget by the university for every postgraduate student. One well-established consequence of devolved funding is that the unit to which funds are devolved – particularly a relatively small unit – has to be capable of coping with 'shocks' to its key funding sources, which in the past would have been absorbed by the wider university structure.

Another key aim was to raise the research assessment score in the next RAE (the RAE 2001 result though better than RAE96 was still among the bottom-markers across the university), as this not only affected the department's core funding from the university but also excluded it from applying for ESRC studentships and other UK awards, though ESRC awards were now held by a very small proportion of students in view of Barnett House's increasingly international intake.

These broad aims laid down in the early 2000s and ratified by the formal five-year university review of the department at the end of 2003, while subject to adjustment and debate, more or less defined the shape of Barnett House over the next decade. But though the

broad parameters were set, some of the elements changed significantly over this period.

### Growth and recovery: 2000-2008

By the turn of the millennium several of the components for this period of growth were already in place. The comparative social policy MSc course established by Ringen in the previous decade was now getting into its stride. The appointment of Jane Lewis was a major draw for the course and she became the key figure in the comparative social policy teaching programme. Numbers of students rose steeply, from 18 in 2001 to 34 in 2002; the majority were overseas students on Rhodes, Marshall and other scholarships, including Chevening awards for countries formerly part of the Soviet Union. While numbers fluctuated from year to year, combined with the two-year comparative social policy MPhil from 2003, numbers were typically in the mid 30s for the rest of the decade. There was a steady flow of graduates from this course into the doctoral programme.

Doctoral students had already risen to more than 20 in total by 2000 though the first doctoral student had only been recruited to Barnett House in 1991. Numbers continued to rise steeply, with more than 70 doctoral students by 2008, though this number included some who did not submit their thesis until the final point permitted, often long after they had left Oxford and were working elsewhere. Overall numbers fell back after 2008 as tighter rules and revised fee and funding arrangements created incentives to submit more promptly and not hang on to the final deadline.

In its final years, recruitment to the social work course was typically in the mid 20s, with a reduced intake in the final year of entry (the 2002–04 cohort). The new evidence-based social work MSc overlapped with the final year of the social work course with 23 students in 2003. Overall graduate students had been roughly 60 in total at any one time throughout the 1970s and 1980s; this grew during the 1990s as recruitment to the comparative social policy course and doctoral programmes increased. After 2000, the number flat-lined as the social work course ended – there was only a brief drop in overall numbers in 2004–05 before numbers on the comparative social policy MSc and doctoral programme more than covered the

shortfall – but then rose again strongly to peak at around 140 by 2010. But the major difference was that in 1990 there were a maximum of one or two non-UK students among the total. By the 2000s UK students were now a small minority – one aspect of the shift to an international department.

Research funding had began to rise during the 1990s particularly in the last few years of the decade after the Labour government was elected in 1997. Having committed itself to maintaining the level of spending under the previous administration, social research was one of the areas where government expenditure could rise almost immediately. The creation of the Social Exclusion Unit in 1997 and the series of linked policy action teams (PATs) across major areas of government policy created a momentum for more policy related research studies. These included PAT18 for better information for government, on which Michael Noble, now deputy head of Barnett House, played a major role.<sup>2</sup> The very topics which had been closed subjects, almost taboo, for government research suddenly became its central focus. Many of these reprised areas where Barnett House had conducted policy related research in the 1960s and 1970s, including educational disadvantage and urban renewal; for example, the schemes for educational action zones<sup>3</sup> and neighbourhood renewal and, from 1998, the New Deal for Communities, which had echoes of the earlier Community Development Project (see Chapters 6 and 11), though these developments were on a very much bigger scale than anything in the 1970s. These focused on areas that the Social Disadvantage Research Centre (SDRC) at Barnett House had been studying with purely charitable foundation support over the last 10 years. In addition to the commission for a new index of multiple deprivation covering England in 1999, SDRC began to secure very substantial research funding from government. This included funding to extend the deprivation index work to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland by 2001–02 and for a range of other studies making use of the increasingly available national administrative data. SDRC was involved in constructing new longitudinal data sets drawing on

<sup>2</sup> Michael Noble was awarded the OBE in 2001 and the CBE in 2008 for services to research on poverty and deprivation.

<sup>3</sup> Educational action zones were in part influenced by the French zones education prioritaire (ZEP), which themselves had been directly influenced by the education priority areas (EPA) programme run through Barnett House in the late 1960s, following key meetings between Halsey and other EPA people and the leader of the French team that developed ZEP.

national administrative data to which the centre had negotiated controlled access.<sup>4</sup>

Research outside the UK, particularly in Europe, had been developed by Ringen. Jane Lewis's arrival brought a large number of academic contacts across Europe and also EU funding for European research networks. This linked others at Barnett House into academic networks across Europe. In 2004 Barnett House hosted the annual conference of the European Network for Social Policy Analysis (ESPAnet), with 155 delegates from across the world giving 80 papers over a major three-day event at St Antony's College in Oxford. But there was limited follow-up from the conference or the links it had established as the capacity to do so was lacking, and Jane Lewis was about move back to LSE.

The university review of Barnett House in late 2003 was conducted by the Educational Policy and Standards Committee (EPSC), with a panel including four external academics from outside Oxford and one from outside the UK. It was the first since the Goode review in 1996. But despite some trepidation the atmosphere was very different from the reviews conducted in the previous 15 years. While regretting the decision to close the social work course (then in its final year), the conclusions were highly positive and supportive of the changes and progress made across the board since the Goode review. SDRC's work on administrative data, which had led to the development of neighbourhood statistics by the Office for National Statistics, was mentioned as one of the division's 'research highlights'. This year also saw the successful launch from the department of the division's first 'spin-out' company, Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI), which worked with neighbourhood statistics and administrative data nationally and internationally.5

By this point the growing numbers of students in comparative social policy allowed Barnett House to convert temporary or conversion posts granted following the Goode review into permanent positions and to add further appointments. Frances Gardner was confirmed as a full university lecturer linked to Wolfson College, and Rebecca Surender, previously a departmental lecturer, to a university post linked to Green College. Two further appointments could also

<sup>4</sup> The SDRC's work is discussed in some detail in Chapter 12.

<sup>5</sup> OCSI continues to thrive in 2014, and in an echo back its parent body won the contract to review the national index of deprivation for England, 2015.

be made. The changing nature of the student body and research programme was increasingly reflected in a similarly international staff composition. These appointments included Martin Seeleib-Kaiser from Duke in the United States and Bremen University to strengthen the comparative social policy element, particularly work on welfare states: his work again strengthened the international dimension with work on European countries, the United States and Japan.

And on the evidence-based social intervention (EBSI) side – by now the name of the new degree had changed to 'social interventions' rather than just 'social work' – there was the appointment of Don Operario from the United States, whose research on HIV/AIDS, particularly its social consequences and policy implications, rapidly led to a growing number of doctoral students in this field, as well as co-operation with other departments in the university and an international research programme, not just in the United States but in China and parts of the former Soviet Union. The formation of the Centre for Evidence Based Intervention (CEBI) research group in 2005–06 created a strong group that incorporated Frances Gardner's work on parenting interventions addressing antisocial behaviour in children, as well as research on the effects of nutrition on child behaviour and learning by Paul Montgomery, who became a full university lecturer in 2006.

Over this period the SDRC had been developing a programme of research in South Africa which quickly grew into a separate research team, the Centre for Analysis of South African Social Policy (CASASP), several members of which were based full-time in South Africa. This resulted in a number of South African research students and established researchers being drawn into the Barnett House orbit.

All this provided the basis for long-term developments which formed the substantial part of the Barnett House research programme over the next ten years. These developments raised the profile of Barnett House internationally. At the same time other more UK-focused research groups were also benefiting from the increased availability of funding, principally from central government. These included Ann Buchanan's work on parents and children which formed the nucleus of her research group on parenting and children, Teresa Smith's evaluation studies of some of the major initiatives in early education by the Labour government, and Mavis Maclean's work on family and law (OXFLAP). This last group was boosted by the arrival of Ceridwen Roberts, former director of the Family Policy

Studies Centre in London, after this national centre closed down in 2001.

By 2005 Barnett House could point to its international character in almost all aspects, with a student body from nearly 20 different countries, staff from about ten and an active research programme in at least as many including research staff based overseas.

Steady growth in staff and student numbers after the departure of sociology in 1998 meant that space in the building quickly filled up. But relocation from Wellington Square to the new social sciences centre in Manor Road was on the agenda. This development had moved forward during the 1990s as architects were selected (Fosters and Partners for the initial phase) and plans began to be drawn up. By 2002 the difficult debate about space allocations among the many groups that would be relocated was in full swing. Very late in the day it emerged that the total space allocated had failed to include the circulation space required in an open plan environment. There had to be a major cut in the space for each group. As Barnett House was already comfortably settled in its long-established premises in Wellington Square, the department offered to stay put and move at a later stage if further developments allowed. This, in the short term, undoubtedly solved at a stroke the division's allocation problem but left Barnett House outside the main social sciences centre and its new library. Like the closure of the social work course, this seemed the only possible decision at the time and was not contested at divisional level. On later reflection, the then head of division judged it to be a major mistake, though the expansion of the Social Sciences Division since then has meant that there are many departments not based in the Manor Road centre and the planned expansion of the building has yet to occur, not least because it is adjacent to two Grade 1 listed buildings (St Catherine's College and the university law library), which restricts its infringement of their prospects. The result was that Barnett House lost direct access to its own library (which moved to Manor Road in 2005 and was incorporated into the new university social sciences library) and missed the opportunity for closer links with other social sciences departments. As virtually all Barnett House academics had no other work space, they would have been full-time users of the new space – academics in other departments usually had rooms in their colleges. It is also probable that Barnett House staff, once based in the building, would have had greater involvement in its development as a social sciences centre.

But this is all hypothesis. The social sciences centre opened in 2004. Barnett House remained in Wellington Square in 2014.

In 2004 Jane Lewis, who had been the central figure in research and the comparative social policy teaching since her arrival in 2000, moved back to the LSE as professor of social policy. The LSE was a much larger and more prestigious department of social policy than Barnett House, having consistently gained top rating in the RAE assessments. In her two posts at Oxford she had run into the byzantine and sometimes obstructive nature of decision making in the university, and in the department she expressed concern that the growth of EBSI and CEBI research would curb the potential growth of social policy. The disappointing RAE score in 2001 and the resulting funding linked to the university's resource allocation mechanism meant that senior members had little choice but to take on a very high workload of funded research, doctoral student supervision and course teaching, all of which she loyally did. But as the next RAE was deferred until 2008, it would have been another five years before this could change.

Jane Lewis was a major loss, as she was then the only full professor in Barnett House, and her departure left a big gap on the European social policy side. At a different time, this might have proved a very serious setback to a department recovering from a long period of instability. But with new arrivals in the pipeline, particularly Martin Seileib-Kaiser, buoyant recruitment of students and new staff as well as expanding research, this was a more like a brief check on an upward trajectory. The response both by the division and the university was also significant. Previously such losses would have been made good only after an extended period but, in this case, the refilling of the Barnett professorship was almost immediately approved, and in addition a well-pitched proposal to use some of the increasing research funds to 'buy out' another senior member's post (this was Michael Noble) created the possibility of establishing a further professorial post.

The two professorships in social policy were advertised at the same time and filled by early 2006, with Peter Kemp from York University, where he had been professor of housing and of social policy, as the next Barnett professor and Robert Walker, professor of social policy at Nottingham University, as the new chair. Peter Kemp's research fields were housing and housing policy, particularly the private rented sector. Robert Walker's research covered poverty, social exclusion, family dynamics and budgeting strategies,

children's aspirations, and employment instability and progression; his policy interests embraced social security and social assistance, welfare to work and labour market policies, policy evaluation and policy transfer. Importantly his interests also covered research and evaluation methods, which overlapped with EBSI and CEBI coverage. Shortly after, these moves on the social policy side were matched by the creation of a professorship in evidence based intervention. This attracted a very strong field but it proved difficult to finalise the appointment. Later the department appointed Professor Larry Aber from New York University to cover the post for a fixed period.

In 2007 the Sidney Ball lectures were reintroduced on an annual basis. The first lecture had been given in 1920 and they were held more or less annually after that until the mid 1970s (apart from a break in the second world war). Until the 1970s, the subjects had been very wide ranging across the social sciences and current affairs with some very distinguished speakers. After 1975 the lectures became intermittent but more closely related to the Barnett House programme. Since 2007 they have focused on social policy or social intervention topics and have continued annually. (See appendix 2 for the full list of Sidney Ball lectures.)

The overall financial position, though still seriously in deficit, continued to improve over the next few years, roughly in line with the recovery plan. But there were some serious bumps on the way. Because of the discrepancy between the income generated by UK/EU students and full overseas fee payers, relatively small changes in the balance could have a dramatic financial impact. In 2005–06 both MSc courses recruited more UK/EU students than in other years; the result was a very sharp spike in the deficit and concern whether this was the shape of things to come. However the pattern of improvement continued the following year, with student income reaching over £1m for the first time in 2007–08 and the deficit declining to a residual figure in 2008–09, more or less in line with the broad plan, as retirements began to reduce the overall salary bill. For RAE2008 some academics due to retire stayed on to overlap with their replacements, so that a wider range of research contributions was included.

Preparations for RAE2008 had been drawn up from 2004 onwards following an interim research review of Barnett House carried out for the division by Jonathan Bradshaw, professor of social policy at York. Department discussions in 2005 focused on the Bradshaw Report, coinciding with the report from the EPSC review and the second

departmental five-year plan. Issues highlighted in the division at this time included the problems of small departments (Barnett House was one), and anxieties reflecting the shifting balance in the university towards graduate work – the increase in graduate numbers, and the quality and number of taught masters courses. But Barnett House came out strongly from these debates.

In 2006 CASASP published the provincial level index of multiple deprivation for South Africa, and organised a major colloquium in Oxford. In May, Mavis Maclean organised the first of OXFLAP's highlevel panels reviewing a major piece of family legislation – this one on the process of making the 1989 Children Act, drawing in the major actors such as the parliamentary draughtsman, former government ministers and MPs, lawyers and academics; later panels reviewed contrasting legislation such as the 1991 Child Support Act. By now Barnett House felt confident enough to invite the vice-chancellor to visit and review the overall programme of teaching and research and meet with staff, students and research groups. A head of another department which also sometimes felt marginal to the university, when asked by his staff 'what does the university think of us?' commented that 'the university does not think of us; our job is to make them'. But until this point, Barnett House had felt 'on probation' since the late 1990s. That was now coming to an end.

Debate on the preparation for the RAE – over the actual configuration, who should be 'played' and how best to present the overall programme, continued right up to the final stage. As for RAE2001, there were difficult choices on how many staff to enter to increase the resulting multiplier, and how far including a large number might weaken the overall quality score. But this time the broad parameters of the submission were clear, as the research groups were by now very well defined and well established.

The RAE2008 submission was made at the end of 2007; the national results were only released in late 2008. As these were in the form of a distribution, it was not immediately clear how they corresponded with the previous single grade. However, compared with other departments in Oxford's Social Sciences Division, it was clear that the department had moved from being the backmarker to being more or less on a par with the other major social science departments previously rated internationally excellent, though these were typically much bigger. Some 70% of its outputs were judged to be 3\* or 4\* (that is, 'internationally excellent' or 'world leading').

The overall ranking of social policy departments across the UK had risen overall as their results moved into line with other related social science panels – RAE2008 had placed much more emphasis on inter-panel consistency – but Oxford had moved up to a level with other leading social policy departments, still below the LSE (with 80% 'internationally excellent' or 'world leading') but on a par with some much larger and longer established centres of social policy. The recovery in ranking had taken more than 10 years to achieve after the poor results in 1996.

From 2009–10 the results of the RAE2008 were fed through into the JRAM<sup>6</sup> formula, generating an additional £300,000 per annum in central funding for the department – though some of this was clawed back to meet the accumulated deficit. As these were genuinely *additional* funds, unlike income from students or research grants, which required corresponding teaching or research activity to match any increase, the RAE results allowed academic effort to be redeployed and new appointments to be made with less anxiety about the financial consequences. The additional funding lasts until the next research assessment (REF2014) comes into play.

### Towards the centenary: 2008-2014

Peter Kemp was elected head of department from 2007–08 and served until 2011 when he was succeeded by Martin Seeleib-Kaiser, the current head of department (2014). Once the RAE2008 assessments fed through from 2009–10, the way was open to replace retirements with new staff. Don Operario returned to the United States,<sup>7</sup> but continued to keep links with Barnett House, not least through his research and his research students. He was replaced by Lucie Cluver, now a full university lecturer, who already had a growing volume of research with her work on HIV and AIDS orphans in South Africa (see Chapter 12). From 2010 to 2013 Chris Bonell worked in the EBSI team as professor for sociology and social interventions.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> RAM had by now been renamed the joint resource allocation mechanism to take college funding (such as for joint posts) into account.

<sup>7</sup> He took up a post in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences at Brown University, becoming associate dean of the graduate school in 2014.

<sup>8</sup> In 2013, Chris Bonell was appointed professor of sociology and social policy in the Department of Childhood, Families and Health at the Institute of Education in London.

In 2010 Peter Kemp set up the 'Oxford Institute of Social Policy'. The aim was to pull together the wide range of social policy research in the department under a single umbrella structure. The argument was that the creation of CEBI in 2006 had focused the research carried out by the evidence based group. This needed to be matched on the social policy side where there had been a number of different groups. This in effect restructured the department's research programme under three main headings – the new Oxford Institute of Social Policy (OISP), the Centre for Evidence Based Intervention (CEBI) and the Oxford Centre of Population Research (OXPOP). This became the format for the 2014 research assessment submission.

Further appointments were also made on the social policy side with Paola Mattei and Georg Picot and, to strengthen the methods side, Erzsébet Bukodi, whose work on social mobility and education renewed a strand of research that had been strong in the 1980s, when Barnett House was closely linked to the social mobility project based at Nuffield College (see Chapter 12). She also brought in the sociologist John Goldthorpe, emeritus fellow of Nuffield College, as part of her research team. The demography strand also began to grow with Sylvie Dubuc's work on gender differences and sex selective abortion. Stuart Basten, with research interests in social policy and demography in low and middle income countries, was appointed in 2013 as another full university lecturer to join David Coleman.

For some years there had been discussions at the Social Sciences Board about the possible development of a new centre for 'public policy', with a very major donor in prospect. The argument was that to date these centres were predominantly US based, the most prominent probably being the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard and the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton. And yet whatever else the United States might be a model for, government or public policy would not be high up the list, rather reinforced by the recent history at federal level of budgetary gridlock and other very public impasses. One major issue for existing departments, particularly Barnett House and the politics and international relations department, was the extent to which this new initiative would overshadow their own programmes. Plans for the new school crystallised following discussion across not just the social sciences but other divisions, as the idea expanded to include the very wide range of policy fields covered by modern governments. The Blavatnik School of Government was formally launched in autumn 2010 with the (then) largest ever single donation given to the University of Oxford (initially &75m). A major building programme is now under way; the first students on its graduate course (Master of Public Policy) started in 2012.

Peter Kemp was initially seconded to help in the development of the Blavatnik School, and moved across formally to become associate director and course leader in 2011. At present, there are limited numbers of students on the Blavatnik programme, so its impact on other departments is yet to be seen. At present Blavatnik's fee structures are very much higher than the average graduate course at Oxford, with many of its initial students seconded by governments or other agencies. There is a partial overlap with the comparative social policy student intake; but in general students on Barnett House masters programmes are at a very early stage of their careers, and not yet established or seconded but on scholarships. The aim is for some of the Blavatnik resources to be used to develop joint appointments across existing departments in the university.

Increasingly Barnett House was becoming known for hosting high-profile lectures and events in social policy and social interventions, in addition to the regular programme of student seminars and workshops. The Sidney Ball lectures had been held annually since 2007, with high-profile speakers and topics drawing large audiences. CASASP set up the annual Zola Skweyiya lectures in May 2011, with Dr Skweyiya, then the South African high commissioner to the UK, giving the first lecture. In 2012 the lecture was given by Dr Temba Masilela, deputy CEO research of the South African Human Sciences Research Council, on South African social policy. In 2012 Martin Seeleib-Kaiser was appointed to the Barnett chair in social policy to follow Peter Kemp.

This has to be an interim assessment of Barnett House leading up to the centenary in 2014. Some overall judgements are made in the concluding chapter. At the end of its first century Barnett House is probably as strongly placed as it has ever been, with a thriving graduate and doctoral programme and a very large volume of research, 70% of which has been judged to be 'international' or 'world leading'. The recently submitted REF2014 presents both a more extensive range of research work than in RAE2008 and a much broader base of funding sources. 'Impact' has now become a very significant part of the national research assessment process, and Barnett House can cite many examples where its research has had a major direct or indirect effect. These range from improving

evidence-based policy and programming for children living with AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa, and reducing child antisocial behaviour through effective parenting programmes to using small-area indices of deprivation in the UK and South Africa to target resources and policy interventions. The coverage these and other research projects receive in both national and international media has been very extensive.

Forty years ago the debate was how to get *any* coverage at all of social research into the public domain; now the concern is not so much to get coverage, but to ensure that results are not presented in ways that distort the findings for the sake of headline grabbing, though this is often out of the researchers' hands. Over this period Barnett House has become much more an international centre, not just in terms of the student and staff composition but also in the scope and coverage of its research. This to an extent has proofed it against some of the short term fluctuations in funding and support from any particular source. Barnett House has now built up much stronger links with 'the collegiate university', as staff are increasingly linked to colleges, students are clustered in graduate colleges and graduates are close to 50% of the university student body.

But despite being substantially larger than at any point in its history, it is still a relatively small institution with around 130 graduate students and some 35–40 teaching and research staff, and therefore always potentially vulnerable to external shocks or change to its immediate environment. Yet it has survived such events over the hundred years and has somehow managed to survive and reconfigure itself several times.

Barnett House has always encompassed a range of different academic groups, inherent in its multidisciplinary nature. Its present configuration around two or three major groups is therefore nothing new; it stems from its recent history, as this and previous chapters have shown. This configuration was raised in the 2003 review and again in interviews for this centenary history suggesting that it is a potential fault line. The way these groups develop and operate in a small department depends in part on the amount of common ground they share as well as academics who are comfortable working at the points of overlap and intersection. They have 'very different philosophies and different views', as one academic commented. While CEBI is very strongly focused on particular methods of research, the social policy coverage is much more eclectic with no

single overriding approach. But there are clear overlaps in areas such as policy evaluation which CEBI is now taking up. This revives a strand that has operated intermittently at Barnett House since the 1970s.

Barnett House operates in the space between a pure academic setting and the applied world. At times it has been closer to one end of the spectrum, for example when it has been directly involved in training for practice, or even setting up and running local projects or other developments to 'get things going' rather than simply to research or evaluate them in a detached way. At other times it has moved towards a more purely academic position where it professes lack of interest in any practical implications of its research or findings. But often there has been range of positions within Barnett House, and the external environment as well, either encouraging more engaged stances or stressing the importance of academic detachment. Barnett House at its outset had a predominantly selfdefined 'progressive' stance on tackling social problems; but as social policy has moved from a marginal part of the national policy agenda and budget to become, on some definitions, by far the largest part, then concern with these issues is no longer restricted to a particular point on the political spectrum. Student intakes reflect this range. Of the eight students taking the comparative social policy course in 1998, by 2013 one was the political adviser to Eric Pickles, secretary of state for communities and local government in David Cameron's government, and Ben Jealous, then a Rhodes scholar, was head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) in the United States. Others in the year group were arrayed between these two poles, including a senior administrator in a region of France and a chief medical officer in the Los Angeles area. Their common ground is the focus on social policy in very different settings.

The centenary seminar series organised in the department over the autumn of 2013 and the spring of 2014 reflected this range of positions and themes. The first alumni lecture, in May 2014, was delivered by Jacqueline Bhabha, who took the MSc in applied social studies in the 1970s and is now professor of the practice of health and human rights at the Harvard School of Public Health. Her lecture, 'Making a Difference: Policy, Practice and Human Rights', set out an uncompromising case for 'academic activism' – that the academic task is to strive to change the world for the better, to improve the lot of the poor and the disadvantaged, by seeking to understand

the causes of malaria, for instance, or why polio is resurfacing in Pakistan, bringing scientific rigour to serve the cause of improvement. Or as put in a slightly more complex way in an interview for this study by a current Barnett House academic, 'my aim is to produce the best possible research and put it on the desks of people who can use it...and also to train the next generation [in the] of importance of academic enquiry' to change the world for the better. This brings us full circle not only to Halsey's 'action research' in the 1960s but to Violet Butler's social work training in the early 1900s, with young men and women learning to understand poverty and disadvantage and seeking change through practical action.



Martin Seeleib-Kaiser, head of department, 2011 to date.

# Contributions to social work education and social action



Violet Butler

## Social work and social action: 1914–1962

Barnett House trained social workers from 1913 to 2004. This chapter and the one that follows are not a history of social work. They attempt to chart social work's journey as one element in the rise of the social sciences, illustrated by the hundred years of Barnett House's story. What made the Barnett House course unique? It was not the first of the university-based programmes, nor the largest, nor in a particularly promising location; and there were several times in its life when it might have closed down. Its selling points at the start were the opportunity it offered bright students to immerse themselves in the real-world problems of poverty by staying in settlements, such as Toynbee Hall in London. In the settlements they could

<sup>1</sup> Toynbee Hall residents at the end of the first world war described social work 'not only as an attempt to deal with the actual difficulties with which it comes in contact but as a means of throwing light on national problems' (Pimlott, 1935:205).

carry out enquiries and apply the solutions offered by social administration and working-class organisations. In the 1930s, when lack of funds threatened closure, supporters pointed out that Oxford's relatively rural location in a county borough, with good links to the industrial areas of south Wales and Liverpool, gave students a more varied experience than courses in big urban centres; closure would lose good material and useful recruits to the social services. In 1959, when the university's Committee on Radical Economies complained of Barnett House's apparent low standards and high use of resources. the threat was countered by the importance of sound intellectual training for the top level of the new welfare administrators required by the expansion of services envisaged in the Younghusband Report (1959) – and Barnett House was well on the way to full graduate status as a university department. From Halsey's arrival in 1962 until the closure of the social work degree in 2004, the department stood out for its approach to social work as the applied end of the social science disciplines that were studied in their own right: theory and policy had to be understood as well as practice.

The story is partly one of gradual incorporation into, and recognition by, the university. It is also part of the national and international story of increasing professionalisation of all kinds of education and welfare work and training – not just social workers, but community workers, medical social workers (or almoners), probation officers, personnel and industrial welfare officers, health visitors, as well as teachers, planners and the clergy. It is also the story of the surge in interest in training for the social services, initially following the first world war and particularly the second world war with the creation of the welfare state. What form that training should take is still hotly debated: the balance between 'the right temperament for the job', experience and skills,<sup>2</sup> and the balance between research-based and theory-based study in the classroom and practice in the field.

At a deeper level, the story has to be the meaning of welfare itself. Are the social services about helping individuals to make the best of themselves, and come to terms with or change individual behaviour? Or are they about challenging inequalities in the circumstances of different groups – understanding poverty and class, and recognising patterns of behaviour influenced by such structural factors?

<sup>2 &#</sup>x27;Social work is not like a trade taught by an instructor on precise methods. It requires character, personality, originality, good sense, devotion, and not least freshness and imagination' (Macadam, 1925:100).

Asa Briggs' 'pictures of welfare' (Briggs, 1976:7) show how different underlying assumptions about welfare, need and moral responsibility are encapsulated in different historical time periods: what Kuhn calls 'paradigms' (Kuhn, 1962) and Collingwood 'absolute presuppositions' (in Boucher and Smith, 2013:65–68).

### Small beginnings and gradual expansion

The first moves towards a social work training course in Oxford were made in 1913. But for the earliest developments in professional social work education we have to go back some 15 years to the settlements in London and in Liverpool (Leubuscher, 1946; Macadam, 1925; Sewell, 1925). That Violet Butler was entirely familiar with these origins and developments, and knew the key players, is clear from the voluminous papers and letters in her archive collections in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, as well as the Barnett House minute books. For example, in March 1926 Elizabeth Macadam, one of the great pioneers of professional social work, and secretary for many years of the Joint Universities Council for Social Services (JUCSS) founded in 1918, addressed a meeting in Oxford attended by 50 students from women's colleges, on the subject of paid and unpaid 'openings' in social and administrative work; and she and Butler corresponded about conferences, work and potential students.

One of the early 'flyers' announced that 'a scheme of training for social work has been organized by the Committee for Social Training of the Oxford Social and Political Studies Association, Barnett House, to supplement the theoretical training of the Diploma Course, by direct observation of social and economic conditions, and by a certain amount of practical work under the supervision of experienced social workers. Students who have fulfilled the necessary conditions will receive a Certificate from the Committee for Social Training.'3 The first report to the Social and Political Studies Association, dated 1914, described the course as 'a kind of practical commentary' added on to the diploma in economics and political science, and recorded three men and two women students.<sup>4</sup> This shows a very informal

<sup>3</sup> The 'flyer' is included in the Barnett House Social Training Committee's Minute Book, Vol II 1925–41. SC1/9/2, Oxford University Archives.

<sup>4</sup> SC1/38, Oxford University Archives.

beginning for the certificate course, but the committee was filled with the great and the good and included numbers of heads of colleges, thus tving it to the university from the start. The 1915 report added more names to the list of tutors, and set out the structure and curriculum of the course as a study of institutions – essentially setting the format for future development. The aim was 'to meet the increasing demand both by state and by voluntary authorities for the services of men and women who have taken a systematic course of social and economic studies at the University and have supplemented their theoretical training by direct personal observation and consideration of social and economic conditions' and were aiming 'to make social work their professional career'. But the appeal was also to a wider audience of people – clergy, civil servants, businessmen and citizens - likely to come into contact with the social and economic problems magnified in complexity and urgency by the war. Students were advised to get some experience in a settlement or other social work organisation before starting.

The social training course had two parts. First, 'three terms of study and observation of the workings of local government and welfare institutions such as the City and County Councils and their respective committees such as Housing, Sanitary and Education; the Courts of Law and the Administration of Justice; the Labour Exchanges including the Juvenile Labour Exchanges; the Guardians of the Poor; the Charity Organisation Society; Local Friendly and Co-operative Societies and Trade Unions [AJ Carlyle was responsible for including detailed study of 'working-class organisations' such as these]; the organisation of Health Insurance'. Second, 'either a course of practical work in a Settlement or an organisation approved by the Committee, with reports by the student and by the supervisor; or a special investigation and report on some problem of urban or social conditions'.

The observational visits organised during the three terms covered the working of local government and the interweaving of statutory and voluntary organisation and responsibility. Students were expected to take detailed notes and discuss these at their weekly tutorials with their tutor. Termly lectures and classes were published in the university lists; examples for 1921 included trade union problems, wages and co-operative societies.







Top left: Miss AMH Rogers, 1921 Top right: Miss CV Butler, 1968 Bottom: Dons in St Anne's, 1943 – CV Butler (sitting) bottom left









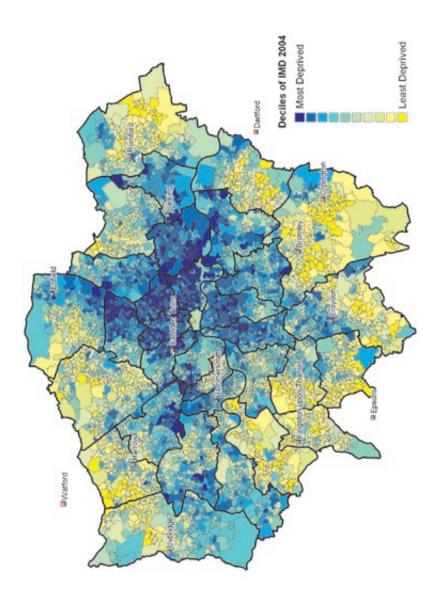


Educational priority area projects, West Riding of Yorkshire 1969–72 Top: Denaby Main – view from school gates to the pit, 1969 Bottom left: Denaby Main pit, 1970 Bottom right: Denaby market stall during school lunch break, 1970





Community development projects, Liverpool 1970–77 Top: 'Walk-up' flats in Scotland Road, Liverpool, 1970s Bottom: Resident in the walk-up flats, 1970s







Top: School children at a junior secondary school in Mount Frere, Eastern Cape province, South Africa, 2003 Bottom: South African delegation visiting the department





Poverty and Shame study Top: Meeting with members of a women's workers union in Gujarat Bottom: Women and children rolling incense sticks in Gujarat





Top: Aframano schoolgirls in Ghana, sanitary pads trial run by Paul Montgomery and colleagues Bottom: Young Carers research study in rural South Africa by Lucie Cluver, 2011

The 1920 course memorandum spelt out the study of 'modern social problems' from the point of view of the administrator, 'the industrial worker' and 'the active citizen'. Postwar problems loomed large. Course observations included industrial employment in town or country, 'working class dwellings', and schools and educational establishments. Butler's indefatigable notes and typed memoranda give flavour to the official prose. In the autumn term of 1920, three second-year students studying 'working class organisations' with Dr Carlyle made visits to the Wolvercote paper mills and Oxford University Press, the Savernake Glove factory on Botley Road and the Pavlova Leather works in Abingdon, the Oxford hand weaving industry and a meeting of the Women's Co-operative Guild; they interviewed representatives from the Oxford Trades Council, the Oxford Co-operative Society and the Friendly Societies; one of the students worked for an hour a week at the Oxford Juvenile Employment Exchange. Three first-year students studying local government with Violet Butler visited three of the factories, an infant school, an infant welfare clinic and 'specimen houses', attended a session at the City Police Court and sat in on two meetings of the city council (one discussing the 1918 Education Act); they interviewed a headteacher about school organisation and curriculum, and an inspector of midwives about the work of a sanitary inspector and of the Oxford Public Health Department. Two of these students helped at play centres; others helped at a working girls' club.

Brian Harrison, the historian of the University of Oxford, wrote of Butler's 1912 survey, *Social Conditions in Oxford*, that 'it is in classifying the structure of local administration that Miss Butler attains an institutional precision which is absent from any of the other surveys [of the time]' (Harrison, 1976:36). The same might be said of her curriculum for the social training course; its strength lies in the detailed unpicking of the relationship between the role of the state and the voluntary and industrial sectors, the different functions of local government and the organisation of welfare services, and the framing of contemporary social problems in bites that could be digested.

Rigorous note taking and tutorial discussion were hallmarks of the Oxford course. One civil servant later attributed her facility at writing official reports to her early training in Barnett House 'note taking'; and Dorothy Jackson's notebook – she was later appointed to the

<sup>6</sup> SC1/38, Oxford University Archives.

staff at Barnett House – was reputedly a 'magnum opus'. Research of various kinds was taken seriously – always with an eye to social action – mirroring the 'village surveys' (see Chapter 2). By 1927, students' surveys (later called 'theses on some definite piece of local investigation') included topics as diverse as problems of village life in south India, wage conditions in east London and mental deficiency problems in Oxford. The tutors recruited by Butler were already tutoring Oxford undergraduates in PPE or modern history, and the social training students were simply absorbed into their tutorial groups and lectures, as students at Barnett House in the late 1940s recalled when interviewed for this book. Practical work experience was offered by placements in trade union and Charity Organisation Society offices, and with settlements in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and Liverpool – a 'solid period of casework', school 'aftercare' work, industrial welfare work, work with clubs, hospitals and infant welfare clinics, probation services.

Initially, student numbers were small. Two men enrolled just before the first world war, and five women 'with rather intermittent supervision' during the war. Only eight students had completed the course by 1919. Ruskin College (the principal, George Slater, was on the Barnett House committee from the start, and Ball, Carlyle and Bell were involved in Ruskin) and the Catholic Workers' College (later Plater College) were formally affiliated in 1921. By 1927, the course had reached its 'jubilee' of students with 54 having completed, according to Butler's report for that year. By 1933 numbers of completions had reached a total of 95. Student numbers rose to 50 or so per year just before the second world war, with the change in admission requirements in 1936 allowing Barnett House to admit its own 'unmatriculated' students (that is, students who did not meet the normal university admission requirements of School Certificate. with two foreign languages, one of which had to be Latin or Greek), and reached over 70 in 1945-46 by the time of the transfer of the course to the delegacy in 1946. The first student on the register was killed in action in Flanders in 1914; and the first woman to complete the course - Daisy Adler, a student of St Hilda's College from 1916 to 1918 – died on Christmas Day 1961.<sup>7</sup>

Students' career destinations were both varied and international. A list compiled in 1927 included two university lecturers (one in

<sup>7</sup> Green Book 1961-62.

India); a trade board investigator and inspector; a factory welfare worker; a handful of aftercare organisers with the London County Council; a local government worker in India; a worker in a remand home in South Africa; an organiser with the Irish Board of Health; an investigator with the Federal Prohibition Bureau in Canada; a Zionist worker in Palestine; a clubs' leader and organiser in a settlement; a secretary with the Charity Organisation Society; a curate and a barrister. The 1933 list added hospital almoners, police and probation workers.

The relationship between the social work training course and the university was not easy. Who had the power to publicise the course, admit and examine students, set the curriculum and award the certificates? Who taught the students and arranged their placements? By 1917, the Social and Political Studies Association had been dissolved. There was a push for closer, more formal recognition by the university through the Committee for Economics and Political Science, and in June 1919 the university formally recognised the certificate in social training as 'an approved course of social work training', attached as before to the diploma in economics and political science, but run now by the Social Training Committee in Barnett House. Butler noted, in a handwritten scrawl tucked into the minute book, that she had been away during 1918 and 1919 'apart from some weekends, and Dr Carlyle did it all'. (During 1918 and 1919 Violet Butler was employed by the Ministry of Munitions to write the official history of its welfare department.) So after 1919, the course flyers were headed 'Barnett House'. The committee membership changed: with the death of Sidney Ball in 1918, it was now chaired by Dr Carlyle. But the structure of the social work training already in place - university-based; a combination of theoretical and practical parts to the course, and continuing debate about the balance between the two, as well as their timing; a diversity of professional careers – remained more or less constant throughout its 90 years, although staffing, students and the content of the curriculum changed.

Problems of funding and status remained acute. A memo written by Violet Butler in 1933 made it clear that the Committee for Economics and Political Science still had to approve any course changes and the appointment of supervisors, and the Drummond professor

<sup>8</sup> SC1/17, Oxford University Archives; Barnett House annual report 1927–28.

<sup>9</sup> SC1/9/1, Oxford University Archives.

of political economy signed the certificates: 'from the point of the University the Barnett House Committee carries out the work on behalf of the Committee for Economics'. Butler continued to carry the major workload – reading applicants' work and admitting students, arranging their tutors and their studies, teaching much of the course and tutoring many of the students, arranging and supervising their visits of observation and placements and keeping in touch with people in the field, and doing the administration, typing and note keeping. All this without help, and without payment. (One surviving file for a student taking the social training certificate in 1932 vividly demonstrates the administrative workload.) The tone of Butler's reports on this situation grew increasingly sharp over the years, with the increasingly heavy workload. A handwritten letter dated October 1932 survives to Mr Joseph, secretary of Barnett House 1929–33: 'Would you read this – a piece of ancient history, only accidentally disinterred – as illustrating the interest which Vice-Chancellors and professors take in these social training courses in other universities [here she lists six] – all really take an interest in their schools of social training, and push them (tho' the bulk of the personal side is left to the Woman Tutor). But none of the distinguished Barnett House Council, except Mr Ball and Dr Wells (and, fitfully, Dr Carlyle) has ever taken any effective interest in the subject – especially the two professors who in other universities sponsor the subject.'10 Was this a draft for a letter? We do not know if it was ever sent.

Barnett House's position 'in but not of' the university remained problematic. Applications for funding to the Hebdomadal Council of the university were refused, on the grounds that it was *ultra vires* to fund an institution not formally part of the university. In the financial crisis of the early 1930s, Lindsay engaged in correspondence seeking support for Barnett House's social work training, and received encouraging replies from a number of heavyweights, including Elizabeth Macadam, honorary secretary of the JUCSS, and Hilda Cashmore, who ran the Bristol settlement. The situation was resolved in 1935, at least for the short term, when the university devoted part of the Rockefeller Foundation's five year grant to Barnett House. The grant lasted seven years and provided welcome relief for the funding of social work training, always a hand-to-mouth affair, as well as allowing diversification into highly topical training

<sup>10</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 42, Bodleian Special Collections.

Chapter 12: Research at Barnett House: 1965-2014



Wytham Woods camp, March 1933

for local government. It is unclear whether the funding Barnett House received was for research or for training; the reports written for the university stressed the components of the training which prepared students for research work; but the result was expansion of Barnett House's training role with the development of the new diploma and certificate in public and social administration, as described in Chapter 3.

Butler herself suggested that the impetus for the new courses came partly from the Hadow Report (1934) and partly from the Webbs' 1932 publication, *Methods of Social Study*, with chapters on 'how to study social facts' and 'the art of note-taking'. At the same time, the university's relaxation of the entrance regulations was particularly important for attracting local government officers.

The curriculum for the new public and social administration courses was set out in the university statutes.<sup>11</sup> It focused on 'the study of the working and interrelationship of national and local administrative bodies, both statutory and non-statutory, including Trade Unions and other working-class organisations'. Optional papers included local government (again a particular emphasis), national income and expenditure, statistics, labour movements, housing, town and country planning, administrative law, penol-

<sup>11</sup> Drafts of this curriculum exist in Violet Butler's notes, SC1/17 and SC1/39, Oxford University Archives.

ogy, social psychology as applied to social and industrial problems. international organisation, and trade and finance. The public administration and social work training courses ran alongside each other: 'really their needs are fundamentally the same', wrote Butler. 'Almost all [students] will, during their later work, be immersed in multitudes of small details with which they must deal accurately; it is therefore specially good to help them think out general principles...[with] sound study of the principles and structure of public administration', including the rationale for 'helping the community' and planning future work 'in correlation with other services, sciences, and people'. The curriculum was intended to focus on statutory-voluntary co-operation, surveys and other methods of studying 'the localised social problem', publicity and measurement – the use of statistics and presentations – and study of case papers. Placements ranged from settlements, welfare organisations and play centres to the Charity Organisation Society (COS), hospitals and factories: they included Oxford House, Southwark COS, the Liverpool Personal Service Society, Josephine Butler House in Liverpool, Waterloo Play Centre, Lady Margaret Hall Settlement, COS Islington, Great Ormond Street Hospital, the Wills tobacco factory in Bristol and Dunlop Rubber Company in Liverpool.

As with the social training course, the public and social administration course was tailored to the needs of individual students. A surviving student file<sup>12</sup> dated 1938–39 for an Indian civil servant – the first Indian to complete the public and social administration diploma – shows both the range of work required and the course's flexibility. This student wanted to study rural reconstruction. So the course put him in contact with work in public health, youth organisations, education and adult education, councils of social service and rural community councils, and co-operatives in Denmark and Sweden; all this leading finally to a thesis on 'Some Aspects of Rural Reconstruction in Denmark, with special reference to Co-operation, Marketing and Cottage Industries, and their applicability to conditions in United Provinces, India'.

John Redcliffe-Maud, in his reminiscence 'Administrative Studies in Oxford 1929–39' in Violet Butler's Festschrift (Maud, 1976:73–77) gives a personal account of teaching for the public and social administration diploma. Appointed in 1929 as a junior research fellow at

University College, with English local government as his field, he knew Barnett House, with its 'small invaluable library', as 'the humble but exciting centre of social studies in Oxford throughout the pre-war decade': 'there was worked out a scheme enabling Oxford public servants, local government officers in particular but voluntary workers too, to benefit from the fact that they were working near a great university – and at the same time enabling Oxford academics, if their subject was public administration, to become better acquainted with the practical problems of government by personal contact with pupils whose daily work was administrative...The tutor for whom you wrote weekly essays would be some don that Miss Butler enticed into her kindly net...As a quite unqualified researcher in the local government field, I learnt a great deal from my diploma pupils.'

The Rockefeller grant also provided, at long last, money for an honorarium for the social work training course secretary and funds for a half-time secretary/typist. From 1940 Dorothy Jackson was appointed assistant secretary for the course, with main responsibilities for practical work, and later for the proposed development of 'Barnett House East' in Rose Hill. This was the dream to establish an Oxford version of a settlement or civic house on one of Oxford's new housing estates, where Violet Butler and Dorothy Jackson devoted much energy over the next 15 years to helping local people develop a community association and build a community centre, with students helping to run groups and provide activities. This is a good example of the local involvement with community associations, boys' and girls' clubs and youth groups across the city, which characterised Butler's work and Barnett House from its earliest days. The statutory takeover of these pioneering voluntary community development initiatives has been described in Chapter 4. But the idea of community effort survived into the 1960s, when under Olive Stevenson students once again ran 'playgroups' in Rose Hill, Barton and Blackbird Leys.

By the 1940s, Barnett House was running the diploma in public and social administration and the certificates in social training and in public administration. As the Rockefeller grant came to an end, the crucial questions were how to continue funding and, even more important, where Barnett House should be 'lodged' in the university structure. The early 1940s saw a flurry of reports, correspondence and memoranda – with the Barnett House Council about future options, the university registrar about funding and admissions, Nuffield College about the possibility of association and even

merger, and the university's Hebdomadal Council about taking over the social work training. Violet Butler's lengthy background paper for the university discussions, *Social Training – the study of Social Administration in Oxford*, is a blockbuster of a document on the history, development, organisation and costs of the Barnett House training, the importance of the work as demonstrated by the careers of its graduates, and comparisons with other courses in the field.<sup>13</sup> Eventually this led to the creation of the delegacy, a story that has already been told in Chapter 4.

Violet Butler served as the first secretary/director to the delegacy until Leonard Barnes' arrival in January 1948. Her final report on the social work training in the first year of the delegacy's operation 1946–47 is clearly intended as a 'baseline marker' for the start of university responsibility. It gives a vivid picture of the workload and complexity of the operation at that point, and is worth quoting in detail.

The delegacy in 1946–47 had three full-time equivalent posts to run the entire social work training section: the secretary/director (Butler, who acted as director of studies, conducted the admissions, examined work, tutored a number of students and also gave lectures), and a handful of part-time administrative staff and typists, including Dorothy Jackson, at that time responsible for the Rose Hill Community Centre, the 'Barnett House East' development. There were 36 tutors from across the university, which provided variety but was an administrative nightmare. Students attended university lectures, mainly in the social studies faculty, as well as special lectures by a large number of university people, local authority officers and social workers. (At this time, the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, the Oxford Council of Social Service, and the Oxfordshire Federations of Women's Institutes and Bovs' Clubs were still resident in the attics of Barnett House, and their officers were friendly and available to deal with 'questioning students'.) In 1946–47, Violet Butler organised and supervised fieldwork for 90 students, in settlements, local authorities and voluntary organisations; because of the competition from other university courses, negotiation for places had to start six-to-nine months in advance. Some students were involved in research: for example, the Institute of Statistics'

<sup>13</sup> SC1/17, Oxford University Archives; also Violet Butler papers, VB box 42, Bodleian Special Collections.

<sup>14</sup> SC1/39, Oxford University Archives.

survey of the cost of living, and Dr Grünhut's study of the evacuation of school children. The course was structured into two parts examined separately but the award was dependent on passing both; Part I theory (with some practical visits and weekly 'groups' in clubs, community centres and so on), Part II supervised fieldwork (examined by notebooks of 'first hand observation'), and/or (but increasingly and) a thesis. Student numbers were high: 120 in total in the first year, mainly full time, including a handful on special short courses. This number included approximately 80 working in Oxford for Part I, the rest on supervised fieldwork in Oxford or elsewhere for Part II. During the year, 31 students took the Part I examinations, and all passed, six with distinctions; 27 took the Part II examinations, and again all passed, four with distinctions. Students came with a wide experience gained during the war years in the services, in government departments or through nursing, childcare, factory and farm work. Eight came from the Colonial Office or the British Council: from Cyprus, Trinidad, Nigeria, the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Tanganyika (now Tanzania). Two-thirds of the intake held government or local authority scholarships. Many went on to professional training as hospital almoners, childcare or psychiatric social workers, or in probation or personnel management.

The 1946-47 report sets a marker for the end of one era of the conception of Barnett House and its social work training, and the start of another. But where did Barnett House fit in the wider frame of social work training in the first half of the twentieth century? A JUCSS leaflet, Social Work as a Career, published in 1924 listed ten university courses, in Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Oxford, St Andrews, and Bedford College and the LSE in London. In her 1943 memorandum, 'Social Training – The study of Social Administration in Oxford', Butler listed 19 courses (as did Leubuscher in 1946) and included notes in an appendix: the LSE course was the largest in the country, Bristol the smallest; at Edinburgh, students attended the usual university lectures, supplemented by some special sessions; the Glasgow course was not formally part of the university but was taught mainly by university lecturers; and so on. A booklet issued by the Ministry of Labour and National Service in 1949 listed 22 courses (five of these in London). 15 Until the

<sup>15</sup> Social Work, number 39 in the 'Careers for Men and Women' series, Ministry of Labour and National Service.

university relaxed its entry requirements in 1936, social work training places in Oxford were limited. Barnett House fretted that these increasingly outdated requirements meant that many promising candidates were lost to other universities, but consoled itself with the claim that this meant smaller numbers but higher quality. As Violet Butler pointed out in her jubilee history, compared with other courses at the time Barnett House had more graduates, more men and more distinctions (Butler, 1964:43).

Butler's papers, as well as Barnett House's minute books, provide evidence for close contact with developments in social work training nationally and internationally. Violet Butler attended meetings of the national JUCSS, held termly at the LSE; Adams and Carlyle were listed in 1921 as Oxford representatives on the JUCSS Council. She drew heavily on JUCSS material in her teaching. Barnett House staff were closely involved in the three conferences run by the International Council on Social Welfare (ICSW), in Paris in 1928 (its founding event). Frankfurt-on-Main in 1932, and London in 1936. The papers illustrate discussions about social work and social work training widespread at the time. Elizabeth Macadam's summary of the first conference is worth quoting: 'What is the aim of social study and training? Does it aim at producing efficient capable workers well equipped with useful facts and technique, or is its object to send out men and women who have acquired some sound fundamental social principles as a foundation for their future work – principles which will stand the test of time and change? Or is it perhaps aimed at an equipment which will serve both ends?'16 We find the same discussions in Butler's course papers.

The last year of the old Barnett House was marked by an important conference on the training of social workers held at Nuffield College as part of Nuffield's role in postwar reconstruction. In the conference proceedings (Nuffield College, Marshall and Leubuscher, 1946), the warden's preface noted: 'The purpose of the Conference was to discuss, in view of the imminent extension of the social services, how far the various university social science departments, and the social work societies, who had together been responsible hitherto for the training of social workers, were agreed on training for social work, academic and practical, and how far their students could and should be employed in the new statutory social services...

[T]he social science departments...have been an experiment in a kind of learning, more common in the sciences than the arts, which essentially depends upon the fusion of theory and experience...[It is] fitting...that these papers should be published by Nuffield College, a foundation whose main purpose is to further "the study by co-operation between academic and non-academic persons of social problems". The overlap in interests revealed here between Barnett House and Nuffield College is striking.

The conference papers included a lengthy memorandum circulated beforehand, 'Training for social service as a branch of university education' (Leubuscher, 1946). Leubuscher noted that by 1945-46 there were 19 social work courses ('social science' and 'social study' were interchangeable labels) all fully absorbed into a university or a university college, with approximately 930 full-time students on roll, many with previous social work experience. The courses were typically two years for non-graduates and one year for graduates. leading to a certificate or a diploma. The curriculum usually included economics (including social economics), economic and/or social history, social administration, central and local government, ethics (or social philosophy, social ethics or social theory – the labels varied), psychology, public health and hygiene (or social biology), and the methods and principles of social work. Social work aspired to be a profession, but many job advertisements still preferred 'practical experience and common sense'. Leubuscher argued that universities should focus on the common elements in social service, and leave specialised training to professional bodies. A social science course should be 'designed to give students a grounding in the relevant basic subjects, to educate them in scientific methods of thinking, and to acquaint them with the working principles of social service'; it should not aim 'at supplying fully equipped social workers, but at preparing students for the problems which they will have to face in their future work by giving them the intellectual and spiritual tools wherewith to tackle their tasks'. Social science departments should be raised in status to the same level as other university departments in recognition of their role in developing social studies, including university research.

The opening address to the conference was given by Professor TH Marshall from the LSE (Marshall, 1946). It is intriguing for the sharp and combative stance he brought to the definition of social work and social services and to the role of social work and social

workers. First, he profoundly disagreed with Elizabeth Macadam's definition of social workers in *The Social Servant in the Making* (1945) as all those who battle against Beveridge's five 'giant evils' ('in the years before the war much time was wasted in the futile discussion of what exactly were and were not social services. Today, with the Beveridge Report in our hands, all this fumbling as to definition is at an end'). 'The "something in common" shared by all,' said Marshall, 'has become so nebulous that it has little practical value and certainly cannot serve as the foundation of a common basic training'. Second, he quoted and again strongly disagreed with MacIver's argument in *The contribution of sociology to social work* (1931) that the social worker is engaged in remedial work, focused on individuals, primarily the poor ('poverty complicates nearly every problem with which he deals...He is in fact called upon to provide many of those services for the poor which the well-to-do obtain from the members of other professions'). Social workers should be preventive and constructive as well as remedial, said Marshall, They should have a good knowledge of the statutory and voluntary services available, and make a sound social diagnosis of the situation affecting the problem, including the social context of neighbourhood and community. They should not aim to be experts in other professions, and other professionals such as doctors should not aim to be 'social specialists' (though 'it may be thought that they should give some attention to social studies'). If social workers provide services for the poor, as MacIver argued, then 'this is a situation which should be remedied by making genuine professional services available to the poor', in Marshall's view. He ended his address with this encouragement for a multidisciplinary approach to teaching: 'select some outstanding contemporary problems as examples and...show, in a series of lectures, how the various disciplines can be brought to bear on them, thus leading the students along the final stage of the journey from pure theory to the complex reality of life today and showing them how to make a scientific and objective examination of a controversial political issue.'

This is a far more upfront analytic approach to social work and social work training than anything emerging from Barnett House at this period. We do not know whether Butler or her colleagues were involved in this conference. But it is a sharp example of the differences in style between Barnett House and the more academic environment of Nuffield College.

## The Delegacy for Social Training

Barnett House's new home from 1936 on the corner of Beaumont Street and St John Street provided smaller premises, as Butler pointed out with some irritation – although considerably larger than 'the former housemaid's cupboard which was the first home of "social training" in the early days of Barnett House in Broad Street'. Violet Butler handed over to Leonard Barnes as director of the delegacy in January 1948. Unlike Butler, Barnes left little about social work or social work training in his archives and unpublished biography. But the delegacy left meticulous records in its minutes and in its annual reports published in the university's *Gazette*; and from 1948 the Barnett House Old Students Association published a Green Book every year which contained annual reports from the director as well as accounts of work by former students, and maintained continuity with the former Barnett House through its president, Violet Butler.

To what extent did the delegacy mark a new departure? The Barnett House name lived on in the delegacy, and the social work training expanded and diversified, with more staff and more activity. We take the 1948 Children Act, which required local authorities to set up children's committees and appoint children's officers, as the beginning 'marker' of the delegacy period, and the 1959 Younghusband Report as its end 'marker'. The years in between were a remarkable period in the changing postwar climate for welfare services, social work and training, and Barnett House was closely involved in these changes. The British National Conference on Social Welfare organised six national conferences on social work between 1948 and 1964, on the family, children and young people, communities and social change, people and work. Delegacy staff worked on the preparations for at least three of these conferences. The Ingleby Report was published in 1961, arguing that local authorities had a general duty to 'forestall the suffering of children through neglect in their own homes' and their first duty should be to 'assist the family in carrying out its proper functions' through preventive casework and meeting material needs. The emphasis on prevention with the family on the one hand, and the proper co-ordination of services on the other, is clear; and both foreshadow the push throughout the 1960s towards the Plowden Report (1967) on primary education and young children and their families and the Seebohm Report (1968) on the organisation of personal social services.

The Carnegie Trust's Report on the Employment and Training of Social Workers by Eileen Younghusband, published in 1947, laid down a guide to the development of the professions which came under the 'social work' umbrella. She was well qualified to produce the report – Younghusband was a student and later tutor at LSE before the war, a voluntary social worker and a justice of the peace (JP) in Stepney, east London. The social work courses which then existed across the UK were all different although there were common elements: her conclusions stressed consistency of syllabus, and argued for three types of workers for the field. Quality was crucial: 'the issue as to whether the Universities actually train Social Workers or only provide a course of less than degree standard in the social sciences has never been squarely faced' (Younghusband, 1947:para 90). This was certainly a just criticism of Oxford's course at that time: the important message was that it needed to develop a graduate level training course for senior staff across the professions.

The most urgent challenge facing Barnes concerned academic standards. An article in the Oxford Magazine in May 1954, 'Barnett House: the Delegacy for Social Training', was anxious to rebut the myths about 'girls who are going to be social workers' or 'noble women toiling in the slums' and the suggestions that Barnett House was not quite respectable academically and rather vague about 'social work'. (We are reminded of the comments in interviews with Margaret Fetherston and Margaret Herbertson, both Barnett House students in 1946, that they came to Oxford because their parents thought it was a safer environment than London or Edinburgh. And we should also remember Violet Markham's dismissive comment to Eileen Younghusband about the 'established inferiority' and the 'fundamental second rateness' of the Oxford delegacy.) The 'myths' were challenged with claims to academic rigour in admissions and examinations, as well as descriptions of course curriculum and practice and explanations of professional rigour in the differentiation of professions to which the course gave entry – industrial welfare, probation, medical social work, childcare and so on: it was 'a rigorous programme', 'carefully watched'. A push for all-graduate entry, and closer links with both central and local government to meet the expanding needs of the welfare state, marked the time of the delegacy. At the same time there was growing anxiety about the marginalisation of both students and staff from 'full Oxford life' by their lack of college attachments.

The priority to raise academic standards had two prongs. The first was for the delegacy to create posts and appoint its own staff rather than relying on the goodwill of college dons; for the first time, there was university money to make appointments. The academic expansion at this time has been described in Chapter 4. At the same time, social work posts were created. Dorothy Jackson was appointed director of practical work in November 1947. Una Cormack was appointed senior tutor in 1948. She had served as secretary to Nuffield College's Social Services Subcommittee, authored a paper<sup>17</sup> for The Practice of Social Work conference organised by the British Federation of Social Workers in 1946 (according to the organisers the first 'experimental' attempt to focus on the practical work supervision of students), and for many years served as a district secretary of the London Family Welfare Association – thus combining an academic background with practical social work experience. Also in 1948, Mary Hamersley, with a social science certificate from the University of London, was appointed as assistant supervisor of practical training. But the strains between practice and theory were still apparent. In 1957, the delegacy decided that Dorothy Jackson's post should be called 'Tutor in Social Work', and her salary put on the same scale as other tutors; by 1961, this had still not been achieved - a note in the October 1961 minutes of the then department's standing committee suggests this was because of her 'unqualified status'. 18 The post of senior tutor was not renewed after the probationary period; Una Cormack moved to the University of Exeter (she came back to speak at the annual reunion in 1962). There was no senior social work tutor until the arrival of Olive Stevenson in 1960.

The second prong in the strategy was to raise the academic standards of the curriculum and course intake. Social psychology was added, and its first tutor, Freeman, from the University of Pennsylvania, was appointed in the 1949–50 academic year. Vacation 'schools', that is, conferences or workshops, were organised throughout the life of the delegacy, drawing participants and speakers from national and local government, welfare services and industry: 'Welfare Service in the Welfare State' in July 1949, and 'Social Work and Social

<sup>17</sup> Cormack's paper, 'The Principles of Casework with Special Reference to Different Types of Social Work', is in SC1/39, Oxford University Archives. See Cormack (1945).

<sup>18</sup> SC2/6, Oxford University Archives.

Research' in July 1950 are examples. Research was increasingly part of the curriculum. Students arranged themselves into groups (formalised later into streams) according to their interests in delinquency, social medicine or industrial welfare.

Experiments in new fieldwork arrangements to raise standards started in 1948–49, with students sent to London for a block of childcare and family casework experience with the London Family Welfare Association, taking four weeks of the Hilary term and four weeks of vacation, allowing delegacy tutors to visit for occasional group meetings. This continued in the following year with a more organised format of seminars, discussion groups and case conferences embedded in the practice. Students commented that the theoretical and practical sides of the course were brought together more effectively 'on the job'. According to Violet Butler, this 'sandwiching principle' was one of the hallmarks of the Oxford course, and was later adopted elsewhere (Butler 1964:43). Barnett House students also benefited from local authorities keen to offer training under their children's officers following the 1946 Curtis Report into the death of a child in foster care.

Increasing the graduate intake was also part of the strategy, as was balancing the genders by recruiting more men. In 1948–49, at the start of Barnes' time at the helm, 90 students were registered for the Part I examinations (in the diploma in economic and political science and in public and social administration, and the certificate in public administration and in social training), and 53 second and third year students registered for Part II. Students were admitted from the Bahamas, Ceylon, Egypt, France, India, Iran, Jamaica, Nigeria, Palestine, Sierra Leone, Sudan, the USA and Yugoslavia, as well as the UK. 19 In 1956, new regulations were published by the university for a one-year graduate diploma in public and social administration. At this point the social work training and public administration certificates were discontinued. This, after 40 years, redefined the social work training begun in 1913, by upgrading it to graduate level and amalgamating it with social administration, and in effect, broke the link with local government officers, including social service staff, as most were not graduates and would therefore be ineligible for the new course.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Though the delegacy was only responsible for the Diploma in Public and Social Administration, the Certificate in Social Training and the Certificate in Public Administration.

<sup>20</sup> The relationship with Ruskin College and Plater College, the two adult education institutions linked to Barnett House since its earliest days, would continue as their graduates would be eligible to apply.



Students on the balcony at Barnett House, c1948

By 1960, when the delegacy was transformed into the Department of Social and Administrative Studies, the student figures were also transformed: of the 49 applicants admitted for the one year diploma, 43 were graduates, six non-graduates (chosen for 'special experience'); and the gender ratio was more or less equal – 27 men to 23 women. From the following year, numbers rose again with the arrival of the Home Office-sponsored childcare students and, a year later, probation students.

The Green Books of the Barnett House Old Students Association add more detail, drawing on Barnes' more informal 'annual reports' as well as accounts from former students now scattered all over the world writing of their work. Barnes wrote with a nice light touch about his visits to review education in Malaya, his hopes for 'a big new idea' in social work research, and the new social work plans at the end of the 1950s. The reports from old students tell us about relief work in Germany and work with refugees immediately after

the war; work in Israel, India, Cevlon, Uganda, Nigeria and the British Solomon Islands: setting up Women's Institute-style groups in Malaya and Kenva; a sanatorium in Denmark; a pioneer nursery in a Greek village; and, in the UK, community development, casework, psychiatric social work, welfare and labour management in industry, work in education departments, probation and work in borstals and prisons, adoption work, the 'changing face of childcare' and work in the new children's departments and community associations, variously in Hampshire, London, Essex, Scotland, Teesside and Lancashire. One former student writing in the early 1950s as a hospital almoner asked 'what's new since 1948' and the coming of the welfare state, and concluded that neither the work nor the principles had changed but public attitudes to welfare most certainly had. Another wrote from the psychology department in the University of Arkansas about the surprise of her first day in 1957 when the governor brought out the troops: 'if the governor had not interfered with the progress of integration for purely personal reasons, the admission of Negro pupils to the Central High School would not even have caused a ripple in public opinion' – a new take on a historic event.

The informality, or 'actuality', of the Green Book accounts is their strength; here we have social work, broadly interpreted, in action, with analysis and self-reflection by the actors. We find this kind of account also in The Social Services in Action: some Personal Experiences, the booklet edited by Butler and published in 1949 (though some of the papers in it were written during the war in 1944–45): wartime nurseries, evacuees and the blitz, social medicine, 'boys in trouble', industry and labour management, youth work, social research, education as a social service and an account of refugees in Teheran<sup>21</sup> as an example of international social service. Butler in her preface called these contributions 'a picture of work in the social services – at the pit's face, rather than in committee or lecture room', and goes on, 'their editor, in many years of warm interest in such work and workers, has constantly met the need for pictures, or analyses, such as these.' Characteristically, Butler is content to let 'pictures' tell their own story, but requires 'analysis' from the coal face

<sup>21</sup> By 'S. Tarnoschka – Countess – Housewife – Polish refugee', notes Butler in her copy. She adds that Tarnoschka was 'a Polish countess, who reached Barnett House as a haven of rest during the war, having from ages 18 to 22, pushed or *crawled* her way through half the frontiers of Europe, part of the time with her baby and Polish-RAF husband. Very intelligent – and ornamental. Now, I believe, peacefully married in Scotland.'

as well. We are reminded of Asa Briggs' 'pictures of welfare', and also the contrasting style of TH Marshall in the Nuffield conference. But these 'pictures' are also life in the raw, not at all like the 'upper class' image of 'Barnett House girls' sometimes portrayed at this period.

Where did Barnett House sit in the expansion of the welfare services and the welfare state following the second world war and the Beveridge Report? Social work nationally was paying more attention to its practice, and to training, and Barnett House was certainly familiar with these developments, as is evident in the reports from the delegacy and from students' own accounts in the Green Books. At the end of the 1950s, however, the mood in the delegacy seemed darker. It should have been in a good position to take advantage of the major new developments in welfare services and training proposed by the Younghusband Report (1959). But once again it found itself under threat. The story of the battle with the university's Committee on Radical Economies has already been told in Chapter 4, but episodes relevant to social work education are worth examining here.

The committee concluded that the delegacy's social work training, the diploma in public and social administration, was not a case for abolition.<sup>22</sup> Indeed 'its usefulness will tend to increase rather than the reverse', as it would cater for the 'top tier' of students in social administration, given the emphasis on graduates and the government's requirements for social services. In Annex A of the committee's report, the delegacy's former chairman, Mary Ogilvie, set out a powerful case for the importance of the delegacy's work. It is worth quoting in detail as it goes to the heart of the value of university education and the relationship with what is seen as vocational: 'The fundamental basis for asserting that the work of the Delegacy is valuable must be that it has to do with matters of very great public concern in which university education can make an important contribution. To argue that the work of the Delegacy is too vocational is an argument which could be applied elsewhere (training doctors, for example), but even though the Delegacy must be concerned in part with the practice and methods of social workers these are matters not entirely divorced from high-level thinking and social legislation. Moreover the Delegacy is and will be increasingly concerned

<sup>22</sup> Hebdomadal Council Papers, Vol 234, 17 September 1959–16 December 1959, Report of the Committee on Radical Economies, 6 November 1959, pp 359–76. Annex A is a memorandum by Mary Ogilvie, principal of St Anne's, as chairman of the delegates; Annex B is a memorandum by the Social Studies Board.

with the training of administrators and social researchers. Here it is clear there is a demand for persons trained in university disciplines. There is also a wide field as yet hardly touched for graduates already in industry who might return for a year to take the course before proceeding to higher administrative posts.'

Ogilvie also had something to sav about the isolation of the delegacy from the university mainstream, and its potential role in inter-disciplinary work as a research laboratory emphasising the role of sociology (both forward pointers to Halsey's interests in the 1960s): 'The Delegacy has always felt itself outside the main field of interest of the Social Studies Board which is quite properly concentrated on the main Honour Schools...It might, however, be argued that there is value to the faculty in having tutors thinking along the broader lines of political and social administration with their practical implications. Moreover the Delegacy is concerned with sociology, social psychology, industrial relations, criminology and local government in which the University has recently made appointments. We are a research laboratory for the relevance in the university of such subjects, and much more use could be made of us in this way. The Delegacy is in fact the one point at which the small amount of sociology done in the University makes contact with the other subjects that come under the Board of Studies...The Delegacy believes that the future lies not only in organising the work of the graduate diploma, but also in providing a centre for those working in the field of social and public administration and research. We are told that more research workers will be required and a number of our Diploma students ought to be able to proceed to graduate research.'

The Social Studies Board in a separate memorandum, reproduced as Annex B of the committee's report, echoed the point about isolation: "Barnett House" has been rather isolated, an isolation fostered in its early days by the feeling on the part of college tutors that it was largely concerned with the training of women social workers not up to Honour School standard and by general ignorance of its specialised work.' On admissions, all parties were agreed that the delegacy was on the way to an all-graduate entry, and the professional bodies had agreed the one-year course. The one difficulty remaining seemed to be catering for both British graduates and non-graduates from overseas, and the latter would be phased out. Staff had already supported the proposal for all-graduate entry.

The good news was conveyed in one laconic sentence in the

delegacy's report for 1958–59 that the university 'should continue to provide the teaching and the facilities previously provided by the delegacy'. The abolition of the delegacy and the change to the Department of Social and Administrative Studies took effect in 1960. Barnes presented a very upbeat set of proposals in his final two vears before retirement (see Chapter 4). The Home Office would provide ten sponsorships for students on the new 18-month childcare course, and fieldwork would be based in training centres in two of the London settlements in Bethnal Green, Oxford House and St Margaret's House (this was reported in *The Times* and in the Oxford Mail). This would provide a new professional course of training in childcare, and later probation, along the lines of the medical model of 'clinical' training. (There were also ideas about setting up a similar training course for specialists in industrial administration.) Olive Stevenson was appointed in 1960 to look after the new professional course. Barnes' five-year forward look 1962-67 - his final 'Ouinquennial Report' to the university before retirement<sup>23</sup> – was again upbeat; student figures included ten for social research, 20 for industrial relations, 20 for public administration and 20 for social work: a total of 70. Perhaps this was an attempt to get social work training a good score against his old protagonist Chester. Yet Barnes remained a curiously low-key and disengaged figure.<sup>24</sup> In the eyes of former students and staff, the social work training at the end of his era was seen as old-fashioned and patronising, lacking rigour or co-ordination – though this was before the arrival of Olive Stevenson. Perhaps Barnes' plans for a 'clinical' model of fieldwork training based on the settlements were the victim of bad timing. In the 1920s or 1930s this would have been a pioneering innovation. But by the 1960s, with the Younghusband Report and the growth of children's departments, the settlement movement was the past not the future.

We leave the last word in this chapter to the students of the first 50 years. Where did they go and what did they achieve? Here is a handful at random, many illustrated from the Green Books. Jean Marindin (1925), well known in the youth work field, was awarded the OBE in 1951 for 'services to the Festival of Britain'. Cicely Saunders (1944), later Dame Cicely, set up the hospice movement for the care of the dying. Chief SA Ojo (1944) was later awarded the CMG;

<sup>23</sup> SC2/1, Oxford University Archives.

<sup>24</sup> See John Dossett-Davies in Community Care, 29 March 1984, pp 18-20.

he wrote an article in the 1951 Green Book about Nigeria's new constitution, in which SL Akintola (a former student of the delegacy) served as minister of labour. Enid Harrison (1947) became a lecturer in social studies at Oueen's University, Belfast, and later a professor at Manchester University. Kajal Basu (1957) returned to community development, training refugee women in Bengal as village-level workers, and later became a lecturer at the University of Calcutta. Daisy Adler (1916–18), married JB Hobman, editor of the Westminster Gazette, and went on to become a best-selling author. Dina Kleines (1941), later Liebermann, studied at the LSE after leaving Barnett House; after the war she returned to Prague before emigrating to Israel in 1949, working as a social worker in Tel Aviv and then teaching in Tel Aviv in the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her obituary in 1967 referred to her as 'one of the pioneers of social work education' in Israel. Helen Crisp (1940) set up a rural broadcasting system for women in Australia. Margaret Fetherston (1946), later Wilkie, worked in the Solomon Islands, setting up women's education schemes. Margaret Herbertson (1946), later Pawley, had worked with the Special Operations Executive (SOE) during the second world war; she later worked in Malaya, setting up Women's Institutes in order to counter terrorism.<sup>25</sup> Many became almoners, probation officers, childcare officers and industrial relations managers in the UK. But many came from overseas, from postwar Europe, and from countries of the empire soon to gain independence, and made their mark across the world.<sup>26</sup> And in the last year of the delegacy, there were at least three students who went on to become well-known academics: Bleddyn Davies, later professor of social policy at the University of Kent and founder and director of the Personal Social Services Research Unit; Bob Leaper, later professor of social administration at the University of Exeter; and Juliet Cheetham, who went on to teach at Barnett House and later became professor and director of the Social Work Research Centre at Stirling.

<sup>25</sup> Both Margaret Pawley and Margaret Wilkie were interviewed for this book.

<sup>26</sup> See Roberts (2013) for another angle on Oxford's black students.



Olive Stevenson

## Social work and social action: 1962–2004

By 1962 and the retirement of Leonard Barnes, social work education in Barnett House was a much larger affair – with more staff, more students, more teaching and research. Social work staff had become recognised actors on the national and international stage. However, the background questions about social work education remained. What was special or unique about the Barnett House courses? What was the balance between specialisms and a generic approach to social work and social services that combined different approaches in the training? Was social work a profession? This chapter cannot provide a comprehensive survey; it is instead deliberately selective in its choice of examples over this period.

AH Halsey arrived as director of the Department of Social and Administrative Studies in October 1962. In terms of social work training, what did he inherit from the previous director, and what stamp did he want to give it?

Barnes had bequeathed the department a diploma in public and social administration with new appointments and an increasingly graduate intake. He had aimed to provide both a professional course in childcare and probation supported by the Home Office, using settlements in the East End of London as fieldwork training centres, and also a professional training recognised by the Institute of Personnel Management. Halsey on his arrival summed up 'the demand for professional people in the social services' and the department's response in his report in the 1962–63 Barnett House Old Students Association Green Book: 'It is not surprising...that in response to the increasingly variegated demand for social workers, child care and probation officers, industrial managers, social research workers and other kinds of social service professions the Department has been developing a wide range of variations within the rubric of the Diploma in Public and Social Administration'. But his vision was bolder. He was determined to raise this diploma hotchpotch to recognisably masters degree level, and embed it into the social sciences. This had been the case from the earliest days, when the certificate in social training was tucked under the wing of the diploma in economics and political science, but Halsey wanted to do this more deeply, and in particular, make the link with sociology (this was novel). The hallmark of the Barnett House social work training throughout Halsey's period was that the three academic disciplines of sociology, social psychology and social administration were taught separately in their own right: social work theory and practice were their application in the field. This was a major difference between Oxford and most other universities teaching social work, and emphasised in interviews with former staff and students for this book.

How this embedding was to be achieved was well expressed in Halsey's introduction to Violet Butler's Festschrift in 1976: 'Oxford has provided a new and effective base for the traditional link between sociology and the study of social problems'. For Halsey, social work was part of the social science disciplines, and his support for social work training and the social work tutors was strongly acknowledged throughout the interviews for this book. In a difficult meeting 'you could always wheel out Chelly'. He could be counted on to put the social work tutors' case to the university authorities: 'he would call us together and ask, "What do you want me to say?". Halsey's vision of intellectual coherence including social work, together with his practical support and very high-profile style, did much to create an

ethos within the department with which everyone could run - at least for 20 years or so.

In 1964, the department's jubilee year, Halsey spelt out the challenge in the jubilee volume of the Green Book, Barnett House 1914–1964: 'They read the social sciences at a gruelling pace to prepare for the diploma in one year. Roughly they divide into four groups: the first is destined for a wide variety of careers in the social welfare professions; the second will take up management posts in industry; the third aspires to research and teaching in sociology or social psychology, and the fourth is made up of students reading for eighteen months before going into the child care and probation services.' Medical social work was added by 1968, in response to a plea by Lord Wolfenden, the Home Office minister, to the vice-chancellor, recorded in the department's standing committee minutes. Halsey goes on: 'I am inclined to think that the demands put upon each of these four groups is increasingly such that the courses will have to be lengthened to two years, especially for those with a first degree outside the social sciences', and emphasises the importance of research for the department as 'a centre for sociological study'.

The 1964 jubilee was marked by a study course held in St Anne's College, with six lectures published as *The Family in Modern Society*, New Barnett Papers No.1. (These were intended to keep social workers 'abreast of current research based on scientific evidence if they are not to be misled by false assumptions and out of date theories'.) The lecturers included John and Elizabeth Newson (Child Development Research Unit in the University of Nottingham) speaking on their research, 'Patterns of discipline: the four year old child and his mother'; Kathleen Jones (Department of Social Administration in the University of Manchester) on 'Mental disorder and the family'; Nigel Walker (who had succeeded Max Grünhut as reader in criminology in the University of Oxford) on 'Criminology: the last ten years'; Una Cormack (who had worked at Nuffield College and at Barnett House before moving to the Department of Sociology at the University of Exeter) on 'Casework: the last fifty years'; and Elizabeth Irvine from the Tavistock Clinic on 'What is advanced casework?'. Olive Stevenson, who played the key role in organising the course, spoke on 'The challenge of family social work today'. There was nothing on personnel management or industrial relations.

In 1963–64, 54 students were admitted – 49 graduates and five non-graduates with special experience (local government officers

working in Oxford and some students from overseas). In 1966–67, the one-vear diploma in social and administrative studies (as it was then called) had three 'streams': the general diploma course, the professional training course in childcare or probation which led to the Home Office 'letter of recognition', and the industrial organisation course (remembered by former staff as popular with sportsmen keen to stay on in Oxford as well as with those moving into personnel management). Students on the general diploma course took four papers, completed visits of observation and a token month of fieldwork, and wrote a dissertation. Students on the professional training course added on six months, and took two additional examination papers in methods of social work. Julia Parker was admissions tutor, Olive Stevenson and Dorothy Jackson tutors in social work. The course started with an introductory week followed by some practical fieldwork before starting the term's lectures. This was the last year of the old one-year diploma and the 18-month professional course.

Throughout the 1960s the drive to upgrade the social work training was gathering pace. In his 1965–66 Green Book report, Halsey writes 'we turned our minds to devising a new graduate diploma to be read over two years and to include both professional training for the social welfare professions as well as academic training in the social sciences'. The professional bodies approved, and the first students to embark on this new two-year diploma in social and administrative studies were admitted in October 1967; all read four papers and presented a thesis for the final examination, as well as completing fieldwork; those who passed qualified as child care officers, probation officers or medical social workers (MSWs). There was also the possibility of switching to the BPhil in sociology during the first year for those more suited to a career in teaching or research; and vice versa for those more interested in professional social work (Halsey, 1967). Around this time the original diploma in economic and political science, started in 1909, came to an end, weakening the link with Ruskin and Plater colleges.1

The new two-year diploma introduced in 1967 marks a transitional solution to the problem of how to marry academic and social work teaching. The social work was still taught as an 'add-on', and

<sup>1</sup> See Chester (1986:140-43). Ruskin and Plater had provided many students for the diploma, particularly after the second world war. High flyers went on from the diploma to Oxford degrees, including George Woodcock, general secretary of the TUC 1960-69, who continued from Ruskin to gain a first in PPE.

examined separately by a different board, with a social work academic or social worker as external examiner. There were two social work papers, which together with two fieldwork reports (and the academic papers) made up the assessment leading to professional recognition by the Home Office or the Institute of Medical Social Workers. One paper covered explanatory theories related to social work (including sociology), the other dealt with social work philosophy and administration – values, methods and organisation. There was already discussion about possible revised structures. Should the present diploma be replaced by a BPhil in applied social studies? In the event, this was overtaken by the new masters degree. But whatever the future, the examination of professional competence in the existing diploma was unsatisfactory – as discussion in the department made clear. Should there be one paper or two? Were 'explanatory theories' already covered in the psychology and social pathology teaching? Was too much prominence, or too little, given to sociology? Did the separation between the academic and social work practice papers, and the separate timing of the two examinations, reflect a more fundamental split?

The examiners for the first cohort 1967–69 sent their report on the two papers on social work practice to staff and students.<sup>2</sup> Their comments were trenchant. Students had a 'poor grasp of the uses of sociology to social workers': they were 'vague about the sociological factors relevant to the understanding of unmarried mothers and problem families' or assumed that 'sociology equals practical external factors, e.g. not having enough money'. 'What about social class, cultural and class differences', and above all 'social role'? Some of the comments were what might be called standard examiner reportspeak – 'on the whole the answers were disappointing' – but others were more punchy. One examination question was: 'Should social workers ever strike?' The examiners commented briskly that no one attempted this question: 'Cowards! The era of social work strikes may not be far off!'

The report continued in a more measured tone, concluding there were 'some very satisfactory aspects of these papers...Miss Stevenson remarked that after marking social work papers in Oxford for eight years, this was the first time she felt really convinced that students were genuinely "generic" in their approach. There were many

<sup>2</sup> The report is in the authors' own archives.

instances of students writing excellent answers on subjects in which they are unlikely to specialise in the immediate future, e.g. intending probation officers wrote well about fostering and intending child care officers answered questions about hospitals...This evidence of a really "generic" approach is extremely encouraging in view of a possible "Seebohm" future of social work.' Barnett House was thus clearly teaching a 'generic' approach, rather than students working only in their specialisms; it taught to high standards and required rigorous analysis from its students; though the fault lines between academic work and fieldwork, theory and practice were already revealed.

What was the style of teaching social work in Barnett House at the end of the 1960s? Dorothy Jackson, the last of the old guard, retired in 1967; Olive Stevenson, Juliet Cheetham and Joan Smethurst carried the social work teaching until the appointments in 1968 of Michael Picardie, and David Millard (formerly a consultant psychiatrist at Rubery Hill Hospital in Birmingham) and Phil Evens in 1970 – the first two appointments to strengthen the medical and psychiatric side of the degree, the latter to develop community work teaching. David Millard took over the residential teaching, and developed this into a serious and well-respected option on the course, alongside his work on therapeutic communities combining psychological and sociological analysis. He was well known by students for continuing to practise professionally throughout his academic career: a model for combining practice and academia. Phil Evens' work in Barton is discussed later in this chapter.

Olive Stevenson has been acknowledged as 'the leading social work academic of her generation' (Ferguson, 2013).<sup>5</sup> From a start as 'assistant house mother' aged 17 in a children's home in Croyden, her career spanned social work practice in Devon, professor, researcher and consultant, moving from Barnett House (1960–75) to professorships at Keele (1975–83) and Nottingham (from 1984 to her retirement in 1994, though she continued working until 2010). Her arrival at Barnett House, with her local authority experience and contacts, set down a marker that the rapidly expanding children's departments had to provide both training and

<sup>3</sup> The Seebohm Report was published in July 1968. Like the 1959 Younghusband Report, it endorsed a generic approach to social work and social work teaching.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Picardie, psychologist, now actor and theatre writer.

<sup>5</sup> See the obituary of Olive Stevenson by Phyllida Parsloe, *The Guardian*, 10 October 2013.

employment. She immediately went to see Lucy Faithfull, head of the Children's Department in Oxford City Council (Niechcial, 2010:73); and they collaborated closely in developing the new course and ensuring it focused on children and their needs. These ideas were set out by Olive Stevenson in the Lucy Faithfull memorial lecture of 1997 (Stevenson, 1997). Barnes' plans at the end of the 1950s to upgrade settlements as 'professional' settings sank without trace. Settlements, as recorded in her memoir (Stevenson, 2013:73), 'were the past and we were the future' – the future, in her view, lay with the statutory services.

Olive Stevenson's interest focused on the use of psychoanalytic concepts in social work: psychodynamically informed social work practice, which uses the social worker's relationship with the service user – adult or child – as the key tool, and hence takes the learning how to create that relationship as the key task in social work teaching. Her article about the interaction between the ten-year-old girl whose foster placement has broken down and the childcare officer driving her to a residential home is a brilliant description and analysis of the conversation that developed in the car as a 'safe place' with the child wrapped in the worker's 'magic' car rug (Stevenson, 1963). Here the only tools are the car, the rug and the worker, using the long journey to make the transition between past and future.

Psychodynamic casework, however, was not the flavour of the month in the 1960s with the rediscovery of postwar poverty; it was attacked for ignoring the deprivation and discrimination that surrounded the lives of many clients; sociology was increasingly seen as the way forward and the task of social work should be the relief of poverty. Barbara Wootton, in her *Social Science and Social Pathology* (1959:268–297), famously quoted Virginia Woolf's description of social workers as 'tainted with the peculiar repulsiveness of those who dabble their fingers self-approvingly in the stuff of other people's souls'. Stevenson (2013:72–79) criticised Barbara Wootton for misunderstanding and misrepresenting the state of social work in Britain at the time, and Eileen Younghusband for being far too influenced by American ideas and failing to relate these sufficiently to realities of British social work: Clare Winnicott, with whom she had studied, and whom she invited to lecture at Barnett House in 1963

<sup>6</sup> See also Wootton in the House of Lords debate on the Younghusband Report, *Hansard*, HL Deb 17 February 1960 vol 221 cc73–91.



Barton Group June 1968: outing to Wicksteed Park

was quoted instead.<sup>7</sup> Stevenson in her published work wrote about the importance of understanding both the inner life of the child and the external social and economic realities, and other former lecturers in Barnett House have commented on the lack of polarisation at the time. Halsey himself supported the social workers; he has been described as definitely not of the 'Wootton anti-social work brigade', though he wrote a sympathetic piece on her and her work for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

What did Olive Stevenson think about the Barnett House she had joined? In her memoir (2013:50–52) she picked out four things which gave Barnett House 'a good name' at that time. First, the calibre of the students: 'lively and innovative young people'. Second, the quality of the academic teaching, drawing on so many able academics. Third, the focus on developing practice placements and supervisory skills and the processes involved in learning and teaching. And finally, her own invention of the weekly 'playgroups' run by students in Barton and Blackbird Leys, interwar and postwar peripheral housing estates on the edge of Oxford, characterised by much concentrated deprivation; later, some students confessed this was the first time they had met young children from a different background ('there were moments of anxiety, as when small boys peed from the roof, and so on').

<sup>7</sup> June Thoburn, later professor of social work at the University of East Anglia in Norwich, was a student at Barnett House in 1962–63 and recalls Winnicott lecturing. See Thoburn (2010), also Holman (2013:99–126).

Juliet Cheetham was appointed in 1965, in place of a local probation officer, Priscilla Tolkein, recruited part-time in 1963. After gaining a distinction in the Barnett House diploma in 1961 and taking the Home Office qualifying course, she had worked for five vears as a probation officer in Brixton in south London for the Inner London Probation Service. With her first-hand experience on the ground, as she recorded in her interview for this book, she soon began to work with law professor Rupert Cross (who asked her to talk to his law students about her experiences in Brixton and what it means when people are sentenced), and with the criminologists Nigel Walker (who established the Penal Research Unit in 1966), HLA Hart (the well-known legal philosopher, elected professor of jurisprudence at Oxford in 1952, author of The Concept of Law) and Roger Hood (who became reader in criminology in 1973 and took over the centre, renamed Centre for Criminological Research in 1976). Later on, with Roger Hood, she ran 'prison classes' in Oxford Prison for Barnett House social work students – with the prisoners as the 'tutors' and the tutors as 'umpires'. These classes lasted for about 20 years, and for Barnett House it was considered a coup to have such innovative practice run in collaboration with the highly respected academic end of the university. Juliet Cheetham's style was very interdisciplinary. In the course curriculum this was particularly demonstrated by the second year seminars she led on 'social problems', taught by a combination of academic and social work lecturers and bringing together research, policy and practice to focus on a range of individual problems and social issues.

The political and social climate was changing by the mid 1960s. According to a lecturer who had been a student under the previous regime, Barnett House had massively changed: the social sciences were driving policy, social work could effectively change people's lives, there was excitement, intellectual ferment and optimism about the capacity of the welfare state: 'students thought they could change the world'. The prewar debates about 'the statutory-voluntary relationship' seemed far away (Crossman, 1976; Bourdillon now Baber in the Barnett House Green Book 1964–65:7). How far was social work training in Barnett House affected by changes in social work and social policy at the national level? We can pick out four elements.

First, there was fresh thinking about the organisation of social work as the profession and practice expanded. The Younghusband Report of 1959, the Seebohm Report of 1968 and the Barclay Report

of 1982 all argued for generic social work and social work training, albeit with different emphases. Younghusband focused on different levels of worker and work skills; Seebohm supported a 'one door' social services department; Barclay proposed multidisciplinary 'patch-based' teams.<sup>8</sup> The debates between generic work and specialisation, and between centralisation and localism, were reflected in the teaching in Barnett House.

Second, there was a huge expansion in social research, which provided an important context for social work training in Barnett House. A drive for major government-led social policy action-research brought ideas from the United States about reforming education and welfare services, leading in the UK to the education priority area (EPA) programme and the community development projects (CDP) programme in the late 1960s and 1970s (see Chapter 12 for a fuller discussion of this research). Other authors based at Barnett House appeared on the course booklists: *Portrait of Social Work* by Barbara Rogers and Julia Dixon (later Parker), published in 1960, one of the first studies to analyse social services from a locality-based. multi-agency perspective following the raft of 'welfare state' legislation in the 1940s; Jean Packman's analysis of the varying provision of children's services in different local authorities, published in 1968; Social Service Teams: the Practitioner's View by Olive Stevenson and Phyllida Parsloe (1978), the first large-scale and comprehensive study of Seebohm-organised departments; and later on Jane Aldgate's studies of children in need, child welfare and safeguarding, and the implementation of the 1989 Children Act (Aldgate and Tunstill, 1995, 2000).

Third, there were national events which brought current thinking and practice into sharp focus for students. One was the founding of the *British Journal of Social Work* in 1971, the major social work journal with Olive Stevenson as the founding editor. Stevenson's first editorial robustly claims social work as a research-informed academic discipline – an important claim at the time: 'the Journal must speak for itself and justify – or fail to justify – its claim to be "a learned journal", comparable to those in other professions and academic disciplines...It is hoped to strike a balance in the Journal between three kinds of article. First it is our intention to publish research,

<sup>8</sup> See the 'Pinker-Hadley' debate between specialist and locality-based generic work in the Barclay Report (appendices A and B). Decentralisation experiments in the 1980s included East Sussex (Hadley, Dale and Sills, 1984), Normanton and Dinnington near Wakefeld, Walsall, and Islington, Hackney and Tower Hamlets in London (see Smith, T, 1989; Hadley and McGrath, 1980).

relevant to social work, designed and executed with proper regard for techniques of social research now available...If work claims to be "research" then it must be judged by rigorous standards. However, social work will always profit from a second category of writing – that of good description – even if it cannot claim statistical validity and can do no more than point up interesting issues for further study... Then thirdly there is always room for reflection and argument... There is a need to spend time looking at the trees (or even the leaves of the trees) with suitable scientific precision but there is also need to look at the wood, if we are not to lose our way.' The *British Journal of Social Work* can justify its claim to be a learned journal; the claim for social work as a research-informed academic discipline is still disputed.9

A national event which shocked both professionals and public was the killing of seven-year-old Maria Colwell by her stepfather in Brighton in 1973. Olive Stevenson was invited by the Department of Health and Social Security to serve on the inquiry. This was one of a series of national inquiries into child death or injury – Victoria Climbié (2000) and Peter Connelly or 'Baby P' (2007) are more recent examples. The Colwell Inquiry focused attention on failures of communication, and Stevenson wrote the section in the main report on inter-agency working (Stevenson, 2013:61–67); but she disagreed with the committee's interpretation of the evidence, and wrote a minority report about the complexities of social workers' roles and the deeply contentious issue of a child's separation from its parents, and questions of placements (at what age, with whom and with what contact). Colleagues say she was deeply shocked by her experience on this inquiry; child welfare, abuse, maltreatment and protection remained significant issues in her work throughout her career.

The fourth element at the national level was the creation in 1971 of the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW), marking a further step in the development of generic social work and training by amalgamating the previously separate professional bodies and establishing a new generic social work

<sup>9</sup> Barnett House staff working in the Centre for Evidence-Based Intervention (see Chapter 12) and running the evidence-based social intervention degree which took over from the social work degree in 2003, have close links with the Campbell and Cochrane Collaborations. These are international organisations which aim to collect robust information and conduct systematic reviews of research evidence on effectiveness. The former focuses on the social sciences - social work, social welfare, education, crime and justice, and more recently social development in developing countries; the latter focuses on health.

qualification, the certificate of qualification in social work (CQSW), with its first intake in 1971. Barnett House had already decided to start the new two-year masters degree with the CQSW qualification, the MSc in applied social studies/CQSW, in 1972; the old diploma closed. This remained the Barnett House degree until CCETSW made further changes in the professional qualification, replacing the CQSW by the diploma in social work (DipSW), with the first DipSW students graduating in 1991.

## The MSc in applied social studies

With the new degree in place, the department expanded. The mid 1970s to mid 1980s were seen later as the heyday of the social work education in Oxford. New staff were appointed following Olive Stevenson's departure to a chair at Keele: Jane Aldgate, Barbara Hudson and Pauline McDonnell all arrived in the mid 1970s. Jane Aldgate brought expertise with children and families, and developed close contacts with the Department of Health Inspectorate which led to substantial research. Pauline McDonnell combined the demanding role of fieldwork development officer with a scrupulous attention to the growing amount of legislation students had to have in their heads when in the field. Barbara Hudson, from a lecturership at the LSE and a background in psychiatric social work, brought a different speciality to the Barnett House mix – behavioural social work, critical thinking workshops and cognitive behavioural work. She later developed courses in social skills training, anger management and sex therapy (and helped James Sandham when a probation student to publish his dissertation on social skills work with sex offenders. Sandham was later appointed to the staff). She was editor of the British Journal of Social Work from 1987 to 1991.

The new masters degree introduced in 1972 was inspected by CCETSW for the first time in 1977 for its accreditation 'as a course leading to the professional certification of social workers'. In the papers provided for the inspection we have a snapshot of the degree's organisation, objectives, curriculum, field practice, and admission, supervision and examination arrangements. The document prepared for CCETSW, *Education for Social Work in the University of Oxford*, lists 12 members of staff teaching for the degree (11 were university lecturers), including a psychologist, sociologists, a social

administration lecturer, and seven social work tutors (one of whom was a fieldwork development officer responsible for organising practice placements). Halsey provided a introduction – the course 'continues to reflect the shifting and uncertain definition of what constitutes the professionalism of social work' – and stressed three things which made the Barnett House degree special (he might also have had in mind C Wright Mills' exhortation in The Sociological Imagination (Mills, 1959) about the task of the social scientist 'to translate personal troubles into public issues, and public issues into the terms of their human meaning for a variety of individuals'). First, the department's programme of research 'using the social sciences to investigate social conditions, social policy and the social services is held to be essential to the milieu in which the principles and practice of social work should be taught'. Second, the department had resisted 'ghetto tendencies'. It was not a stand-alone department of social work: its boundaries were 'permeable' in relation to the teaching and research in the rest of the social sciences, and sociology in particular. And third, it had a 'mixed intake', recognising 'the varied sources of motive and aptitude' for a social work career ('a continuity perhaps with the older "amateur" tradition") and the importance of work experience ('in addition to or even instead of academic experience'). This last was hardly novel for social work courses. But the first two highlight the best of Barnett House's contribution to social work training throughout this period, recognised by former students who still talk about the grasp of research and policy it gave to their practice.

The course was generic, aiming to train basic grade social workers ready for practice, but students could specialise through their choice of fieldwork placements and academic work: individual and family casework in local authority social services departments, the probation and after-care service, and the health services, as well as residential work and community work. In the second year, inter-disciplinary 'social problems' seminars took up a major part of the timetable. The topics here ranged from individual troubles to social issues: race relations; crime and the penal system; family breakdown; community breakdown; housing problems; chronic disability; drug abuse; mental disorders; unwanted pregnancy.

Both years included fieldwork practice – the 'playgroups' in the first year, residential placements at Christmas, and two long fieldwork placements in the second year – and it was this that provided the context for social work discussion, particularly in the first year

which was mainly taken up with the social sciences teaching. The playgroups were originally intended as opportunities for children to have sustained contact with friendly adults, and for students to observe child development and practise group work skills, each session followed by discussion with the social work tutor attached to the group. (A rather different gloss had been given by Halsey in his 1968 application to the Barnett Fund for 'a programme for maladjusted children run jointly with the Oxford City Children's Department in which tutors and students training for careers in child care are participating'.) By 1977 the weekly groups had expanded to include home visiting families in an army base, visiting in a geriatric hospital, working with young prisoners and with a youth group, and working in a welfare rights advice centre. Many of the social workers acting as fieldwork teachers were longstanding contacts of the department. Some settings were DHSS-funded as student units, linked to a specific number of courses and with a dedicated student unit supervisor, whose job was to maintain placements and supervise students. By 1977, only one settlement, Blackfriars, was still regularly used by Barnett House for placements.

So much for the bare bones of the 1977 CCETSW inspection papers. The actual inspection visit was to prove more challenging. Five students had just been referred by the examiners for further fieldwork; the fieldwork supervisors who had contributed their own assessments of the students challenged the decision as inaccurate and unfair, and the inspection was accompanied by student demonstrations and complaints. What the event crystallised was the difficulty of examining social work practice – quite a different matter from examining academic understanding, even with fieldwork assessors serving on the examination board and advising examiners. Should the field assessments or the examination room judgements hold the final say? Should the examination be 'an oral' as a matter of routine (immensely time-consuming), or only 'a viva' for students whose competence was in doubt? If examiners thought they had insufficient evidence to make a decision, should they ask for addi-

<sup>10</sup> The final meeting was an event to remember — with tutors' offices occupied, students demonstrating outside, and an agitated secretary bringing in the tea tripping over the carpet and upsetting the blackboard on to one of the inspectors, breaking his glasses. One participant recalls students and a fieldwork supervisor attempting to get into the meeting. Despite the media furore (the strike and boycott had reached the national newspapers), an assessor advising the examiners recorded his view of their 'scrupulous fairness and honesty' and the 'high standards' and 'high quality' of the work overall.

tional information – from the student or the fieldwork teacher or both? More fundamentally, how much knowledge should be required about social work theory and research in the fieldwork? A very thick file still exists from the following year on discussions within the department and with the university authorities about how to resolve some of these procedural and practical issues.

All this played into debates about social work as a profession and an academic discipline. The 1970s and 1980s were a period of increasing debate nationally about the nature of social work and its role, following local government reorganisation and the creation of social services departments, and against a background of increasing poverty and social and economic polarisation. To illustrate some of the tensions as they played out locally in Barnett House, we take the example of community work, perhaps always marginal to social work, but equally drawing on its roots in collective action and education.

#### Community work - social work or collective action?

The department viewed community work from a number of different angles. It was taught as one of the social work methods, the 'third method of social work' alongside casework and group work in the generic approach. This was spelt out by Younghusband in her 1959 report and by Pincus and Minahan in their textbook, Social work practice: theory and method, published in 1973 and widely adopted on social work training courses: the social worker was expected to have a repertoire of skills with individuals, groups and communities, to be deployed depending on the diagnosis and location of the problem; the 'system' may be the family, informal networks of friends and kin, or the formal institutions of church, school, workplace – or the interaction between all of these. 'Community work' here is defined in relation to social work. This was essentially the approach taken by Phil Evens (1976; 1974), when he wrote about 'the methods of intervention "continuum" and the essential ingredient of 'collective self-help'. Evens resigned his university lecturership and moved out of Barnett House in 1974 to run the Barton project for the department. (An ordained minister, he went on to serve in the Birmingham parish of St Edmund's Tyseley from 1989 to 1999, and published his last book in 1990 on the problems of the inner city, Despair and bope in the city.) Teresa Smith, after working with the national EPA project

at Red House in Denaby Main in the south Yorkshire coalfield, was appointed in 1975 to develop the community work teaching, and George Smith was also recruited following his research role in the EPA project and the larger-scale CDP programme, both headed by Halsey.

Community work was also taught as an approach and practice in its own right. Teresa Smith and George Smith were both interested in different types of community and their history, the historical sources of different approaches to community work, and the different intellectual 'baggage' of the words used – community development. community action, social action, community social work, community organisation, community education. Some overlapped – or conflicted - with social work more obviously than others. John Benington, director of one of the CDP projects, wrote of 'community' as an 'aerosol' spraved approvingly on institutions such as 'community policing' or 'community schools' (quoted in Smith and Smith, 1974:4). The Gulbenkian Foundation's enquiry into community work, chaired by Eileen Younghusband, then adviser to the National Institute of Social Work, published its report in 1968, Community Work and Social Change. The emphasis is on community and social change, power, participation, multi-agency co-ordination and social planning (Bell and Newby, 1971; Jacobs, 1961; Lees and Smith, 1975; Lukes, 1974; Specht, 1975; Stacey, 1969; Young and Willmott, 1957).

Barnett House's work corresponds well (if not neatly) to the three levels of work distinguished in the Gulbenkian Report: 'grass roots' or neighbourhood level (work with the Oxford youth clubs, or the Rose Hill Community Centre); local agency and inter-agency level (Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, Oxford Council of Social Service); and regional or national community planning (the use of the ORCC and the OCSS as 'pilots' for national bodies). There is clearly an echo of the split between defining problems in an area as 'pathological', and working with local people on their own terms.

But it was the vision set out in the Seebohm Report that marked the first attempt to bring community work into the mainstream of the professional welfare services – 'welfare through community', 'a community-oriented family service', and networks of 'reciprocal social relationships' as the basis for mutual aid (Seebohm, 1968:paras 474–501, 583). The Gulbenkian Foundation's second report, published in 1973, *Current Issues in Community Work*, was significant in that it added 'community action', which aimed

to challenge inequality and deprivation through claimants' unions. welfare rights, housing action and squatters' groups (Lapping, 1970; Leonard, 1975). Different styles of community work, reflecting different analyses of the underlying problems, are well illustrated by two contrasting studies used in the Barnett House teaching of the time. The first (Mitton and Morrison, 1972) is the story of the Notting Dale project, just down the road from Notting Hill, notorious for its race riots in 1958, and focuses on the community development process. The second (Bryant and Bryant, 1982) covers work in the 1970s in the Gorbals and Govanhill, highly disadvantaged areas of Glasgow with a long history of deprivation and working-class solidarity. It focuses on *community action* – local residents mobilising about housing conditions, organising a mass campaign to challenge the local authority – and on outcomes. The CDP's Inter-Project Report published in 1974 analysed the shift from 'social pathology' assumptions about inadequate or ill-informed neighbourhoods to a more 'structural' analysis of the distribution of services and employment. The 'community breakdown' option in the MSc course's social problems series (developed from the mid 1970s in parallel or rather counter to the 'individual breakdown' option) drew heavily on this research and policy literature, as well as experience on the ground. Students were expected to discuss different theories about community change and decline and their implications for policy and practice. This option ran successfully until the end of the MSc in applied social sciences and runs as an option in the MSc in evidence based intervention, with a stronger emphasis on how to measure the effectiveness of community-level interventions.

#### The Barton project

The EPA and CDP programmes were action research at the national level; but they led to action research at the local level in Halsey's 'backyard', with the development of the Barton project in one of the most disadvantaged housing estates on the edge of Oxford. This combined community work with student training for 20 years in Barton and still continues in the new century, with a new neighbourhood centre in Barton and the student unit transferred to Ruskin College. Following Phil Evens' appointment, there were plans to combine a fieldwork teaching unit with actual practice. Halsey reported to the



The Barton estate in 2010

department's standing committee in 1972 and 1973 on proposals to collaborate with the Oxford City Social Services Department and the Gulbenkian Foundation, which was to prove very supportive, as the project combined help for a deprived area with the foundation's continuing interest in pioneering developments in training for community work. CCETSW also showed interest as it was beginning to fund student units as an economical and effective way of providing well-supervised fieldwork experience for social work students. In its combination of direct service and training work, the project perhaps echoed earlier involvement by Barnett House in the community in the village surveys in the 1920s and with the Rose Hill Community Centre in the 1940s and 1950s.

The Barton estate had been labelled in the local press as 'the forgotten community' – it was on the 'wrong side' of Oxford's bypass, still largely comprised interwar prefabricated housing to cater for St Ebbes slum clearance in the centre of Oxford, with very minimal facilities, and had a reputation for problem families (Smith et al, 2010). The aims of the Barton project were described by Phil Evens (1976:58) as a 'new venture in community work'. Posts were funded by the DHSS and the Gulbenkian Foundation; the city council's Social Services Department provided a neighbourhood social

worker. Phil Evens started work in Barton in January 1974. The project worked with local groups to campaign for a health centre; and it built a new advice centre, opened in May 1975 by Oxford's Lord Mayor, Olive Gibbs, a well-known local figure. However, project staff could not agree on project aims or strategy. Student placements were slow to develop; and the review at the end of the first three years, 1974–76, agreed another round of funding up to 1980 only conditional on reaching a full complement of 800 'placement days'. Phil Evens left the project at this point. Brian Astin was appointed as student unit supervisor in October 1977, and stayed until 1986, when he was replaced by Michael Noble (1986–92).

The years from 1977 until the early 1990s saw the project expand. But there were considerable changes. First, there was a shift away from Evens' stance on the relationship between community work and social work ('there do not seem to be any major theoretical or professional boundaries between community work and social work'). Brian Astin and the new project team placed more emphasis on organising and campaigning, learning political awareness, confronting authority at local and indeed national level, and the development of people's skills and self-identity. Both the department and Ruskin College had been involved in this kind of activity.

Second, the information centre was increasingly seen as a way of meeting the need for welfare rights information and advice on the estate, providing a point of contact with residents ('a shop window'), and a place ('a listening post') where individual information could be linked to more collective action and earlier prevention (Astin, 1979).<sup>11</sup> Local contact was strengthened when a local resident, appointed as the centre secretary in 1976, began to develop a crucial role in welfare rights advice work.

Third, the transformation of individual problems into collective issues became a major objective. Individual queries to the information centre could develop into matters of wider local and even national significance, through investigation, campaigning and action. Staff and students represented individuals at tribunals; the Citizens Advice Bureau, after initial scepticism, directed people to the Barton project for help. The information centre ran training courses in welfare rights together with the CAB and the WEA. Students helped with

<sup>11</sup> This was similar to family advice centres, a model of accessible services ('the one door to knock on') much talked of nationally (Leissner, 1971).

surveying the need for welfare rights advice in Rose Hill, another disadvantaged estate, and by 1980 a centre was established there. Campaigns developed against the cuts in social security proposed in the government's supplementary benefits review. Project staff and students were involved in monitoring Oxford's 'Operation Major' in 1983, when social security officials and police set up a bogus 'sting' to arrest apparently fraudulent homeless claimants (Franey, 1983). Tensions between specialist individually focused welfare rights work on the one hand and collective approaches such as campaigning on the other led to splits in the project later on; for now, they were held in balance by a strong community work philosophy. Test cases taken all the way to the high court in London, for example over the use of single benefit payments, were the highest profile examples of this work, resulting in changes in the implementation of the benefit legislation, which meant thousands of claimants nationally becoming eligible for additional payments. By the mid 1980s the Barton project was seen as 'the nearest thing to a law centre in Oxford' – a reminder of the neighbourhood law centres at that time working in some of the most disadvantaged areas of the country.

The fourth change was the development of research. By the second half of the 1980s, the project's investigations had expanded into some pioneering research studies (see Chapter 12). The first example was *The Cutteslowe Health and Housing Audit: a community approach to defining health needs*, published in 1990 by the Health Audit Group (Munby and Noble, 1990). This grew out of student work with women's and residents' and tenants' groups in collaboration with the health authorities and the city council's Environmental Health Department. Students on placement in Barton were thus exposed to both local research as part of their work and national debates about the relationship between research and policy.

The story of the Barton project up to 1990 illustrates the tensions between individual and collective approaches to working with disadvantaged areas. But the notion of professionalisation was itself contentious. Should community work be seen as a profession at all? Harry Specht (1975) voiced his dismay at the state of UK community work at the Association of Community Workers' conference in 1974 and urged his audience to take their profession seriously rather than aspiring to be 'radicals'; but this was an unpopular message to those who wanted to be part of a social movement rather than a profession, in Specht's words. But was community work part of the social

work profession? Olive Stevenson, writing in 1976 about the development of social work itself as a profession, argued that community work was a sort of 'boundary extension' of social work, with many community workers ambivalent about the relationship (and, she suggested, 'anti-professional') and reflecting a debate 'fundamentally moral, political and ideological...more significant than mere similarities and differences of task' (Stevenson, 1976:133–4). CCETSW itself increasingly took this view.

#### **CCETSW** and the department

The foundation of CCETSW in 1971 was intended to introduce welcome clarity to the social work field by bringing together in one organisation the earlier separate professional bodies, and sorting out the different levels of social work training as envisaged by Eileen Younghusband into the certificate of qualification in social work (CQSW) and the lower level certificate of social service (CSS). Support for the social work profession was to be provided by publishing guidance on best practice throughout the 1970s and 1980s – much as the National Institute for Social Work had done in the 1960s. Some of this was welcome, some less so. But it also foreshadowed evertightening regulation of social work training over the next 30 years.

CCETSW's contact with Barnett House provides illustrations of this trend. There was a concern, much discussed in interviews for this book, at CCETSW's persistence in dictating what should be taught, how it should be taught and by whom – widely interpreted as a threat to university autonomy by an external body. Halsey joined senior professorial colleagues in the leading universities teaching social work in forming a group to resist such threats. Complaints to CCETSW led on more than one occasion to anxious enquiries as to whether the university was considering withdrawing from social work teaching – a move then viewed in government circles as a major loss. This frustration mounted throughout the 1980s and came to a head under Halsey's successor in the early 1990s.

Another concern involved black students and staff and the teaching of race relations. This was also widely discussed in interviews for this book. In the mid 1980s, good practice as defined by CCETSW required that all courses should include black tutors and teach antiracist practice. The directive was widely seen as interference in the

curriculum and in staffing, both jealously guarded as internal university matters. Barnett House staff felt labelled as 'endemically racist', although for some years the course had taught anti-discriminatory practice and an option on race relations. While achieving a 10% ethnic minority intake, it was still campaigning to attract more ethnic minority students. Juliet Cheetham was a member of the Commission for Racial Equality from 1977 to 1984 and wrote, with black colleagues, on social work with black families.

A different discussion concerned CCETSW's changing view about the place of community work in the social work profession. CCETSW Paper 8, The Teaching of Community Work, published in 1975, examined the teaching of community work 'appropriate to basic social work courses' and sought to define a core content and the contribution of social science disciplines. Interest in community work grew on social work courses (this was broadly defined, and included courses such as Swansea, recognised for the COSW although it only taught community work). However, by the end of the 1970s, CCETSW redefined its position: community work training, and therefore funding, should be restricted to what was considered relevant to social work. The community work teaching in Barnett House, and the placement provision in Barton, required careful description for CCETSW inspections. All, however, came through with flying colours. The department was relieved to be reassured that the outcome of the CCETSW review in 1988, which coincided with the Nairne Committee's review preceding Halsey's retirement, as well as a UGC review of the university, was positive (see Chapter 6). However, it created uncertainty at just the wrong moment.

How should the period from the 1960s to the 1990s be summarised? With hindsight, we can see this was the longest period of stability in social work teaching at Barnett House, with stable staffing, expanding numbers of students, a well-regarded degree, a solid foundation in the social sciences and a strong research base. The course took a broad approach to social work; the integration of theory and practice was more important than any particular theory. Halsey had embedded social work firmly in the social sciences and was a strong supporter. Former staff interviewed for the book praised this time 'as the good years', 'the heyday', when 'Barnett House trained research-minded social workers', and students went out into the world and 'really made a difference'. According to staff, students said the department taught them 'intellectual curiosity

– how to think, and how to use research. 'The social work course got better and better', with 'very bright students'. Staff felt encouraged by local authority heads of social services like Lucy Faithfull and Barbara Kahan (leaders of the city council Children's Department and the county council's Department of Social Services respectively). The consensus was that the 1970s and the 1980s were Barnett House's high point in social work – it was a very exciting place intellectually, bringing a research-based input into social work. Staff and students could see how to use social science research to inform moral and political questions: not to answer them, but to cool down some of the political debates. The government was putting money into social work training; social work was a well-paid job, and local authorities sponsored training places and then employed the students.

But during the 1980s there were signs of waning government support for social work. The government was keen to take probation training out of social work as well as out of the universities, following a report by David Coleman, a member of the department, commissioned by John Patten (Coleman, 1989). CCETSW was shifting social work training away from the universities to agency-based consortia. Halsey was due to retire. Social work staff were leaving. Barnett House social work in the 1990s would look rather different.

#### Against the tide and closure

Halsey's successor, Stein Ringen, arrived in the autumn of 1990. His first year was marked by continuing problems with CCETSW, now intent on new regulations leading to the diploma in social work (combining the old CQSW and the lower level CSS) and plans for a three-year degree course (which it later abandoned). Ringen acted fast – perhaps too fast, it was suggested. His criticisms of CCETSW (he was looking for 'a modification of its role') might well have been supported, but it was not clear what action might follow. He had raised with the vice-chancellor the view that the new CCETSW requirements were incompatible with university autonomy, and reported this to the department's standing committee in October 1991. But his next decision to close down the course was announced to his social work colleagues without consultation. The social work staff reacted with amazement ('we were in the middle of the sweat with CCETSW, registering the new diploma; he went off on his own,

no consultation, and then told us what he had done', as reported by one social work tutor in interview). Contact was immediately made with Barnett House's powerful friends – such as Lucy Faithfull, former head of Oxford's Children's Department, then in the House of Lords (who was reported as responding 'my dear, I will go into action today'). Over the Christmas vacation, with Ringen abroad, the case for the course was put together, and posted off to CCETSW, the Social Services Inspectorate and the Home Office. The vice-chancellor was 'besieged' with letters of objection. In the new year Ringen backed down, and wrote to the vice-chancellor that the regulations for the new degree did not in fact pose a problem. But objections continued to come in: a letter from the Department of Health Inspectorate in June 1992 confirmed strong support for the masters in applied social sciences, having heard it was under threat.

The course continued, but so did the tussles with CCETSW, and anxieties over placements and lack of research time for overburdened staff. James Sandham had been brought in as placement co-ordinator in 1989 ('a bed of nails') but Barnett House had to compete with two other courses in Oxford, one at Oxford Brookes University and one at Ruskin College. CCETSW's view that university social work tutors should confine themselves to teaching in the classroom, while practice supervisors should organise and teach on the placements, did not match up to the Barnett House view that sometimes supervisors themselves 'needed close supervision' and were perhaps not always up to the job. Tutors spent much time managing placements ('tutorials in the field' was a constant refrain), which led to resentment amongst the fieldwork agencies – 'what's so special about Barnett House?' Apparent 'preciousness' about academic theory and research-based practice may have rankled in the field.

The department suffered a major shock in 1994–96 – the loss of probation training and staff. This followed the 1994 Dews Report, *Review of Probation Officer Recruitment and Qualifying Training*, which took essentially the same line as the earlier Coleman Report recommending that probation training should be removed from universities and from social work training. This signalled a major change in ethos. Probation should be a service for the courts as part of the criminal justice system serving the victims of crime; criminals were 'offenders' not 'clients'; the primary role of probation officers was to reduce crime; individual responsibility rather than social problems was the focus. Training was to be based in probation

agencies, at NVQ level 4,<sup>12</sup> apart from in a number of specially vetted universities. There was political and academic outcry. However, in December 1995, the plans went ahead. Coleman restated his views in an article published in 1995: 'in order to become more effective and fully integrated into the criminal justice system, probation should cease to have its base in generic social work training'; and 'some of the more abstract material taught at universities does not help probation officers play a useful part in the criminal justice system and may make it more difficult for them to see the reduction of crime as their primary function'. This had the unfortunate consequence that a well-established and highly valued element in the course in his own institution was closed down.

For Barnett House, the loss of probation students and staff was severe. Probation had formed part of the social work training since the 1960s (and, in embryonic fashion, far earlier). Probation placements had been high quality, and fieldwork supervisors often the best trained and most challenging. With no probation students, the criminology lecturer Colin Roberts moved to the Probation Research Unit in the Centre for Criminological Research. The direct link was lost with criminology which had started with Max Grünhut in the 1940s.

The social work course continued. But the national debate about social work and social work training intensified. In 1997, the government set up a review of CCETSW itself, and the department added its views, at long last able to do so formally. Although a central regulatory body was essential, CCETSW was a poor candidate: too bureaucratic, administratively inefficient, with low academic standards and a fundamentally misguided view of partnership between agencies and academic bodies, which had raised severe boundary problems for admissions policy and the conduct of examinations. CCETSW was replaced in 2001 by the General Social Care Council.<sup>13</sup>

The final blow to social work training in Barnett House came with the decision to end the degree. It had survived external shocks, but

<sup>12</sup> National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 is equivalent to a foundation degree or a higher national diploma (HND); levels 6 and 7 are equivalent to undergraduate and graduate level. In effect this ruling defined probation training as vocational rather than part of higher education.

<sup>13</sup> A footnote to CCETSW's latter days concerns the Barton project and its student unit, which had moved into the new Barton Neighbourhood Centre in 1992 with Richard Bryant from Ruskin College as student unit supervisor in place of Michael Noble. However, financial crises followed as CCETSW reorganised social work training and withdrew funding from student units. The Barton unit was rescued by Ruskin College in 1998. Renamed the Oxon Practice Learning Centre, it continues to provide placements, thus illustrating 40 years of continuity and change.

a new combination of university and departmental reorganisations. financial crisis and a poor showing in research, left little option but to close. (The full story is recounted in Chapter 7.) It did not seem possible to run a social work degree providing teaching and fieldwork experience at recognisably graduate level while allowing tutors time for the research which the university required. CCETSW had a very narrow view of social work; social work tutors spoke about difficulties over fieldwork, and 'how social work had been deskilled and hived off to voluntary agencies, who appointed untrained people'. A report to government suggesting that graduate social work training provided no 'added value' confirmed the view that the Barnett House style of degree – research-led and embedded in the social sciences – was no longer in demand. 14 In the event, with the closure of this masters degree (the last cohort was 2002-2004), another was ready to start, with its first intake in 2003, continuing a Barnett House tradition of redefining itself for new fields. New masters degrees had been under discussion for some years, and now was the moment to act. This was the MSc in evidence-based social work (later renamed 'evidence-based social intervention'). Its first ten years have been a major success. It attracts international students in large numbers, and many stay on for DPhils. It has an interdisciplinary focus, and contributes new research and new thinking about the evidence base for social work and other psychosocial interventions; and it has strong backing from both the university and also national and international colleagues in the evidence-based field. But that is another story.

#### Ninety years of social work in Barnett House

How best to bring together the threads of 90 years of social work training in Barnett House, the continuities and discontinuities, from its earliest years outside the university through the years of the delegacy to full status as a graduate university department? Barnett House, and the course, might have closed down on a number of occasions; each time it survived through a combination of powerful

<sup>14</sup> One social services manager, however, remembers her pleasure in helping to supervise a series of Barnett House students on placement in community health teams in the 1990s: 'they brought a reflective eye to any situation, and their research projects provided calm analysis for these increasingly overworked teams. We were always sorry to see them go.'

friends, astute argument and a capacity for reinvention, with a dash of luck. Social work training started off from small beginnings with high hopes and shining optimism; it ended – held up as a 'flagship', still highly rated and in demand (Violet Butler would have been pleased) – when other courses like that at the LSE had already closed, or were struggling under the weight of bureaucracy. There is discontinuity in how social work was defined: in the early years, the boundaries between social work, social policy, health, adult education and even personnel management were more permeable; at the end, social workers were preoccupied with a much narrower set of issues, children at risk and high-profile child abuse cases. They were hemmed in by intensive scrutiny from formal agencies, the media and the general public, all by now far less well disposed, and often extremely hostile.

One major difference is sheer size, of numbers and funding. The social work course started as a small quasi-professional but unpaid effort, with Violet Butler as a dedicated volunteer and a few volunteer colleagues in the pre-university days. It ended as a large-scale, professional graduate degree in a social sciences department, regulated increasingly tightly by at least one external agency. The Violet Butler style of work was hugely labour-intensive; but the tasks to be juggled became even more complex at the end and equally labour-intensive. A second major difference is the volume of research. It became increasingly difficult to operate a national social work course in the context of a university pressing for international and world-leading status and the demands of the national research assessment exercises which had real financial consequences.

In her reflections on social work education at Barnett House at the 2004 reunion,<sup>15</sup> Juliet Cheetham estimated that well over 1,000 social work students had taken the courses founded by Halsey and Stevenson, 'the visionaries and architects of this extraordinary and successful chapter in the history of social work in Oxford'. We could give many examples, but here is a handful from the last 40 years or so. Mervin Grey Msaya (1996), now working in the strategy and commissioning team for children and young people's services in the London Borough of Lewisham; Edgar Moyo (1983), trustee of day care services for elderly people in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea in London; Christine Simm (1984), who runs

<sup>15</sup> Authors' own archives.

the Oxon Practice Learning Centre at Ruskin College; Frances Duffy (1985), service manager for children's centres in Oxfordshire: Marian Allsopp (1985), social worker and family therapist at the Warneford Hospital in Oxford, lecturer at Oxford Brookes University and author; Fr Maria Anthony SJ (1989), former community worker in the Sri Lankan tea estates and later provincial of the Jesuits in Sri Lanka; Liz Railton CBE (1978), who worked in a number of local authorities and was one of the first directors of children's services to be appointed in 2003, later programmes director at Together for Children providing support for children's centres; Andrew Cozens CBE (1981), who worked for the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), then the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), and was president of the Association of Directors of Social Services 2003-04; Don Brand MBE (1967), who worked in Oxfordshire and Kent social services departments for 20 years and then for the Department of Health's Social Services Inspectorate, and more recently for SCIE and the College of Social Work: Oliver Mills (1979), who worked in Kent's adult social care services, then for the LGA and SCIE. And finally, a handful of examples of the academics: Barbara Maughan (1967), professor of developmental psychopathology at the Institute of Psychiatry at King's College London; Nick Gould (1978), the first professor of social work at the University of Bath; Nigel Thomas (1976), professor of childhood and youth research in the school of social work at the University of Central Lancashire: Lucinda Platt (1994), professor of social policy at the LSE and director of the Millennium Cohort Study: Geraldine Macdonald (1977), professor of social work at Oueen's University, Belfast; Judith Phillips (1983), professor of gerontology at the University of Swansea; Heather Hamill (1995), Nuffield College fellow; June Thoburn (1962), professor of social work at the University of East Anglia. At least four current members of staff were former students: Lucie Cluver, Paul Montgomery, Michael Noble and Rebecca Surender.

These are examples of the students Juliet Cheetham had in mind – the grassroots workers and the 'leading practitioners, directors, chief executives, researchers, professors', who 'have gone on to make major contributions in a world where much good still requires to be done': the 'future leaders who would make their mark on welfare and the world'.

# Research perspectives



Violet Butler's study of village survey making, 1928

## Research at Barnett House: 1914–1965

Tracing the history of social research at Barnett House over 100 years is no easy task, whatever way we define 'research'. From small beginnings, when it was a largely implicit part of the overall enterprise – what academics did when they were not actually teaching – research has grown into a major, perhaps the most important, part of the Barnett House programme, as it has increasingly come to be defined as predominantly *funded research*. But this has not been a straightforward linear growth; rather one where rapid periods of growth have been followed by periods of almost equally sharp decline. One reason for this is that the focus of Barnett House research on issues of social and public concern has meant that it has been heavily affected by changes in the wider political and policy environment. There have also been some important changes in direction as new groups have emerged in Barnett House and others have moved on, and as new funding opportunities arose or new

research methods developed. Barnett House has a strong record as a pioneer of new methods or approaches to social research.

Faced with the very many different pieces of research covering a very wide field over the 100 years – since the millennium Barnett House has typically had some 25–35 different funded research projects at any one time and, at the time of writing, the website lists more than 70 recently completed or ongoing research studies – it would be impossible to review these in any detail. What we set out to do in this and the next chapter is to trace the overall development of research broadly defined, splitting the 100 years into five chronological phases. Within each of these periods we have traced the major research developments, illustrating these with significant research studies from the time. Inevitably this means we have to be selective, particularly in the most recent period. To keep these from being simply free-standing vignettes, we have used six main themes to explore the way that research was defined and developed in each period.

#### 1) The idea of 'research'

At the start of the centenary the term 'research' was, it seems, not widely used to cover what might now be thought as social research studies. Booth and Rowntree conducted 'surveys'; Violet Butler does not use the term research in her 1912 book, *Social Conditions in Oxford*, despite the collection of data and information from local people and the institutions she drew upon. Nor does she ever refer to her 'research design' or 'methodology'. It was a local survey, one of several on towns and cities in the UK at this period. The term 'researcher' emerged in the late nineteenth century to describe academics in the hard sciences who were not involved in teaching.

Just before the first world war, the precursor to the Medical Research Council (set up later in 1920) had been established to promote research on major illnesses. In 1915 the UK government established the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) to promote the war effort. But it was only after the war that the idea of research leading to policy and practice began to extend beyond these areas, particularly under the Haldane Committee's (1918) report on the machinery of government for the UK Ministry of Reconstruction. From these small, mainly scientific beginnings research as an explicit activity has come to be one of the dominant elements across UK higher education.

#### 2) Definition of subject matter

Barnett House's original remit was very wide-ranging, reflected for example in the topics covered in the Sidney Ball lecture series from the 1920s which included economics, statistics, management, international politics, rural problems, the English Poor Law, youth employment and music education in the first ten years. While these lectures continued to be wide-ranging until the 1980s, there are some continuities. Thus the very first Barnett House paper in 1917 was on the 'Problem of juvenile crime', and the Sidney Ball lecture in 2011 was on 'Evidence-based interventions in juvenile justice'. As social research, however described at the time, begins to emerge as an explicit activity, then there are questions about how the research topics and questions are defined (and by whom). This raises the issue of 'researchability' as topics move from general, often open-ended, enquiries to much more focused studies with increasingly precise research questions or objectives.

#### 3) Research design and research technology

At the outset 'research design' or method is rarely explicit; the problem or issue to be addressed is the principal driver. And the technology is simple – libraries, supplemented by other source material including administrative statistics as these became available, interviews or observations, pens, pencils and paper and the occasional typewriter. Research design and the available technologies go closely together. Thus while technologies do not drive research design as such, they make feasible what previously would have been impractical on any scale. The IBM punched card and tabulator developed in the interwar years made it possible for Samuel Stouffer to survey the attitudes of half a million US soldiers in the second world war (Ryan, 2010). Analysis of large-scale national administrative data systems only became possible once sufficient computing power had become widely available in the 1990s onwards.

#### 4) Research funding

If research is seen as that part of an academic's work when not teaching or carrying out administration, then additional funding is only required if this involves extra work or staff. Before the second world war, money could be raised from private funds; if larger amounts were required, then the most likely source was charities. (Even hard scientists relied on private sources; Lord Haldane's younger brother,

the chemist John Scott Haldane, had a substantial laboratory built on to Cherwell, his house in Linton Road from 1907.) As public funding for social research expanded after the second world war and particularly after the mid 1960s with the foundation of the UK Social Science Research Council (SSRC, later ESRC), then funded research becomes an increasingly important part of the overall programme of academic departments with the growth of staff dedicated full time to externally funded projects. In the process the balance swings to such an extent that the broader definition of research as an intrinsic part of the academic role gets squeezed to the margin by the emphasis on externally funded research.

#### 5) Research assessment

One major reason for this shift is the growing importance of formal external research assessment in the UK. This began tentatively in the late 1980s and by the mid 1990s had become a regular national assessment across all academic disciplines in all UK universities on a five-to-seven year cycle. The REF2014<sup>1</sup> produced nearly 2,000 separate submissions from across the UK higher education sector covering more than 50,000 research active staff and requiring more than 190,000 outputs to be assessed. As results in these national assessments were directly linked to the government research funds received by each university, the rewards and penalties imposed became major drivers, not just of university level policy but of individual departments responding to gains and losses in their standing. This is a far cry from the days when research funds were likely to be received for marginal or one-off efforts, and assessment would have been either the response to the study or the conventional academic iournal review.

### 6) Relationship between (social) research and the wider world

At the outset the principal reason for undertaking surveys or enquiries at Barnett House was, almost without exception, because the central figures wished to influence policy or practice, or at least public opinion locally or nationally. This was effectively built in to the purpose of setting up Barnett House in the first place 'to advance

<sup>1</sup> The earlier Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) was replaced by the Research Excellence Framework (REF) in 2014.

the systematic study of social and economic questions'. An academic peer group for the subject range that Barnett House encompassed hardly existed at this point, and if it had, Barnett House's purpose was not primarily to contribute to academic debate and theory. Leading figures at Barnett House were broadly supporters of a 'progressive' view (Sidney Ball describes himself, and by extension his close friend Phelps at Oriel, as 'seasoned progressives'<sup>2</sup>) that social improvements would come about through studying social issues and suggesting appropriate reforms or practical developments. Though not published until 1920, JB Bury's *The Idea of Progress* would have been their guide. If they actually saw this link between research, policy or practice as a subject of debate or at all problematic, it does not feature prominently in their discourse.

A hundred years later the links between research, policy and practice are at the centre of debate; first, in terms of whether academics *should* be involved in matters other than the generation of data, findings and theory or should leave others to draw any implications for policy and practice; and second, if they are to venture into this area, what are the appropriate links and what roles should they play as *academics*. Throughout its history Barnett House has trained practitioners and studied pressing social problems. But even in applied social research settings such as Barnett House, some academics argue strongly that their research should not necessarily have any practical import; the only audience that matters is the peer group of similarly inclined academics. Others have taken a much more applied stance, selecting issues and problems where changes in policy or practice might occur, or directly evaluating specific programmes.<sup>3</sup>

With the growth in external research funding there are now additional factors at work. Once UK government departments and charities shifted from the role of what Brian Kay (1979) termed acting as a dispassionate 'research patron' ('somebody ought to support this worthwhile study') to commissioning work that directly related to their policy interests, then the focus shifts to outcomes – findings, dissemination and impact on policy or practice. Charities, too, moved in the same direction, pressing the researchers they funded to produce punchy summaries of their results for a wider audience,

<sup>2</sup> Ball letter to Phelps, 1901, Oriel College archives. Phelps was then fellow at Oriel and later provost. He and Ball had been at school and college together.

<sup>3</sup> These themes were prominent in Ruth Lister's 2013 Sidney Ball lecture 'Social policy in action: speaking truth to power'.

for example the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's *Findings* series. This is reinforced by the research assessment mechanisms with their focus on 'esteem' (RAE2008) and 'impact' (REF 2014).

Barnett House has always operated in the middle ground between the more academic pole and the more applied. As the history of its research shows, this has not been a fixed position, but one that shifted as a result sometimes of internal and sometimes external pressure for change.

#### Social enquiry and social reconstruction: 1914-1945

Social enquiry was high on the list of the initial aims of Barnett House. Changes in society at the time encouraged such enquiry. The belief that social conditions were somehow ordained, right and unchangeable had weakened, and governments had gradually moved from intermittent control and regulation to defining and increasingly making some limited attempts to grant-aid providers or make direct provision itself. Thus by the late 1860s moves to regulate, proscribe and demolish insanitary housing had begun to be supplemented by building, on a very small scale, the first municipal housing. Clearly one major driver of this change was the rapid and unpredictable urbanisation of major towns and cities, and the linked changes in industrialisation, heightened by switches between boom and bust, which led to increased government involvement in 'solving problems'; hence the importance of new sources of data and new methods of data collection.

Platt (2003) in her history of the British Sociological Association (BSA) draws out the many different strands in this development. First was the collection of social data – for example, the decennial census from 1841 and the growth of administrative data sets. Thus from the early 1900s the Board of Education in its reports and annual statistics was beginning to present data for England and Wales based on the cumulative aggregation of returns from schools and local authorities, a method that was still in use for the rest of the twentieth century. But in addition to these dry statistical headcounts there were other more rounded and participative methods. These included

<sup>4</sup> St Martin's Cottages in Liverpool, 1869. This was in a part of Liverpool that had been dramatically affected by the influx of Irish immigrants following the potato famine.

the work of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science (NAPSS), where social surveys and analysis were discussed and examined for the better development of society. Goldman describes these conferences, from the 1850s onwards, and suggests that it was their success, perversely, which kept 'social science' outside the British universities until much later than their continental counterparts (Goldman, 1987; 2002). To survey at this time meant to observe or 'to find out about'; it was therefore a pursuit in principle open to anyone. Social science became the province of the intelligent liberal businessman, and the voluntary social reformer. We might place Booth, Rowntree and Violet Butler herself, with their detailed studies of local areas drawing on a range of information, in this strand. University men (and a few women) might be involved, but often in their private lives, not in their teaching or academic publications (Bulmer, Bales and Sklar, 1991). It was this spirit of 'engaging citizenship' that inspired Patrick Geddes in 1892 to open an observatory in Edinburgh, which he called the 'outlook tower' because he wanted visitors to have their outlook on the city changed by the experience of peering at their habitat from above. The Sociological Society, which started in 1904 in London, and its Sociological Review founded in 1908, originally edited by LT Hobhouse, were in the NAPSS tradition. But there were tensions between those like Geddes who wanted to practise 'observation in the concrete', and others who argued for 'the abstract and dialectical method'. Hobhouse was one of the theorists whose work influenced new liberal thinking in the early 1900s (Freeden, 1978). Gathering and analysing data about a local area, they argued, led to heightened and engaged citizenship, a fully functioning democracy – and one with minimal conflict, based on mutuality between social classes. This strand of participative observation and research is seen in Canon Barnett's work at Toynbee Hall (Leat, 1975), and regularly surfaces in research at Barnett House over the 100 years.

The first 'social enquiry' carried out at Barnett House was commissioned by its council in 1917.<sup>5</sup> A brief summary will give the flavour of the research approach of the time. The council agreed 'to appoint a committee to prepare for the council a report on the conditions of the children in the Elementary Schools in the City of Oxford, with reference a) to the employment of children out of

<sup>5</sup> At a meeting on 17 March 1917, SC1/2/2, Oxford University Archives.

school hours; b) to the extent and conditions under which labour certificates are granted in Oxford and the effect on the children; and c) to the provision for the entrance of schoolchildren into industry'. Carlyle was in charge of the research. He first engaged the co-operation of the education authority, and then set up a committee for the work, which included members of the City Education Committee, teachers in elementary schools, members of the trades council, employers, school managers, and Carlyle, Wells, Thackeray and Rogers from the Barnett House Council. In May, however, Carlyle had to report a minor setback; 'the cooperation of the education authority had been invited but cooperation of a formal character had been found to be impossible'. In October, Carlyle reported back: the Barnett House Council agreed to hold a public meeting on the results. A further study was put forward for the possible organisation and curriculum of a 'continuation school': that is, a club or institute where school leavers might continue their education in the evenings after work. This research was data collection and analysis of the simplest kind, which relied on volunteers and officials; it was designed to gather the evidence needed to argue for immediate changes to existing policy and practice.

This is an exemplar of a kind of pragmatic 'enquiry' which fits within the tradition of the NAPSS observations to further social reform, and also the idea that social enquiry and observation would transform the actors, the enquiry itself acting as an avenue to social reform. It required no funding, beyond the organising work of the secretary in collating the reports. Its results could be used directly to press the local education committee to change its current practice. It needed only a few weeks to finish. Its success depended on the seniority of the person, or group, reporting the conclusions – and the seniority and influence of those listening.

Almost immediately after the first world war, the national Ministry of Reconstruction published *Machinery of Government*, a report produced by a seven-strong committee headed by Lord Haldane (a senior Liberal, later Labour, politician), and including Robert Morant (who had overseen the 1902 Education Act), Beatrice Webb and the trade unionist and Labour MP JH Thomas. In the opening section the report argued strongly for the expansion of research and enquiry; not just in military fields but in all government departments 'better provision should be made for enquiry, research and reflection before policy is defined and put into operation' (Haldane Committee,

1918, para 14). Significantly, in the second section, after dispatching finance in five pages, and defence and external affairs in less than a page, the report moves to 'research and information' for the next 12 pages setting out an agenda and institutional structures for research and development. This covered not just government needs but 'research and intelligence for general use', and the importance of involving 'men of science' along the model of the Medical Research Committee (the precursor to the Medical Research Council), which was strongly recommended to broaden the focus away from immediate government needs. It reads like a progressive charter, though many of its ideas did not fully emerge until the mid 1960s.

Lord Bryce, who had opened Barnett House in 1914, picked up the same confident optimism in a letter to the master of Balliol in 1919: "...there has never been a time at which the systematic and impartial study of social and economic questions has been so urgent...We stand on the threshold of a new age.' He saw Oxford as well placed to take on this work 'and Barnett House...is an institution which is admirably suited to link research not only with the training of students...but also with the various practical movements for social and economic betterment in this and other societies'.6 The formation of the University Grants Committee in 1918 (originally proposed in 1904 by another committee chaired by Lord Haldane) provided a mechanism through which government funds were channelled to universities; it also potentially acted as a 'buffer' and, over time, institutionalised the research role for universities by building this element into their basic funding thus ensuring that research was embedded in higher education rather than in separate research institutes.

At this point, Barnett House was not formally part of the university, though it had very close links, and it only had access to limited funds. There were very few paid staff actually to carry out the work. The model adopted under Ball was like that of the Hull House settlement in Chicago where 'scientific study of the causes of poverty and dependence' carried out in 'close cooperation' with local people was used to press for reforms. Local enquiry was the bedrock for researchers in the early Barnett House days. Rigorous local enquiry, it was held, could inform national and even international problems, while at the same time having relevance and influence in the locality. The research on juvenile employment undertaken in the first world

<sup>6</sup> VB box 39, Bodleian Special Collections.

war was especially relevant while Barnett House was taken up with issues of continuing education. Once that issue faded, it searched for a new area of enquiry.

#### Rural initiatives in the 1920s

Rural decline was increasingly seen as a major problem; the very first Sidney Ball lecture in 1920 had featured this issue, and Plunkett, its author, and Adams, now the central figure at Barnett House, were both active in ways of reviving rural life to respond to changing circumstances. Adams built on his work carried out for the Carnegie UK Trust in 1915 on the poor state of rural libraries to initiate an 'experiment'. This is described in detail in Chapter 2; it absorbed the energies of Barnett House for several years. Adams laid out the scheme in a memorandum to Barnett House Council in 1919. It was open ended and ambitious: its express aim was extremely broad - to increase citizenship in the countryside in Oxfordshire, with the hope that if successful it could be replicated elsewhere. The idea was that the volunteer researchers would also be enthused by the experience to carry it forward. For the first time Barnett House Council was persuaded to seek external funding from Carnegie and the Plunkett Foundation to get the scheme running. However, it is worth recording that the funding was not for research infrastructure. analysis or 'researchers'. It was for a van for the use of volunteers. for an administrator, for library books and for transport costs. There were projects which developed as the scheme progressed – under a simple governance arrangement where Barnett House Council delegated authority to a rural committee of statutory and voluntary organisations, with a Barnett House secretariat. These 'sub schemes' - with their own aims - included rural libraries. They were designed to goad the county council to act by setting up a service they could hardly refuse to take on. The village survey experiment 'spin-off' project trained village teachers in survey making with the express purpose of getting whole villages (all social classes together) to take active control of their own affairs, by promoting transport, leisure, education and health through simple surveys developed by village schoolchildren. The issue was whether the scheme was viable and practical rather than 'effective' on some defined set of outcomes. Success was to be measured in terms of the activities generated

(numbers of books taken out of the library, numbers of adult education classes offered, numbers of students attended, and so on). In that sense there were affinities with some of the later 'action-research' projects run by Barnett House in the 1960s and 1970s, though these were largely aimed at tackling urban decline.

Adams, in his outline for these rural experiments, saw the role of organisations like Barnett House to be to pioneer initiatives and then, if successful, pass them on to other institutions with local authority or government support, a model of demonstration projects that underpinned many later initiatives. He was careful to build in local support through committees involving the local authority (Oxfordshire) and local groups.

The rural experiment was acclaimed in the locality, where success resulted in the opening of a large number of rural libraries in Oxfordshire, the employment by the county council of a librarian for the first time, the advent of a federation of village societies called the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, and the evidence of many thousand attendances at adult education classes across the county. On the wider stage, its success can be measured by the number of similar rural federations established in other counties, and across the world.

#### The Oxford Survey

By the 1930s focus had shifted back to urban problems, though Oxford, unlike many other cities hit by the economic depression, was still expanding with the growth of motor manufacturing and related industries and the rapid influx of workers from depressed parts of the country. Barnett House Council set up a survey committee 'to study the social and administrative changes now in progress in one small district'. It retained some very traditional techniques, and was firmly set in the Barnett House mould. It was not just a study in social policy; it was also seen as a way of encouraging active citizenship, designed to raise the consciousness of the researcher and improve the democratic process. For instance, once workers on the survey had found that very few local people asked how their rates were spent, they demanded more open local government, with open meetings and consultations (Peretz, 2011:111). This was hailed as a significant result from the research. Here is a clear instance of

the tensions inside the House between those who wanted to make immediate improvements at the local level and those who wanted to use the evidence to press for wider changes by influencing developments at county or national level.

The central methods for the survey were still those of a broadbased enquiry collecting information from a range of expert and local sources on the geographical social, economic and administrative conditions in Oxford, rather than anything more 'scientific' that might have made use of sampling techniques to collect information. These had already been developed by the statistician AL Bowley and used in surveys in four English towns published during the first world war. The Barnett House survey approach was to collect information from many sources using volunteers and then build this up in an overall report. But, in drawing on local census data for some parts of the study, the Oxford Survey had moved on from the rural programme in the 1920s. The Oxford Survey also analysed individual data drawn from the records of local employment exchanges and the major car factories to identify where new workers were coming from and their travel-to-work patterns. The section on 'industrial immigration' (from other parts of the UK) uses this data to present quite complex three-way tables showing the proportions of workers new to Oxford by age and gender as well as their region of origin.

This project was also supported by external funding: a £1,500 grant from the Rockefeller Foundation. The first volume was published in 1938. The second volume, published in 1940, overlapped with the emergence of Nuffield College as the new centre for social sciences, to which part of the Barnett House programme was to be transferred. A rather sour review of the first two volumes by Carr-Saunders in the *Economic Journal* pointed out that there were too many authors and too much descriptive material, and that Oxford was a special case rather than an example for other areas. The result of 'too many authors' was a fairly indigestible report, but it contains for the time advanced statistical methods including maps and diagrams about migration and employment thanks to the new Institute of Statistics and its first director, Jacob Marschak. The final volume was never completed, though a draft is in the Bodleian.8

<sup>7</sup> Though at the LSE, Bowley had strong connections with Oxford. He gave the Sidney Ball lecture in 1938, and became head of the Institute of Economics and Statistics at Oxford in 1940.

<sup>8</sup> Violet Butler papers, VB box 40, Bodleian Special Collections.

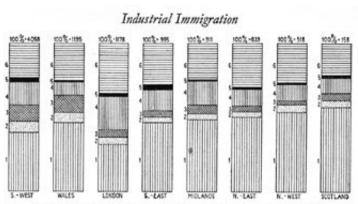


Fig. 23. 'Foreigners' in Oxford in July 1936. Percentages from Each Division according to Industry Entered. Key: 1. Motor; 2. Building, skilled; 3. Building, unskilled; 4. Distributive; 5. Omnibus service; 6. Others.

Marschak's analysis of labour movement from the rest of the UK into Oxford by industry and place of origin, 1936 (Bourdillon, 1940)

During the second world war, Barnett House Council put its research capability at the disposal of Nuffield College and the ambitious Nuffield College Social Reconstruction Survey (NCSRS). Barnett House was officially included in the NCSRS committee structures. Cole, then acting warden of Nuffield, asked it to take an active part in the social services and the local government subcommittees. In the social services subcommittee, 10 of the 12 members were also on Barnett House Council at the time. Barnett House undertook the local surveys for Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire under Claudine Bourdillon's leadership. There were 28 volunteer investigators, spread over England, Wales and Scotland, each with their own small teams of volunteer surveyors (which included WEA tutors and local government officials), and regular conferences in Oxford. The thorough coverage the committees gave to local government and voluntary agencies across the whole nation gives an insight into the interdependence of these two organs of citizenship in the 1940s. For Barnett House Council, this work cemented the extremely important part co-operation between voluntary and statutory workers played in its conception of the state. Barnett House sustained this view in the immediate postwar period, at a time when government energy was directed to building state and nationalised services, and the voluntary contribution risked being pushed to one side.

Beveridge himself commissioned the NCSRS to carry out a

research exercise. He had been asked by the wartime coalition government to report on the future of social security and national insurance<sup>9</sup> and wanted to collect information on the views of those directly affected. The questions he asked Cole and his mainly Barnett House team to answer included: users' wants and needs not fully met by existing schemes; local opinions and views about existing schemes and attitudes to contributions; and the problems and difficulties of social insurance and assistance as seen by social workers. Work on Beveridge's commission began in January 1942. It used a formula very like that used in Barnett House's Oxford Survey; gathering the investigators together, giving them guidance, and letting them carry out the study in their own way in their area. Once the reports came in further questions might be asked if necessary, and then the material assembled into both narrative and recommendations. For the Oxford Survey we only have the published reports – for the NCSRS we have everything that was sent to Oxford. The survey team drew up four detailed sheets of questions to be asked. These did not have to be asked in full – they were to provide a guide for the areas that should be covered. The summaries sent in by the NCSRS to Beveridge from across the country included detailed comments such as 'sickness benefit [should be] at least equal to unemployment benefit'; 'national insurance [should] stop being administered by profit making firms'; and 'we associate ourselves with the demand for a State medical service...though we deprecate the complete elimination of the voluntary principle'.10

The final example we consider from this period is the evacuation study. This was conducted in 1942–43, although not published until 1947. Drawing on a fund set up by St Edmund Hall undergraduates before the war, the project was run through Barnett House by a committee chaired by AB Emden, then principal of St Edmund Hall, with Adams and Max Grünhut, who was the overall director. Mrs Oppenheimer, with her practical experience of educational psychology, was to be the social investigator; the education authorities had approved the scheme with 'enthusiastic co-operation'. Barnett House students were the volunteer researchers, and unusually the

<sup>9</sup> The Beveridge Report, 1942.

<sup>10</sup> NCSRS papers, Nuffield College.

<sup>11</sup> Barnett House Study Group, London Children in War Time Oxford: a survey of the social and educational results of evacuation, OUP.

group is credited with the final publication. The objectives were to study the effects of the mass evacuation of children from London and other major cities under threat of bombing to safer outlying areas. Oxfordshire became a major reception area, not just for individual children and in many cases their families, but also for schools moving en bloc to new accommodation. There was a similar study in Cambridge.

The research plan and objectives were very different from anything Barnett House had attempted so far. This was clearly shaped by direct input from Max Grünhut; a systematic research design runs through the whole study and is fully spelt out at the start. The report notes that ideally it would have been better to have started before the war in the areas that were to be evacuated and then followed up in the reception areas. But it had to be a 'natural experiment', selecting a sample of children evacuated, matched with control groups of similar Oxfordshire children, and a sample of children who remained in east London. Post-hoc controls were applied to the sampled group of children aged 10–14, depending on whether they had been evacuated with siblings, with their family, or on their own, and the type of reception they moved into (foster families, hostels, etc). Families of origin, foster families, teachers and schools were also systematically studied by volunteers including Barnett House students, and the children took three formal intelligence tests (the Terman-Merrill IO, a picture vocabulary and Kohs block design) and completed schedules on their families and evacuation experience as well as free form essays on 'what they liked most' about their new area and 'what they missed'. Information on delinquency and other problems was also collected.

The report is an impressive model of careful research, pointing to the limitations of any findings that could be drawn from these samples, and sets the whole study against the overall background of mass evacuation. Its conclusions are measured and convincing, for example challenging the view of the Home Office that evacuation had resulted in increased delinquency by pointing to a similar increase in the first world war (when there was no significant evacuation) and the comparison between local children in Oxfordshire, the evacuees from east London and those who stayed put in London. The qualitative data from the children's essays were selectively drawn on to illustrate the children's capacity for mature observation of the differences between the Oxford environment and their home

environments, and to show the poignancy of some of the examples. The one major limitation of the study is that the technology to analyse such multivariate and multilevel data did not yet exist. But it is clearly a turning point from the prewar Barnett House studies, which assembled a broad swathe of information, to a much more focused enquiry designed to answer specific questions. It is much closer to a contemporary research study.

Two points should be kept in mind in assessing this period. First, Barnett House was not formally part of the university, though closely linked; and second, its staff were not researchers. Most were unpaid volunteers and, if they were paid, they only received token amounts until the Rockefeller grant in 1935. The objective was largely to bring about change through collecting information or by setting up pilot schemes rather than using state-of-the-art research or sampling methods. (It is clear that sampling methods were not used. despite close links with those in the vanguard of these developments such as Bowley.) But the impact of two German academic refugees. Jacob Marschak and Max Grünhut, on quantitative methods is very marked. The 1942 evacuation study was a modern research study in its design, sampling and style. The continuities from this early period are in subject matter, for example delinquency, local community studies, effects of employment on school-age pupils, all of which turn up more than once later in the story; and in the concern that research and development should make an impact on policy and practice.

#### Individual social research: 1946–1965

Barnes, the new director of social work training in the delegacy and from 1960 the first director of the new department, does not give 'research' a very prominent position in his reports, or indeed feature research projects that did take place on his watch, though he is often listed on their advisory or steering committees. His main focus as secretary of the delegacy was to develop the training. Research was not ignored; Barnes himself undertook research, but rather in the style of Barnett House in the 1930s, conducting enquiries into juvenile clubs in the UK and education facilities abroad. His annual reports faithfully list the research published by his staff in the delegacy, and his plan was to develop a substantial body of research.

But until the 1950s there does not appear to be very much activity on any scale. Barnes himself regrets this in his 1951 report and also underlines the diverse nature of the research. What tends to happen at the moment...is that we get mixed up with research projects which other people start...instead of starting and carrying through our own...Its great disadvantage is that it precludes us from canalizing our work in one continuous and sustained enquiry. This was to be a continuing problem, not just in the Barnes era; linking research initiatives to individual academic staff was a challenge as there was no necessary concentration or continuity, particularly in a department with such a wide range of academic interests.

Perhaps by chance there turned out to be a sequence of three similarly themed community studies linked to Barnett House over the next ten years, though only one strictly the work of a full-time Barnett House academic. The first was John Mogev's Family and Neighbourhood: Two Studies in Oxford (1956), which began in 1950. Mogey was not actually a member of Barnett House but was then the (only) university lecturer in sociology, based in the next building in Wellington Square. His predecessor, Donald Macrae, had quickly retreated to the LSE, perhaps driven out by his marginal position without any college attachment, no support and possibly no students. Mogey ran his research through Barnett House, perhaps because it had the necessary infrastructure, under the chairmanship of GDH Cole. This study was part of the wave of interest among sociologists in the effects of postwar changes on traditional urban working-class areas. The best-known studies are those of Michael Young and Peter Willmott in east London at the Institute of Community Studies they set up in 1953, with their first major publication, Family and Kinship in East London, published in 1957. Mogey's earlier study in Oxford examines the effects on a settled working-class area (St Ebbes) later subject to comprehensive redevelopment, and families from a similar background on the Barton estate, dating from the late 1930s and 1940s, on the city periphery. Technically it was a pilot study, partially financed by the Social Studies Board and a grant of £1,000 from the Nuffield Foundation, to compare and contrast these two workingclass communities. The methods used were essentially qualitative interviewing of families from randomly selected adjacent blocks of housing to uncover links between close neighbours. The findings

cover family structures, relationships, voluntary associations, the workplace, status and class. The conclusions compare and contrast the two areas pointing to the improved environment of the new estate, and the increased emphasis on the individual family ('a family centred society'), compared with the stronger community solidarity of the older St Ebbes area (a 'neighbourhood centred society').

Margaret Stacey's Tradition and Change: A Study of Banbury (1960) actually began in the late 1940s and was largely carried out while she was employed part-time in the Oxford Delegacy of Social Training, though it grew out of her work at the Extramural Department and the WEA classes she gave in Banbury where she lived. From 1950 it was administered and supported through Birmingham University. An initial grant from the WEA was later supplemented by money from the King George V Jubilee Trust and £2,000 from the Nuffield Foundation. Stacev later moved to Swansea; and then, after appointment as professor of sociology at Warwick in 1974, published a further study of Banbury, Power, Persistence and Change (Stacey and Batstone, 1975). Her co-author of this study, Eric Batstone, later moved to Barnett House. The first Banbury study is widely regarded as a classic of community studies in Britain from this period. It is much more ambitious than the Mogey research, placing itself firmly in the tradition of Booth, Rowntree and Bowley. The survey of 1,000 households used a standardised schedule; households were selected randomly from the Banbury electoral register, and the results machine-tabulated with occupational categories graded using the Hall-Jones scale, then the standard way of grading occupations in the UK. 13 These interviews were supplemented by interviews with the leaders of all formal organisations in the town, as well as detailed kinship studies.

The third study was carried out by Peter Collison, who was a full-time member of the Barnett House teaching staff. This was *The Cutteslowe Walls: A Study in Social Class* (1963). Unlike the two community studies discussed above, this focused on a specific event and its consequences. It was a form of natural experiment. In 1934 two very substantial walls were built to divide a new private estate in north Oxford with a largely professional or higher non-manual profile from a council housing area with predominantly skilled and

<sup>13</sup> Later replaced by the Hope-Goldthorpe scale developed as part of the Nuffield Social Mobility Study in the 1970s (see Chapter 12).



The first attempt to demolish the Cutteslowe walls in 1938. They were then rebuilt.

semi-skilled manual households. The walls were built across two existing streets requiring a substantial detour to get round. Despite local protests from the start, and many attempts to get the walls demolished, this occurred only in 1959. The research took place before and after demolition; with a random survey, conducted by Barnett House students, of householders in the area before the change and a follow-up interview after the event. The survey data was supplemented by historical detail on the original decision to build the walls, the attempts to get them demolished over the years, the ensuing legal actions in the courts plus interviews with key figures in the dispute. The research used local census and survey material to illustrate the sharp social segregation of the two areas, though the final survey revealed that social relations between the two areas improved after demolition and the house prices in the private section were unaffected (one of the fears behind the original move to construct the walls). The Cutteslowe Walls set the pattern for other sociological studies of local change and its consequences and is still widely quoted, recently in Danny Dorling's inaugural lecture as Halford Mackinder professor of geography at Oxford in 2014.

All three community studies had no very specific policy or practice message. They were charting and analysing community, family and social relationships in different and sometimes changing settings. All three cases, by using a range of research techniques, demonstrated the underlying complexities of these communities – information that needs to be taken into account in decisions affecting such areas. In that respect they differ from the Oxford Survey of the late 1930s – not just in using more 'scientific' techniques but also by being less policy heavy. In the last sense they were more in the tradition of Violet Butler's 1912 study of Oxford.

Barnes was successful in recruiting several rising academics during the 1950s in addition to Peter Collison and, earlier, Margaret Stacev. This substantially enhanced the research component. Though John Vaisey was only at Barnett House for a limited time (1956–60) teaching social history and, according to his entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Matthew, Harrison and Goldman, 2004) hating Oxford, it must have coincided with his pioneering work on The Costs of Education (published in 1958). Henri Tajfel was appointed to teach psychology in the same year, replacing Frank Freeman who returned to the United States, taking back a couple of blue period Picassos and a Modigliani but leaving other art treasures for his colleague, Peter Collison, to ship to him. Tajfel was clearly the next in line of distinctively one-off social psychologists who taught at Barnett House in the second half of the twentieth century. He remained there for the next ten years before becoming professor of social psychology at Bristol. He had grown up before the second world war, part of a Jewish family in Poland, but was studying in France when war broke out. Though arrested and imprisoned in Germany after the fall of France, he survived; but his family in Poland had been exterminated. Jerome Bruner, in an illuminating preface to a collection of Tajfel's essays (Human Groups and Social Categories, 1981) published just before Tajfel died, writes of the way Taifel 'like many of his contemporaries, witnessed and survived man's inhumanity to man' and 'wondered whether the work of the social sciences might have prevented such catastrophes from happening.' This led him to psychology, but in a social rather than an individual context, and to issues such as the development of group prejudice, the importance of social categorisation, stereotyping of other groups and ethnocentrism. He was also the central figure in creating a network of European social psychologists (which became

the European Association of Experimental Social Psychology). During his time at Oxford he carried out empirical research on these topics, for example measuring the development of national identity among school-age children in Oxford and other European cities. He was also very successful in raising external funds for his research, with large grants from the US National Science Foundation (NSF) in 1961 and the USAF Office for Scientific Research in 1962. Tajfel worked closely with Bruner, spending a year at Harvard with a return visit from Bruner to Barnett House in 1960.

While there was a growing volume of research in the 1950s with some relevance to the core activity of social work training, it was only at the end of the Barnes era that there was a research study directly related to social work. This was Jean Packman's Child Care: Needs and Numbers, published in 1968 but based on research between 1960 and 1964. A small grant from the Barnett Fund was followed by a grant from the Nuffield Foundation. Though initially linked to Barnett House, Jean Packman became a research fellow at Nuffield College which appears to have taken over the research. The question at issue was the sharp variations between the percentage of children in care in different authorities in England and Wales. The aim was to discover whether this variation could be explained by differences in underlying need. Selecting a stratified sample of authorities in England, data was sought on care numbers and facilities and interviews held with officials about their assessment of local needs. In addition a questionnaire was completed on every admission into care over a six-month period, resulting in 4,500 questionnaires from 42 local authorities. This was a very large data set for the time and the only facility then available was the massive Chilton Atlas computer near Harwell, making this almost certainly one of the earliest pieces of social work research to use complex large-scale survey analysis in the UK – as the computing power needed had only just come on stream. This was used to tease out the relationship between different types of need and childcare rates, showing that areas with higher mobility were more likely to generate care needs than more stable areas, but this explained only a small part of the variation. Other factors were the amount and quality of child care places available in the authority, suggesting that provision might be influencing policy and practice. The computer analysis was carried out by a Barnett House research student, Bleddyn Davies (later professor of social policy at Kent and the LSE). Davies was already developing the idea of 'territorial

justice' in his own research, which in the late 1990s was taken up in Tony Blair's 'community regeneration' policies – 'nobody should be seriously disadvantaged by where they live'.

In the first few years of the Halsey era, the same pattern of single research studies linked to particular academics continued, though the range and amount expanded. Tajfel and Collison were major contributors, but a new component was the growth of industrial relations studies linked initially to Joan Woodward and Alan Fox (Woodward's successor when she left to become professor of industrial relations at Imperial College). By the mid 1960s there were studies on the effects of redundancies at a British Aluminium rolling mill, and research for the Prices and Incomes Board on wage policy (Fox, 1990:229–30); industrial relations academics across Oxford were sufficiently numerous to be referred to as the 'Oxford Group'. Later a small research group was assessing the effects of the relocation of a food factory from Birmingham to Banbury<sup>14</sup> and undertaking research on the working arrangements at British Motor Holdings, the then motor manufacturer in Oxford, successor to Morris Motors.

In addition, the new director added his own research on cooperatives carried over from his Birmingham days (published as Ostergaard and Halsey, *Power in Cooperatives*, *A Study of Democratic Control in British Retail Societies*, 1965), his current research on university teachers, and a series of reports of national policies on education and training for the OECD. Olive Stevenson was working on family casework, and Julia Parker's book on social services (published as Rodgers and Dixon, *Portrait of social work: a study of social services in a Northern town*, 1960) added to the range.

The pace and volume of research certainly gathered way after the mid 1950s enough to fund a research student or assistant from time to time. Though there was some concentration first in community studies, then Tajfel's work on social categorisation and inter-group relations, and a focus on industrial relations studies, each piece of research was a single project depending solely on individual academics to take the initiative and if necessary raise funds to support either the data collection or research staff. This was the traditional model for research in a university social studies department at this period, though the industrial relations research was beginning to be defined as a 'research group', at least in the national media. Funds came from

<sup>14</sup> Funded with a grant from General Foods Corporation, the manufacturer of Bird's Custard.

many sources – charities, particularly the Nuffield Foundation, US grants (for Tajfel's research), and a mix of local authorities, industrial companies and in one case a trade union, with just one grant from government in the shape of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, which had expanded its coverage to include social research (for example, on management studies).

In many cases these were landmark studies – for example, the community studies – and widely accepted as such, or pioneering efforts; and, unlike the prewar period, they were often at the forefront of new techniques and methods of analysis made possible by increases in computing power. But in another respect the pattern was still very much the one that Barnes had worried over in the early 1950s, of a scatter across a wide range of topics rather than some more concentrated or sustained effort. This, of course, reflected the spread of interests across Barnett House, but it made a clear research identity and profile and any continuity difficult to achieve.

In reviewing these research studies from Barnett House's first 50 years, three features stand out. First, after a rather low key start in 1917, they drew increasingly on pioneering and innovative research methods, particularly from the 1930s onwards. Second, many of the studies were already recognisably in a research tradition that later came to be seen as a hallmark of Barnett House. This was the tradition of 'political arithmetic' that Halsey drew on for his largely quantitative approach to research: 'on the one hand it engages in the primary sociological task of describing and documenting the "state of society"; on the other hand it addresses itself to central social and political issues' (Halsey, Heath and Ridge, 1980:1). And third, almost from the start, there is close involvement in assessing changing social conditions at a local level, and drawing out the implications for policy and practice. In the rural project in the 1920s, introducing new developments was already a central part of the whole overall project. Under the labels of 'action research', social evaluation and social intervention, these all feature in the next chapter.



Research students in the Halsey room, 2006

# Research at Barnett House: 1965–2014

The previous ten years had seen a steady rise in the number of funded research studies at Barnett House, though the sources of funding were likely to be charities, industry and trade unions, and even overseas governments, but rarely the UK government itself. All that changed dramatically after 1965. The pressure for more systematic state funding of social research that had been building since the war was finally successful through the Heyworth Committee's recommendation in 1965 for central government to establish a dedicated social and economic research council. The necessary legislation had restructured the overall civil research council infrastructure and centralised this under the Department of Education

<sup>1</sup> For an account of the background to the Heyworth Committee on Social Studies and its deliberations, see King, D (1997).

<sup>2</sup> The Science and Technology Act 1965.

and Science (DES), in what was termed the 'science vote'.<sup>3</sup> The outcome carried some faint echoes of the ideas originally floated by the 1918 Haldane Committee: a central government department that would have overall responsibility for the research councils, with built-in representation from 'men of science' covering the full range of civil research.

This year, 1965, also saw the introduction of the Labour government's short-lived UK 'national plan' built around the confident belief that the growth prospects of the country could be radically transformed by the right mix of social, economic and industrial planning. Orchestrated by central government, the five-year national plan aimed to bring about a 25% increase in GDP over the plan period, well above the prevailing growth rate at the time. These developments and ideas would have been fully understood by the 'progressives' at Barnett House in its early days. The core belief was that social and economic policy (and practice) should be guided by careful social enquiry, analysis and planning as the way to generate improved social and economic conditions. The new Social Science Research Council (SSRC) was formally constituted at the end of 1965 under the chairmanship of Michael Young.

# 'Action research' for government: 1965–1978

Michael Young's idea of 'field testing' social policies before full implementation fitted closely with the prevailing climate of linking research to policy development. He had ensured that these ideas were built into the Plowden Report on primary education. Among its recommendations Plowden called for 'research to discover which of the developments in educational priority areas (EPAs) have the most constructive effects, so as to assist in planning the longer term programme to follow' (Plowden, 1967:para 177). This fitted closely with Halsey's idea, set out more programmatically in 1970 on 'social scientists and government' (Halsey, 1970). Halsey argued for the development of 'experimental social administration' or more

<sup>3</sup> Departmental responsibility for the 'science vote' has changed several times since 1965. In 2014 it came under the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, which includes universities and science in its portfolio.

<sup>4</sup> The plan was almost immediately undermined by the failure of growth to match up to the plan, and by the forced devaluation of sterling in 1966, which was followed by government austerity measures.

popularly 'action research' as a middle way between the full incorporation of social scientists into the government machine and being purely external and detached critics. 'The traditional political mode of reform has been to announce a nostrum which is held to be certain in its cure of social ills...The new idea acknowledges ignorance.' The 'laboratory is, by definition, natural and not experimental...the desired outcomes of action are often imprecisely defined...inputs are not completely controlled...Nevertheless the challenge to social scientists is irresistible...to become involved in the definition of social policy, its definition of ends, and its measurement of result' (Halsey, 1970:251). He wisely left himself an escape route: 'the historic role of the scientist as critic of the social order must set limits to his incorporation' by government.

While there had been some previous examples of pilot schemes linked to research and evaluation in the UK, there were very few in the social field and most were very small scale, not directly linked to central government. The nearest parallels were some of the special programmes and projects in the United States, part of the Kennedy/ Johnson administration's 'war on poverty' following the 1965 legislation that set up the Federal Office of Economic Opportunity. This had powers to fund local community action programmes (for example, the Head Start program), bypassing state government. Many of the US initiatives also had so-called 'evaluation clauses' where a proportion of the budget had to be used to monitor the action, though this was often part of a congressional attempt to curb and control federal expenditure.

In the EPA programme the action and research elements were from the start part of the Oxford team, formally employed by Barnett House, but working in each of the four selected areas. Each team developed its own local strategy, though with a common pattern laid down by Oxford for some of the research. In the Liverpool project, the aim was to stimulate educational activity in schools in ways that, the team argued, fitted the needs of inner city areas. This would demonstrate that exciting new work could develop here too, not just in leafy suburbs. This strategy has affinity with the rural initiatives promoted by Barnett House in the interwar period (see Chapters 2 and 11). The aim was to show that new schemes could be successful, well received and work in Liverpool 8. Liverpool and its spin-offs (Midwinter, 1972) very successfully promoted the idea that EPAs might have been the 'down-at-heel' Cinderellas of the Plowden

Report but could blossom into places for educational innovations that would attract and motivate teachers.

By contrast the project in the West Riding of Yorkshire focused on setting up and evaluating specific programmes for children. These were more formal experiments using control groups from other areas or in one case a randomised study. They covered preschool programmes, a reading scheme and the first educational home visiting programme for very young children (18–36 months) in the UK. Here the aim was to assess effectiveness in terms of language development or improved reading scores, though there were other more open-ended developments, such as establishing a local education centre. In other areas where action and research operated more at arm's length, evaluations were more formal or there were separate pieces of linked research; for example, in London there was research to measure how far areas designated as EPAs actually reached children who were 'deprived' (Barnes, 1975). This opened up the debate on whether 'area based' or 'individually targeted' interventions were the most effective way of tackling deprivation.

Oxford retained much tighter control over two components. First was the overall national baseline testing – a standardised collection of data across all four areas, drawing on census data, a programme testing all children in primary schools individually and sample surveys of teachers and parents. Such data did not routinely exist in any form at local level. The data was analysed, again using the faithful Chilton Atlas computer, to form the first comprehensive quantitative account of EPA areas nationally by Joan Payne (1974). Second, Oxford laid down a single national preschool experiment that randomly allocated a language development kit<sup>5</sup> to nurseries across each area with a standard programme of pre- and post-testing. The PLDK, developed in Nashville Tennessee, was selected in large part because of its portability (a large orange box with a manual and props); but it proved highly unpopular in the UK context as it clashed with accepted nursery methods yet had to be imposed to conform to the central randomised allocation procedure. This underlined that what was a research experiment from one perspective, was viewed as a real local resource from another.

The EPA programme was completed by 1972, though it left in place several developments that lasted for many years. In the case

<sup>5</sup> The Peabody Language Development Kit (PLDK).

of Liverpool this included a continuing organisation to promote EPA ideas, particularly in teacher training. The overall findings were presented in a single volume (Halsey, 1972b) with four further supporting volumes, published under the official HMSO imprint. Overall results were encapsulated under seven main conclusions, particularly the importance of 'pre-schooling as the outstandingly...effective device for raising educational standards' and the importance of the 'community school' in EPA areas. The EPA programme undoubtedly had a major national impact, feeding through into the Conservative government's 1972 white paper, Education: A Framework for Expansion, which generated some expansion in nursery education. Halsey was summoned to a meeting with Margaret Thatcher when she was secretary of state for education and science. The EPA project was also extensively covered in local and national media including featuring in a *Horizon* television programme, the BBC's flagship science documentary series. The success of the EPA programme was partly because it was the first of its kind, had a relatively simple organisational structure and operated at a time of continuing consensus. particularly about the importance of education and preschooling. Its seventh conclusion, that education 'can be no more than a part... of a comprehensive social movement towards community development...in a modern urban industrial society', heralded the move to the much larger programme of community development projects (CDP), but also the swing away from purely educational solutions to poverty and deprivation.

Community development projects were conceived as the next stage after EPA, with action teams working in designated areas to co-ordinate statutory social programmes and voluntary services more effectively, supplementing these where necessary with new local initiatives. Research teams were to monitor and evaluate the action to inform future policy. This neat model began to crack almost from the start as local teams were faced with areas affected by sharply rising unemployment, large-scale closures of industry and cutbacks in public provision. The close links with central government through the Home Office and its co-ordinating advisory committees, however sympathetic they were personally, had very little effect.

This was also a period of sharply increasing social polarisation, with growing industrial unrest, including the national miners' strikes in 1972 and in 1974. The 1974 strike led to the imposition of the 'three-day week' to reduce power consumption, and the defeat of the

government in the subsequent 1974 general election. This polarisation had been encapsulated for CDP in a speech made by Sir Keith Joseph, then secretary of state for social services in 1972, which focused on the role of poor parenting as a principal cause of the 'cycle of deprivation'. The long-standing distinction between 'pathological' and 'structural' explanations of poverty and deprivation that had more or less peacefully coexisted in the EPA project, were now seen to be in fundamental opposition. Poor parenting could hardly be the explanation for rapidly rising unemployment and large-scale industrial closures.

The original CDP model was seen to be 'pathological', where the solution was deemed to lie in better education and greater co-ordination of social services. Structural explanations fitted much better with the severe problems now faced by local areas, and this was forcefully argued in the joint inter-project report (CDP, 1974). Local teams might be powerless to make much impression on these problems; but they could chart and analyse these changes to place them effectively in local and national debate.

Three of the twelve research teams attached to the local CDP projects were run through Barnett House. The Liverpool project stuck closely to the original aims of improving service co-ordination through a mix of new institutions such as a multi-services centre and a complex network of residents' and tenants' groups to act as a forum for local concerns. The project area adjacent to the Liverpool docks was very badly affected by industrial closures, crumbling local authority housing and a very poor environment. These issues were taken up by local groups and powerfully reflected in campaigns by the local newspaper, the Scottie Press, that had been launched by the CDP team. The research team's work was to describe in detail how the action team had grappled with these rapidly changing circumstances working closely with local groups; these groups forcibly confronted the local authority with rent strikes, blocked major roads after street accidents and, in one case, put up candidates to fight local elections. A plague of rats was also a major local issue, with dead specimens likely to be dumped in front of officials attending consultation meetings with residents. As the project director wrote in response to a formal complaint about the actions of his staff, 'the amalgam of community worker, local resident and politically conscious elector has rarely, if ever, existed as now in the deprived inner city areas' (Topping and Smith, 1977:101).



An early Steve Bell cartoon on the bureaucratic hurdles detailed in *People in Paper Chains*, Birmingham CDP, 1977

The other two projects linked to Barnett House (Birmingham and Newham), both adopted a structural approach, taking up issues such as housing ownership where local residents had shorthold leases, immigration where many local people in Birmingham were directly affected by the tightening of entry conditions to the UK, and in both areas major industrial change. In Birmingham there was rapid contraction or closure of car plants as well as bus and railway carriage works, which had been the core traditional industry in the city; and in Newham, the area was affected by the closure of the docks in east London and the related industrial and processing plants as these relocated down river.<sup>6</sup>

The shift in analysis towards more structural issues was picked up in the government's 1977 white paper, *Policies for the Inner Cities*, drawing on evidence from the CDP programme and other inner city studies commissioned by government during the 1970s. But the device of action research in quite this form, seen very

<sup>6</sup> Barnett House published separate reports on all these issues titled, respectively, Leasehold Loopholes, People in Paper Chains, Driven on Wheels and Canning Town to North Woolwich: The Costs of Industrial Change.

successfully in EPA and much more problematically in CDP, was not attempted again on any scale by a UK government for another 20 years. Both EPA and CDP added substantially to the overall size of Barnett House but as they were largely self-contained groups working outside Oxford, their impact on the department in Oxford was limited.

Olive Stevenson's time as a Whitehall adviser generated a series of commissioned research studies on her return to Oxford. The first of these examined the widely believed notion of 'voluntary unemployment' by studying a sample of long-term or chronically unemployed men in three areas of England. The sample was drawn from official employment records; survey data collected directly by face-to-face interview was linked to employment history and other centrally held data. The results, published as Men Out of Work (Hill et al, 1973), suggested that there was very little evidence to support the idea of widespread voluntary unemployment, as motivation had only a very small explanatory role, except possibly in the area with very high employment rates. This study was followed by a small 'actionresearch' venture to test whether social work support might promote a return to work, as well as Stevenson's own work on the relationship between services providing income support and social services (Stevenson, 1973).

Local authority social services departments that had been set up from 1971 following the Seebohm Report (1968) and the resulting Social Services Act 1970 were the focus of another major study (Stevenson and Parsloe, 1978). This topic was closely linked to the social work course at Barnett House, with students on secondment from social services departments and those likely to be employed there. The study made use of a range of research techniques to describe and analyse the way these new institutions were operating - interviews with social workers in 31 area teams, direct observation of field teams in action, focus groups, questionnaire surveys of social work students followed up into their new posts, and a study in six local authorities of how social workers handled financial problems through the use of Section 1 money<sup>7</sup> and exceptional needs grants<sup>8</sup>. This threw up many major issues about social workers' tasks and training, and inter-agency relationships and arrangements – the nub of multi-agency working.

<sup>7</sup> Payments under the preventive regulations of Section 1 of the 1963 Children and Young Persons Act.

<sup>8</sup> Exceptional needs grants were discretionary one-off payments in cases of high need.

The EPA, CDP and Stevenson research studies were all dependent on central government funding and support. This allowed a degree of access to central and local government records and internal policy debate that would not normally have been granted to outside research teams. They generated largely self-contained research groups on a much larger scale than anything that had occurred at Barnett House since the war. However, they were financed by time-limited research grants and were therefore hard to sustain.

### Social research in a cold climate: 1978–1999

The Rothschild Report on social research in government in 1981 had effectively put an end to the action research ventures of the previous decade. It would have taken an exceptionally bold move within the civil service to have bucked this trend. The SSRC/ESRC had its wings severely clipped at the same time. Research at Barnett House did not die out, but reverted to the earlier pattern before the sudden expansion in the late 1960s, where funded research arose from individual academic interests, rather than a continuous departmental function. The research groups that flourished in the late 1970s and early 1980s were the Oxford social mobility project based in Nuffield College and the Oxford Preschool Research Group (OPRG) based in Educational Studies. Both projects had significant contributions from members of Barnett House.

The origins of the social mobility study go back to the late 1960s when SSRC funding was first obtained. The aim was to replicate and update the seminal study of British social structure by David Glass and colleagues at the LSE 20 years before. It was also an opportunity to focus Oxford sociology on a major project and strengthen its quantitative base, particularly at Nuffield where the British election series of Butler and Stokes was already in operation. Blau and Duncan's 1969 study of American occupational structure was highly influential both conceptually and technically and Duncan was a visiting fellow at Nuffield in the early stages of the project. The arrival of John Goldthorpe as a Nuffield official fellow strengthened the role of social class in the analysis of social mobility. A major national survey of the educational and occupational history of 10,000 men living in England and Wales took place in 1972. Two book-length publications drew on findings from the analysis of this data: *Origins* 

and Destinations: Family, Class and Education in Modern Britain by Halsey, Heath and Ridge (1980) (at that time all three authors were members of Barnett House) and Goldthorpe's (1980) Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain.

The Halsey, Heath and Ridge volume is squarely within the Barnett House tradition of 'political arithmetic': the question in its most general and deceptively simple form is whether education can change society. The authors used the data from the national survey to answer a number of crucial questions about British education and its development from the 1930s to the end of the 1960s. They examined the progress that had been made towards equality of opportunity and meritocracy, and evaluated the workings of the 'tripartite system' of grammar, technical and secondary modern schools and of the private school sector to estimate how far the choice of school affected a pupil's subsequent educational attainment. Some of the conclusions are pessimistic. The 1944 Education Act brought the UK no nearer meritocracy or equality of opportunity, and comprehensive schools were likely to have little impact on these goals. The tripartite system, with its inflexibility, created great injustices for children of 'borderline' ability. Nevertheless, the authors argue that goals such as the reduction of class inequalities are not inevitably beyond reform.

The Goldthorpe volume is a return to the tradition of analysing social mobility in relation to class structure and assessing the extent that class inequality plays in life chances and, ultimately, considering the implications for transformation and class conflict. As with the Halsey, Heath and Ridge volume, Goldthorpe (1980:251, 276) was pessimistic about the openness of British society: 'From the analyses that we have reported...it is plain that British society today is still very far removed from the goal of openness...Egalitarians do not in fact have any easy options available to them.'9

Jerome Bruner, who had become the Watts professor of psychology at Oxford in 1975, had set up the Oxford Preschool Research Group (OPRG), a five-year collaborative research programme funded by the SSRC (1975–79). Though this was based at the Educational Studies Department it involved several Barnett House researchers, particularly Kathy Sylva and Teresa Smith who each conducted significant parts of the study, Kathy Sylva on children's learning

<sup>9</sup> We are indebted to Kenneth Macdonald for material in this section.

strategies (Sylva, Roy and Painter, 1980) and Teresa Smith on parents' involvement in their children's learning (Smith, 1980). Teresa Smith studied a range of family centres in the late 1980s (many of these later became children's centres), publishing one of the earliest studies of these institutions (Smith, 1996). Since the 1980s Sylva and Smith have worked together with research colleagues on a series of evaluations of programmes for very young children.

After the EPA and CDP projects, researchers from the Social Evaluation Unit, including Pauline Jones, Joan Payne and Angela Skrimshire, continued with a series of research projects over the next decade. These were funded by local authorities, the Manpower Services Commission (MSC) and the ESRC. They included a study of the development of 'community colleges' in Coventry – large purpose-built secondary schools with additional facilities for use by the community at large. The research examined how far this had succeeded and how schools, teachers and management had responded to the additional demands to serve a wider community than simply school-age pupils.

In the late 1980s Michael Noble and George Smith began a series of research studies, supported by the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust, surveying low income households in Oxford to examine the adequacy of welfare benefits, the quality of life for those on benefits and their methods of coping on low incomes (Noble and Smith. 1989). Working with the local authority, they estimated the effects of major changes in the social security system under the 1986 Social Security Act, which came into force in 1988. Based on the total caseload of householder claimants in Oxford, this demonstrated which groups gained or lost under the changes in principle (though actual claimants received some 'transitional protection'). These estimates were widely used nationally to raise questions about the detailed impact of the changes on particular groups; for example, pensioners were badly affected by changes in rules on personal savings that threatened their entitlement to some benefits. The national furore over this apparent penalty on 'thrift' brought a rare change of direction in government policy, with a doubling of the savings threshold before deductions were made. Further studies began to make use of administrative data from Oxford, Oldham and other

<sup>10</sup> Joan Payne later joined the Policy Studies Institute, where she continued research on employment and unemployment.

local authorities to assess the position of different groups of claimants, including those on in-work benefits (family credit) and 'board and lodge' claimants (those in temporary accommodation at hostels, etc). These studies were able to draw on the anonymised records of all claimants in these categories in an area to make detailed and accurate estimates.

On taking up the post of director in 1990, Ringen brought in new research areas. These included comparative social policy, which directly fitted with the new degree in that field, and Ringen's own focus on variations in the development of welfare states. The social transitions in eastern Europe, newly emerging in the post-Soviet era, were another fruitful area for comparative research as these countries opened up. This led to several volumes of collected papers by Ringen, for example with Claire Wallace then at the Central European University in Prague (Ringen and Wallace, 1994), and links with scholars in the region, as well as workshops and seminars, in Prague for example, and an international conference organised at Wadham College, Oxford in September 1994.

In the 1990s Noble and Smith had formed the Social Disadvantage Research Centre (SDRC) at Barnett House. 11 SDRC was supported by the ESRC to study benefits for those with disabilities, this time using administrative data to give the overall picture and then conducting detailed surveys to see how far these benefits were reaching people with disabilities. SDRC also made the first moves into geospatial mapping of low income making use of the full postcode recorded for each claimant. 12 This was used in a study for part of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation Inquiry into Income and Wealth (1995) to assess the degree of geographical polarisation within urban districts. In some cases these datasets had ethnic group classifications allowing this dimension to be studied alongside social and economic disadvantage (Platt and Noble, 1999). The very large numbers in the administrative data made this possible in a way that could not occur in a normal survey with relatively few cases. The next stage was to link the administrative data series longitudinally covering extracts over three years. These were probably the first large-scale longitudinal administrative datasets outside central government. The research was influenced by the work of Bane and Ellwood in the United States

<sup>11</sup> Originally called the Social Disadvantage Research Group.

<sup>12</sup> A full UK postcode covers a small geographical area covering a small number of houses.

on so-called 'welfare dynamics' (Bane and Ellwood, 1994). The longitudinal datasets were used to estimate lone parent movements on and off benefits (Noble, Smith and Cheung, 1998). This study demonstrated that there was much more movement than was widely assumed or portrayed in the media, where single parents were a particular target for the charge of long-term 'welfare dependency' (Murray, 1994).

#### International social research: 2000-2014

By the time of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 2001, funded research was developing very rapidly. Annual research funding at over \$500,000 per year by 2000–01 had more than tripled since RAE96 and it more than doubled again by the next RAE in 2008, equivalent to about \$1.2m per year. By then, growth was levelling off but there was a 25% increase in funding over the next assessment period (REF2014) – providing a total of \$7.6m over the five-year period (2008–13) generating on average \$1.5m per year. This profile reflected not just a change in scale but in funding sources. Initially funds came largely from UK charities and then, after 1997, the UK government. Amounts from UK research councils, overseas governments or agencies were still a relatively small proportion of the total.

This began to change after 2001 with roughly 20% of external research funding coming from non-UK sources in 2001–07. Over this period the UK government was the principal funder, contributing nearly two thirds (66%) of the total. Funding by UK research councils was still a small (6%) element of the total. During the final period under review (2008–13) this changed again quite dramatically, with a precipitate drop in UK government funding after 2010, now down to just 25% of the total (and just 6.5% of the research spend in 2012–13).<sup>13</sup> This was compensated by further growth in the overseas proportion (to 32%) and a very strong rise in UK research council support to 24%. These two elements comprised 56% of the total over 2008–13.

With its rapidly growing international profile, almost all Barnett House's teaching income came from overseas student fees over the

<sup>13</sup> The coalition government that took office in 2010 was committed to reducing government expenditure across the board. Research funds, as in previous austerity periods, are one of the easiest taps to turn off.

Sources of external research funds, 1997–2013

Funding source	RAE2001 (1997–2001) %	RAE2008 (2001–2007) %	REF2014 (2008/9–2012/3) %
UK research councils	2.2	6.1	23.9
UK charities	44.8	7.8	14.7
UK government and agencies	43.4	65.8	24.5
UK industry and commerce	4.8	0.3	4.5
Overseas sources	4.8	19.7	32.4
Total	100% (£1.6m)	100% (£7.75m)	100% (£7.58m)

Source: RAE and REF official returns

Note: This is 'research spend' over the relevant period from external research sources, not funds raised over this period. Historic monetary values are used. RAE2001 and REF2014 each covered five academic years. RAE2008 covered 6.7 academic years.

same period, once the social work training had ended in 2003–04. This meant that Barnett House's overall income was increasingly from overseas. This increased further as Barnett House moved out of overall deficit with the university, and the subsidy received from the central university fell as these other sources of income rose.

Though research spending is only one indicator and, it could be argued, a superficial one, these figures reveal both the rapid expansion of the research component at Barnett House from the late 1990s through to 2013, but also the dramatic shifts in funding sources. As all research funding at Barnett House over this period was on a fixed term project basis and almost all obtained through competitive applications, the change in focus could be quite rapid as one source of funding dried up and others came on stream. The underlying strategy since the late 1990s had been to diversify away from over-dependence on a single source of support and this had been reinforced by the introduction of devolved budgets in 2000-01 (under the university's RAM and JRAM funding mechanisms). Throughout its history Barnett House had never enjoyed long-term research programme funding, but one consequence was that it was perhaps more able to change its focus as new ideas, interests and appointments came into play.

By 2001 there were 20–25 funded research studies at Barnett House running at any one time, some for a year or less, others for several years. Research staff numbers had recovered to their early

1970 numbers and settled down to around 50% of the total academic staff. By 2014 more than 70 separate current or recently completed research projects were listed, almost all of which were funded by external grants. It is clearly not possible to cover all projects in a brief overview; instead we focus on the major research groupings in this period to indicate the range and changing pattern of studies.

By RAE2001 the research groups within Barnett House had become increasingly well defined and realistic (in RAE1996 some were no more than 'nominal'). Some groups were large enough to have their own formal organisation and internal structures. A research group was effectively a cluster of research staff working with one or more permanent academic staff on a sustained programme of research (even though the actual funding was for fixed-term projects). By RAE2008, while new research groups continued to be added, these established groups had become the central feature of the Barnett House research programme. Linking research students to research groups had intermittently occurred before 2001 but now it became increasingly important as the number of research students increased. The growing strength of the research groups meant that this was research no longer organised around an individual supervisor and research student taking part in the supervisor's own research; research students worked as part of a much larger research group. This model was a hallmark of CEBI.

The model of single academics conducting their own research, sometimes requiring research assistance and funding to collect or analyse data had continued to be an important strand into the 1990s. In Barnett House, there was the powerful example of AH Halsey, who maintained a high level of research but still took a share in the teaching and lecturing. But this model of combining teaching, research and administration was increasingly pushed to the margins by the fiercely competitive environment of grant applications and funding. The scale of empirical social research and the resources and range of skills required, as well as the demands of sponsors for meetings, reports and the effective and timely dissemination of results and the growing international dimension all pushed in the same direction. These pressures were increasingly difficult to handle without dedicated research staff and an organised set of research structures at departmental and later divisional level. Research income has been consistently the largest growth area in the University of Oxford's overall funding, and also the largest income component (40% in

2012-13, more than the combined income from student fees and central government grants at 18% each). Central 'research services' expanded to cover not only budgetary supervision and approval but also contract wording to cover possible liabilities, and after 2003 all research involving 'human subjects' had to obtain ethical scrutiny and clearance. Research had not only become a permanent feature but also by far the largest source of income. It could no longer be left to the time available to tenured academics after fulfilling their teaching and other commitments. This was only taken fully into account in the university with the introduction of 'full economic costing' (FEC) for research from 2005–06, more than 30 years after it had been first raised. As a result 'principal investigator' (PI) time had to be fully costed in any proposal. Previously it was treated as a largely 'free resource' and accommodated by judicious use of sabbatical leave or other *ad boc* arrangements, though by then some of the larger research groups in Barnett House had been operating their own de facto arrangements.14

The Social Disadvantage Research Centre (SDRC) under the direction of Michael Noble and George Smith was formally set up in 1994, though by then there had already been a series of research studies looking at the effects of social security reform in the UK. SDRC pioneered the use of administrative data, first from local authority housing benefit systems in the early 1990s, moving to national administrative data in the late 1990s as it became possible to handle these very large datasets (up to 12 million individual records in the case of child benefit) first on mainframe and later desktop PCs. 15 After nearly ten years developing this work with support from charities, SDRC took off, winning the government contract in 1999 to produce a new version of the national indices of multiple deprivation for England. The aim was to use largely administrative data rather than the decennial census which had been the basis for all previous deprivation indices. Administrative data allowed indices to be regularly updated and provided far more relevant data than the decennial census.

<sup>14</sup> For example, by arranging buy-outs of senior staff from other commitments and by pooling research funds from different grants to provide better contractual conditions for fixed-term research staff.

<sup>15</sup> Nordic countries with much smaller populations had moved in this direction using their so called 'register data' (that is, records held in national registers) to replace the census and some aspects of national surveys from the 1980s. The UK and the United States were much slower to adopt these methods, partly because of their size but also because of the lack of a comprehensive 'ID' system.

The first national index for England using these administrative datasets (ID2000) was supported by a range of statistical and methodological innovations to link the 32 standard indicators for each area. 16 It was released by central government in late 2000, initially to some controversy, but by 2001 had become widely accepted and used. SDRC was commissioned to develop similar indices for Wales. Scotland and Northern Ireland, using similar data sources and techniques. A revised index for England was commissioned (ID2004), this time using new 'statistical geographies' developed by the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to replace the electoral wards used in the earlier indices. This allowed nationally consistent data to be applied on a much finer basis to areas averaging 1,500 in population. These areas, first used in ID2004, have now become the standard building blocks for national neighbourhood statistics in the UK. New datasets were also added, including individual recorded crime data collected by SDRC directly from all police authorities in England. Further revised indices were commissioned for ID2007 and ID2010.

The index of deprivation has become effectively the 'gold standard' for measuring multiple deprivation at the local level in England. It is very widely used across central government to allocate national resource and programmes differentially to more deprived areas and districts. Estimates suggest that at its peak more than 1% of national public funding (excluding foreign aid and defence) – around &4bn to &5bn a year – was distributed using this mechanism. It is also very widely used by charities, local authorities and other organisations such as the National Lottery to allocate funds; it is extensively used in research studies. In 2006, the SDRC's index of deprivation was listed as one of the top 100 major 'discoveries and developments' by UK universities that have 'changed the world'. It is now undergoing its fifth generation of revisions for launch in 2015.

Further work by SDRC included a local 'index of child wellbeing' (with Jonathan Bradshaw at York: Bradshaw et al, 2009) and a range of research studies using national administrative data including longitudinal datasets to assess 'welfare dynamics'. <sup>18</sup> The SDRC

<sup>16</sup> These were combined with statistical input from David Firth and Clive Payne at Nuffield College.

<sup>17</sup> Universities UK (2006) Eureka UK.

<sup>18</sup> Work with anonymised extracts of national administrative data became more difficult following the loss of the entire set of child benefit records, which were sent by insecure mail between two government departments in 2007. However release of national administrative data headcounts by local area, with cases rounded to the nearest five cases, continues and has become an important source of information.

contributed to the evaluation of the government's New Deal for Communities programme using administrative data to compare the patterns of change in the 39 NDC areas with similar areas. The national index work was also used in other parts of the world and studies undertaken to assess its application elsewhere, including reviews of microdata availability in Bangladesh and India as well as South Africa. SDRC became part of the new Institute of Social Policy at Barnett House in 2010.

The Centre for the Analysis of South African Social Policy (CASASP), under the direction of Michael Noble, grew out of the SDRC group, following an initial approach by the Taylor Committee set up to review social security provision in post-apartheid South Africa.<sup>19</sup> This resulted in a seminar for members of the commission in Oxford, and in turn led to an extensive programme of research and policy development by CASASP funded by grants from the UK Department for International Development in the UK and from the South African government over the next decade. CASASP aimed to contribute to poverty eradication and the building of citizenship through evidence-based social policy research and training with a comparative dimension. Research included developing indices of multiple deprivation for South Africa in 2006 with improvements in 2009,20 for which new 'local geographies' had to be created across South Africa. This work demonstrated that deprivation was particularly concentrated in the former homeland areas. Research on child poverty and analysis of administrative data to estimate levels of take-up by area of key benefits, such as the child support grant, allowed better targeting of take-up programmes. CASASP also introduced the 'socially perceived necessities' approach to defining and measuring poverty to South Africa, through specially developed modules attached to the South African Social Attitudes Survey.<sup>21</sup> In addition CASASP developed training programmes for government staff in the use of research techniques and evidence in social policy. Several research students following the DPhil programme at Barnett House through CASASP are currently working at senior level in the South African

<sup>19</sup> Transforming the Present – Protecting the Future, Report of the Committee of Enquiry into a Comprehensive Social Security System for South Africa, March 2002.

<sup>20</sup> The South African Index of Multiple Deprivation 2001 at Datazone Level, Department for Social Development, Pretoria, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> This uses national attitude surveys to establish what are broadly agreed to be 'necessities' by a crosssection of the population.



Seminar discussion at Barnett House with South African government officials and a member of the department

government or universities. Work in South Africa led to measuring deprivation across Namibia and a project in Oman focusing on child poverty.

If SDRC/CASASP was the largest single research group until 2008, the Centre for Evidence Based Intervention (CEBI), which did not appear in RAE2001 as a separate research group, had by then developed to become one of the largest research groups at Barnett House, and has continued to expand. As social work training was phased out and the evidence-based course took its place, CEBI was formed to cover the linked research programme. CEBI research focuses on the effectiveness of interventions for social and psychosocial problems, with a strong emphasis on randomised controlled trials, systematic reviews and meta-analysis (that is, quantitative reviews) of existing research studies. Its development had been strongly influenced by the Cochrane Collaboration for evidence-based medicine and by the Campbell Collaboration for evidence-based findings in social care and education. Currently its programme covers four main areas: families and children, HIV/AIDS, the effects of nutrition on behaviour and methodology.

Frances Gardner's research, focusing on parenting and antisocial behaviour, and risk and resilience in young people's mental health, using interventions to improve children's antisocial behaviours, which began before CEBI was set up, formed an important

component. This work, which included detailed observational studies of parents and children, developed with a series of randomised controlled trials (RCTs) on the effects of early parenting programmes in the United States and the UK, in some cases jointly with US colleagues and with major funding from the US National Institutes of Health (NIH). This work was extended to include coverage of low and middle income countries with a systematic review of parenting interventions. These studies are very widely cited and have been influential in shifting policy and programme focus in the UK and other countries towards a more evidence-based approach to tackling antisocial behaviour among children.

The appointment of Don Operario to the EBSI team in 2003 added a new dimension with his work on HIV/AIDS and HIV prevention. This developed into a major programme of international research, with projects in China and the United States and work in eastern Europe and central Asia. Lucie Cluver, who had earlier qualified as a social worker at Barnett House in the 1990s, and returned to complete a DPhil on the effects of HIV/AIDS on orphaned children in South Africa, developed a series of research studies focusing on children who are themselves HIV infected or act as carers of those affected, including a major longitudinal study of these groups. This in turn has been linked to RCTs to test out programmes for child abuse prevention among families living with AIDS. These studies have had an impact on South African policy and planning, and on international NGOs. Importantly they have also influenced US policy via the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. The research on HIV/AIDS has grown with the development of the Centre for AIDS Interdisciplinary Research at Oxford (CAIRO), led jointly by Barnett House and the Department of Public Health. Cluver currently holds a five year grant for 15m Euros from the European Research Council for a study on 'preventing child abuse in the context of HIV and AIDS in Southern Africa'. The focus on HIV/AIDS has also generated a number of MSc and DPhil theses over recent years.

Paul Montgomery's<sup>22</sup> appointment to the evidence-based social intervention team further extended CEBI's coverage to a range of psychosocial problems affecting different vulnerable groups. These studies include RCTs to assess the effects of nutrition on child and

<sup>22</sup> Like Lucie Cluver, Paul Montgomery was also a graduate of the Barnett House social work MSc. He went on to complete a DPhil in the Department of Psychiatry.

adult behaviour, for example the effects of taking regular food supplements on learning (studies of fish oil supplements), or sleep problems, for example the elderly suffering from dementia. Research studies into complex psychosocial problems require correspondingly complex interventions, raising challenges of how to organise and assess them. CEBI has also worked on the methodological problems of systematic reviewing, including how best to handle the multi-disciplinary nature of many psychosocial problems, and issues of implementation fidelity – how programmes are actually delivered in practice in a consistent way.

Barnett House has had a demography strand since the late 1970s with the appointment of Michael Teitelbaum. His successor David Coleman formed the Oxford Centre of Population Studies (OXPOP) research group in the 1990s to focus on comparative demographic trends in the developed world and on trends in international migration. By 2001, research on population ageing had been added by Sarah Harper until she moved to set up the separate 'Institute of Ageing' linked to the Sociology Department. OXPOP aims to monitor and project demographic trends, analysing their underlying causes and consequences. Coleman's work has focused on fertility patterns and the demographic consequences of migration. Sylvie Dubuc has undertaken research on the possible reasons, including selective abortion, to explain the pattern of a gender imbalance among some ethnic minority and second generation immigrants in the UK. Stuart Basten analyses demographic trends in east Asian countries with ultra low fertility rates and their policy implications.

Research on families and children over this period often appeared as a theme in the research groups described so far, but it was also specifically the focus of more specialist groups though there was never one overarching structure. Ann Buchanan has been the central figure in the Centre for Research into Parenting and Children which she set up to conduct a series of empirical studies on the well-being of children and young people and their family settings over a ten-year period. This covered topics such the impact of divorce on children's well-being, the role of fathers, the impact of early involvement of parents on children's educational development and psychological well-being, and a separate study on the role of grandparents. The centre also conducted a major review of government policies on children aged under 14 years for the Social Exclusion Unit in 2004 (Buchanan et al, 2004).

Mavis Maclean's move from the Socio-Legal Research Unit to Barnett House in 2001 led to the formation of a group of researchers (Mavis Maclean, Ceridwen Roberts, Joan Hunt and Julia Brophy) working as the Oxford Centre for Family Law and Policy (OXFLAP) for the next decade or so. Linked to Macleans' position as academic adviser to the UK Ministry of Justice, and Roberts' experience as former director of the Family Policy Studies Centre, 23 the emphasis has been on timely production of new research and research reviews to feed into policy formation and debate, frequently using the medium of short and focused 'research briefing' papers aimed at those concerned in policy on the basis that busy policy makers would be more likely to scan short pieces rather than lengthy reports. The group has also published longer research reports and books, organised conferences and produced two academic journals on family law edited by OXFLAP members. OXFLAP set out to examine the role of the state in managing problems following family breakdown. One major strand of research has been on parenting arrangements after separation or divorce, with an international workshop and an edited book bringing together international evidence of the effects of different arrangements. Combined with briefing papers on parental contact and shared parenting these were fed into the Children and Parenting Act 2014, helping to modify plans away from interpreting shared arrangements simply as a rigid formula, such as a 50:50 split. A second strand was in policy work related to opening up the family courts to press and public. Further research covered the moves toward more 'dispute resolution' rather than court action and the role of professional lawyers in this area (Eekelaar and Maclean, 2013).

A research group co-ordinated by Teresa Smith conducted more than a decade of research undertaking a series of major evaluations of new national early years programmes in England from the late 1990s through to 2014. These involved a national consortium of research teams including researchers from the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen), the Institute of Education in London, the Institute of Fiscal Studies and the early education group in the Education Department at Oxford led by Kathy Sylva. These began with a small commissioned study for the Department for Education and Skills of 'wrap around care' to assess linking different forms of provision for young children in the same areas, and a feasibility study of

<sup>23</sup> Recognised in the award of a CBE to Maclean and an OBE to Roberts.

the national Sure Start programme to prepare for a major evaluation study. The full evaluation of the government's Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative – launched in 2001 to provide new childcare centres in disadvantaged areas – was published in 2007. This was followed by a feasibility study of the new children's centre programme. The national evaluation of this programme<sup>24</sup> from 2009 onwards is under the direction of NatCen in London, with a team from the group at Oxford. These are evaluations of full-scale national initiatives. The children's centre programme has set up some 3,500 centres across England. This calls for a range of evaluation techniques, including large-scale surveys of users and their families, assessments of children, observational studies of provision and cost-benefit analysis; they require multidisciplinary teams of researchers. The main results are principally in the form of reports published by central government.

The Oxford Institute of Social Policy (OISP) was established after RAE2008 as part of the strategy to group Barnett House research into three main clusters. OISP therefore combined existing research under this new framework. It includes comparative research on predominately OECD countries but also work on the social policies of developing countries, and on comparative research methods. Its major strands include poverty, inequality and social disadvantage, the politics of social policy, family policy and labour market policy. The poverty strand includes research by Robert Walker who, since joining Barnett House in 2006, has conducted a series of projects on poverty, social security and welfare dynamics. A major project with Elaine Chase studies the links between poverty and shame across seven very different developed and developing countries to test out Amartya Sen's proposition that poverty and shame are inextricably linked in all societies. There are also studies of intergenerational social mobility and social inequality over time carried out by Erzsébet Bukodi and John Goldthorpe (of the original Nuffield social mobility team).

The politics of social policy has been the focus of Martin Seeleib-Kaiser's research at Barnett House since 2003. These studies are comparative in format often in conjunction with international collaborative networks and programmes. They focus on the political determinants and drivers of recent social policy changes as well the changing mix of public and private provision, and include work on

<sup>24</sup> The Evaluation of Children's Centres in England (ECCE) project.

the effects of globalisation, and a project on dualisation of labour markets and social protection, published as an edited volume by OUP which has been influential in current international debates.

Family policy includes work by Fran Bennett focusing on income distribution patterns within households and the impact of various social security arrangements, and since her arrival to take up the chair of social policy and sociology, Mary Daly, whose work also covers family and parenting support policies and comparative reviews of national policies for children.

## Taking stock: one hundred years of research

Research or enquiry into social issues or problems was one of the key objectives of the original founders of Barnett House. In one sense that has not changed one hundred years later; nor, broadly defined, has the subject matter. But in other respects it has changed out of all recognition. Social research as it has now come to be defined is no longer just the activity that academics do when they are not teaching or administrating, but a major part of the whole operation with dedicated research staff and very substantial external funds accounting for probably more than half the total enterprise. This change has been far from smooth; there have been sudden spurts of activity and equally rapid decline, to be followed by another rise a few years later. The proximity of the Barnett House agenda to public and political concerns has exacerbated these peaks and troughs as has the lack of any long-term research funding. Barnett House has never over the 100 years had any explicit research funding other than that which terminates as soon as the research study is ended. It could, of course, be argued that some of its core funding and more recently the funding from the RAE provides indirect support for research.

The scale and diversity of research in both coverage and method, as well as the very diverse funding sources in 2014, all provide some guarantee that this is now a settled pattern for the future. But this might have been the view in the early 1970s with the boom in policy-related social research. Barnett House may now be 'income rich' but this is effectively driven by current activity – unlike the traditional Oxford research foundations, which have very substantial capital or endowment bases that allow them to operate to an extent independently of income secured from their current activity.

To complete the circle we end by revisiting the six categories set out at the start of Chapter 11. If the term 'social research' was not in common use in 1914 to describe studies of social problems, it is in 2014 used almost indiscriminately as a necessary claim to be taken seriously, not just in higher education but by think tanks, pressure groups and journalists as well. But in the process it has also become a far more specialised and varied activity, not just the pooling of information on a topic – understandable as a method when there was very little data available – but now requiring many different approaches. This places much greater emphasis on 'researchability', how a problem is defined and studied, and on the research design and method to focus the enquiry. The volume of research material now available on major topics underlines the importance of systematic research reviews and other quantitative reviewing methods developed by CEBI. But there are always emerging issues that are little studied, where simply establishing what is happening has still to be the first task. Barnett House has had a very strong track record of picking up new issues – from the rural decline of the 1920s through community studies in the 1950s, urban deprivation in the 1960s and 1970s, more recently HIV/AIDS and its consequences, and the changing nature of welfare states. And it has also had a strong record of pioneering new methods and establishing new datasets.

The way these problems and issues are defined remains a central dilemma. There is often a 'top-down' element almost built into the way a social problem is approached. But running through the Barnett House history there is a persistent strand stressing local participation in how problems are defined, not least in the belief that this may help to stimulate local pressure for improvement and change. This is found in the rural work in the 1920s, in the community studies of the 1950s and in the later phases of the government's CDP project, which attempted to stimulate local pressure for action by providing accessible studies of the contemporary social and economic changes affecting the neighbourhood. But it is also seen in more recent research, stressing participation by the poor in research on the poor, for example in Fran Bennett's work, and it runs through the current international project on 'poverty and shame'. The 'socially perceived necessities' research in South Africa technically builds in the views of a cross-section of the population on what is an acceptable standard of living for any citizen. It is a strand that has continued to separate Barnett House research from

studies done directly by government, even though research is now more often funded directly or indirectly by government rather than by independent charities. As the history of Barnett House shows, governments have a way of turning the research tap on and off very quickly as the climate changes. The window of opportunity in which governments are confident enough to fund research that may fuel criticisms of their own policies (as opposed to those of their predecessors) turns out to be open only briefly.

National research assessment since the 1990s has had a dramatic effect on the approach to research in higher education. RAE and REF results in Oxford are directly fed through into budgetary allocations with major consequences for departments with devolved budgets. This has dramatically increased the importance of funded research and, in social policy, it has increasingly driven the traditional 'lone scholar' to the margins to be replaced by research groups and an overall 'research strategy'. Barnett House was already moving in that direction in the 1970s, but the pattern then was for research groups to be only weakly linked to the main teaching programme. The pattern in the last decade is for much greater integration between the teaching programmes, research students and research groups.

The relationship between research policy and practice remains a key debate. The RAE and REF assessments have placed increasing weight on 'impact', and most research funders would now be very unlikely to fund research proposals that expressed no concern about the relevance of the results to policy or practice. But the range is wide – from studies that simply chart the underlying trends in demography or changes in welfare states' structures to very precise assessments of particular programmes or approaches to practice.

The three strands underlined in the conclusion to Chapter 11 remained prominent in research conducted at Barnett House in this period. First there is the early adoption of new or innovative approaches to research not because they are new but because they seem to be the right way forward; seen, for example, in the work of CEBI with evidence-based studies, or the widespread use of administrative data. Second, the strand of 'political arithmetic' is still alive and well, with the emphasis on quantitative data and its analysis – though there are also qualitative studies as well as studies that involve many different methods. And finally the strand of close involvement in policy and practice, now under its more scientific term of 'intervention', remains in place. Its roots can be traced back

through the action research of the 1970s (which included some early RCTs) to the rural development work of the 1920s. This strands draws on the belief that policy and practice are not somehow forbidden territory for researchers and academics, but they have a legitimate role, in Halsey's phrase, 'in the definition of social policy, its definition of ends, and its measurement of result' (Halsey, 1970).

Barnett House, despite its very large research programme, has remained a relatively small institution, but its impact on policy and practice has been out of all proportion to its size. This might range from the rural initiatives in the 1920s, to recent work on measuring social and economic disadvantage across the UK and in other countries. In the case of the indices of multiple deprivation it is easier to assess the impact in a directly measurable way. These indices have been used to allocate enormous national and local resources, using allocation procedures directly drawn from the data generated by the research. This might have occurred anyway using other measures, but the fact that the indices were accepted as highly reliable measures that made sense 'on the ground' validated their use as a national resource allocation tool. Previous measures never achieved that level of legitimacy. The original research funds to develop these measures were very modest but the indices have been used for a decade or more since the early 2000s to allocate very large sums of public expenditure in England alone. A very small fraction of this sum would have been enough to fund all Barnett House research over the same period.

# Conclusions: Barnett House 100

Unlike a research study which ends with findings, conclusions and possibly recommendations, a centenary history has no obvious lessons or outcomes. Barnett House reached its centenary on 6 June 2014. It now continues into its second century, flourishing in both research and teaching on a much larger scale and more strongly than it has ever done over the past 100 years, except perhaps at a few brief points. But it is now a very different institution from the one envisaged and set up by its founders in 1914, though there are still strong links with the ideas and motivations of the founding generation.

The chronological chapters (1–8) have traced this route from 1914–2014 and the major events, decisions, pressures and individuals that shaped its track. It is very far from a simple 'onward and upward' story, and on several occasions Barnett House came close to ending, well short of its centenary. We have also traced both the internal and external changes that have affected this trajectory, particularly the rise of the social sciences and of social research, and also the increasing regulation and pressures from external agencies on university teaching, particularly the social work training, and on the research side through the national research assessments. Changes within the university itself have at times made even more impact. The two final sets of chapters on the social work training and the research at Barnett House illustrate some of these trends in more detail. Inevitably much is covered only briefly, particularly the two most recent teaching programmes that successfully flourish in the twenty-first century, comparative social policy and evidence based social intervention, the linked doctoral programme which has generated many impressive and significant studies, and the very extensive international research programme over the last ten years. So there is much to be expanded on in later studies. This book is already long enough.

Barnett House began with a flourish in 1914, just a few weeks before the first world war broke out. Its initial programme was highly ambitious and wide ranging, though the resources were modest – to influence the university and its alumni to become more closely involved in contemporary social and economic problems and their amelioration, and to provide a centre that pulled together town and gown to address these questions, to provide resources such as a library, lectures and discussion, and to run social training programmes. In effect it aspired to be an 'interface' between the university and the external world. It had many powerful supporters across the university but was in fact a separate voluntary association for the next 30 years. In 2014 it is now a medium-sized graduate teaching and research department within Oxford University's social sciences division, which can claim to be one of the largest such academic groupings in the UK. This is a very long way from the small handful of 'social science' pioneers working at the margins of the university in 1914. It would be nice to claim that Barnett House somehow triggered the growth of the social sciences in Oxford. The ideas underpinning Barnett House, and the substantial university figures supporting or pushing its programme, were also key to later developments in the university – for example the setting up of the PPE degree in the early 1920s, and the formation of the Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies in 1924, and its location at Rewley House.

The 'civic house' programme linking town and gown continued to develop at Barnett House with a network of groups and initiatives, as did its library and lectures, heavily used by undergraduates on the PPE course. But the original aim of stimulating the university to focus on social and economic issues was largely taken over by the growth of PPE as a mainstream undergraduate course taught across colleges. Apart from the senior university academics serving on its council, for most of the interwar period Barnett House was staffed by mainly female volunteers, much of whose time was taken up in running the social training programme as this became a staple activity under the eye of Violet Butler, together with the provision of libraries and lectures and support for local voluntary groups. It also aimed to stimulate new thinking outside the university in local authorities, and in the early 1920s launched an 'experiment' in rural development as a way of testing out new ideas and lodging them in a wider local and national agenda. This set a pattern for a major initiative including both action and research supported by outside funding. The 'rural experiment' focused effort and strengthened institutional links; it had significant impact in Oxfordshire and more widely. But this was at some remove from the university base. Barnett House as a centre

focusing on social and economic issues was further sidelined by the creation of Nuffield College in 1937 as the dedicated social science college. Amalgamation or merger was one possible solution, and Nuffield nearly incorporated Barnett House in the early 1940s. The reasons why this finally failed is one of the murkier episodes in our story; Nuffield was anxious to strengthen its academic reputation, whereas Barnett House was determined to keep its social training courses and other very applied work. Throughout this early period, while not formally part of the university, Barnett House pioneered many developments. One consequence, intended or not, was that if these were successful they were taken over by other better resourced or specialised groups.

After the second world war, the incorporation of Barnett House's social work and public and social administration courses into the university with the creation of the Delegacy of Social Training was a positive move – the first time social work was recognised institutionally by the university. But paradoxically this effectively marginalised it within the wider university, still primarily focused on undergraduate teaching at college level. The 'civic house' that remained gradually faded as its functions were handed over to other groups. But from the 1950s the new delegacy under Leonard Barnes began to benefit from the slowly rising social science and social research tide, with a series of funded research studies and much stronger academic appointments with an increasingly graduate entry to its courses. An attempt to close it down by the central university as part of an economy drive in 1959, instead led unexpectedly to its promotion to a full university department.

Under its new director AH Halsey, Barnett House in the 1960s was quick to take advantage of the rapidly changing national climate with the expansion of graduate sociology and social work and a sudden surge in major funded research after the creation of the SSRC in 1965. Barnett House was closely linked to national policy developments to tackle educational disadvantage and urban deprivation through national action-research projects, echoing the much earlier rural experiments in the 1920s. The result was a very much larger department, with at least as many research staff working outside Oxford as the overall numbers in Barnett House itself. At the same time rapid growth in the social work training meant more academic appointments in Oxford, not just on the social work side but in sociology, research methods and demography. Halsey's aim

was to create a sociology department, broadly defined to include social work as the applied end. But by the end of the 1970s research funds began falling away as so-called 'soft money' (short-term funding) from government dried up. By the mid 1980s the university too was experiencing reductions in its core income and acted to 'freeze' posts that fell vacant. The rapid expansion of the 1960s was now in reverse. However, support for social training continued to be strong, gradually shifting Barnett House's profile to a predominantly social work teaching department, with some research. The 1980s ended with a battery of reviews by external agencies such as CCETSW and a major internal review in advance of appointing a successor to AH Halsey in 1990. But the pattern of teaching and research since the 1960s still strongly reflected key parts of the original aims – a now much more professional training for social and probation workers alongside major social research, much of which was directly related to current policy concerns, even though the links between teaching and the main body of research were sometimes a little tenuous. This period from the mid 1960s was the high point on both teaching and research fronts since Barnett House had opened, even though the last five years were marked with cutbacks.

The 1990s began with hopes of recovery under the new director, Stein Ringen. He launched a new comparative research MSc which attracted an international intake, and introduced more international comparative research to match the teaching, including work in eastern Europe as this emerged in the post-Soviet era. There were new academic appointments and external research funding was beginning to grow again. But there were also major tensions over management and style as the overall programme became very much more diverse and an overall framework under which the different components could operate comfortably was lacking. These tensions were on full view during the central university review of Barnett House in 1996. Its report was highly critical of the teaching on the new course and on overall management; it recommended major changes in direction, and much greater emphasis on social policy rather than making the department the centre of sociology. The result was a number of changes; the director was replaced by an elected head of department and more social policy posts were created. Following a further review, a new department of sociology was set up, leaving Barnett House to concentrate on social policy and social work. These changes took place as the Home Office

withdrew probation training from university courses in social work, taking out a powerful and long established stream in the Barnett House intake. Fortunately the new comparative policy course, now under new teaching arrangements, was recruiting a strong international intake, and doctoral research student numbers were growing. Funded research was also increasing rapidly.

Early in the new millennium the decision was made within the department to close the social work training course which had run for nearly 90 years. The course was still highly rated and received large numbers of applicants each year for its DHSS supported places. The trigger was a change of funding regime in the Oxford social sciences division introducing fully devolved budgets for departments. The formula used left Barnett House with an unbridgeable deficit which could not be met with a course that recruited largely UK students. But there were many other factors, including the growing tension between teaching a professional training course which had a significant academic component ('social work embedded in the social sciences' was a hallmark of the MSc course at Barnett House), the demands of the external regulator, and the growing pressure for academic departments to produce more 'academic' output, not just professional social workers. A department with a poor research rating inevitably received very much lower funding than one rated more highly.

After this difficult decade, Barnett House emerged with a very different profile. It was now far more international in its student intake, staffing and research. The closure of the social work course removed the pressure of dealing with an external regulator, and the need to organise and supervise students on placement in the field – and allowed it instead to operate much more like a conventional academic department. The new MSc course in evidence based social work/intervention, together with the expanding comparative research teaching and doctoral numbers, quickly replaced the 60 or so social work students and then continued to rise to more than double this figure. At the same time funded research continued to expand very rapidly, more or less tripling from 2001-08, with a growing number of large research groups. In the national research assessment in 2008, some 70% of the research submitted by Barnett House was judged to be 'international' or 'world leading'. This moved Barnett House up to level terms with most other departments in the Oxford social sciences division for the first time since 1990. and among the highest rated social policy departments in the UK.

The last few years have seen this pattern continue with a growing volume of research, across a very wide range of topics and geographical areas. In 2014 something like 70 separate research studies were listed as either recently completed or in progress, now grouped under three main headings – demography, evidence based intervention and social policy research.

#### Continuities and discontinuities

The focus on the analysis of 'social problems' and possible policies or programmes to address them was there at the start in 1914, and has remained one of the key drivers. This has ensured that Barnett House has been a largely multidisciplinary institution, though at times this has made it hard to define its core purpose in academic terms, and may also explain its regular changes of name. It has also meant that discipline groups may peel off to join their peers elsewhere, most recently when the separate department of sociology was formed. There are some striking continuities in subject matter (delinquency is one example), but problems are now much more widely defined to include topics such as the social consequences of changing fertility patterns or of HIV/AIDS in different countries and regions, which were hardly on the agenda at the start. The growth of social policy broadly defined across the developed and developing world, which Martin Seileib-Kaiser underlines in his preface to this book, ensures a continuing flow of new concerns.

The founders of Barnett House were largely self-defined 'progressives' with the belief that careful enquiry, analysis and social planning would lead to improvement. They were reformers rather than radicals. This might now be framed rather differently to take account of the more complex understanding of policy development and implementation, including the potentially negative consequences of even well-intended policies, or their differential effects on different groups. But there is no doubt that problem selection reflects not just academic concerns – the aim is to draw attention to an issue and bring about change or improvement if possible. This raises the question of how this is best done. For the founders, many of whom had very close links to central government, the answer would have seemed obvious, though they, too, saw the power of a good local example to influence Whitehall. For a time better research

dissemination was held to be the route, and more recently the quality of the research and information. But as the Barnett House history underlines, the government of the day's agenda at least in the short term strongly influences the way (social) research is received or ignored – however well designed or pitched.

In research methods there has been a clear trend from the more basic 'social enquiries' at the start, to explicit research designs from the early 1940s; and most recently to meta-analyses and systematic reviews as the way both to handle the increasing volume of research and to influence its quality. We have also noted the way that Barnett House picked up the idea of 'social experiments' in the 1920s, again in the 1960 and 1970s, and in a more tightly defined way with the intervention studies and RCTs conducted by the evidence based programme. The emphasis on local experiments and local variation has been a strong theme from the early days, but is seen also in the detailed measurement of local conditions. While these studies may extract the national message of 'what works', they also raise the much more difficult question of how far local variation should in fact shape policy – an often stated but rarely seriously adopted approach.

The original founders of Barnett House were all male, though almost all the volunteers who ran Barnett House on a day-to-day basis were female. Along with a small number of other departments in the social sciences, Barnett House has a high proportion of female teaching and research staff. The strong Christian element in its foundation slowly transformed into an ethic of public service that all could share. The voluntary effort that was central to delivering the Barnett House programme in the early days was also central to its approach to social policy. This too faded in the face of expanding state and local authority after the war, though it is perhaps reflected in the emphasis on local variation and local involvement, not just simple top-down state policies. The major discontinuity has been the closure of the social work training courses and the pull back from formal professional qualifications. Barnett House managed to operate these in an academic environment for many years, despite the pressures to change. A combination of events made the decision to close in 2001 appear inevitable. But it was a pragmatic decision rather than one based on the view that such vocational training was necessarily incompatible with an academic department, though there were those in the university that held this view.

### **Impact**

As Martin Seileib-Kaiser notes in his preface, impact and public involvement are 'part of the collective DNA at Barnett House'. It was part of the justification for the original foundation to harness academic resources to address real world issues. It remains an important criterion of success alongside academic excellence; indeed in recent national research assessments impact, broadly defined, is now included as one of the dimensions of excellence. And it is often high up the priorities of research sponsors to justify their funding. We have given many examples of the impact Barnett House has had throughout its history. These were sometimes the direct result of its programme (for instance the village libraries or the rural community councils in the 1920s), or they were the indirect result of individuals transplanting these ideas elsewhere. More recently the action-research projects in the 1960s and 1970s directly fed research evidence into policy and practice locally and nationally. In the last decade or so the evidence based programme has focused on the formal mechanisms through which research findings can be made available in a consistent form. At the same time improved measures of local deprivation developed at Barnett House since 2000 have been widely used to distribute very substantial national resources across the UK and in South Africa. Research in sub-Saharan Africa focusing on the problems of AIDS-affected children has influenced policy by governments, NGOs and funders and training programmes for health and community workers. Studies on ways of reducing child anti-social behaviour in the UK and other countries have contributed to family intervention programmes and policy changes. Demographic research on Asian fertility has been influential in persuading the UN to revise the methods used to make its population projections. And research studies have thrown new light on the ways that 'poverty and shame' may be linked in different cultures. These are some recent examples. Barnett House remains a relatively small institution, but these examples suggest the way it makes a massively disproportionate impact in terms of its size at national and international level.

The indirect effect of Barnett House through its graduates and through its publications is virtually impossible to measure. No systematic research was carried out for this study on this aspect. We have simply given some examples. Those who took the Barnett House social training courses filled very many different posts as social workers, probation officers, community workers, personnel managers and administrators, and many moved into university teaching or research posts. In the early period many of these were from overseas or went there to work in the then empire. Since the 1990s the student intake has again become international and the two current courses now have graduates spread across the world, some already making an impact in many diverse fields nationally and internationally. These range from academia, through local and central government, national and international NGOs and research centres, to national and local politics.

In 1919 Lord Bryce, who had formally launched Barnett House in 1914, wrote in his letter to raise further funds: 'In my judgement there has never been a time at which the systematic and impartial study of social and economic questions has been so urgent as at the present day'. This was at a time when there was very little such research. Over the past 100 years Barnett House has set out to fill some part of that space, and we have attempted to chart its contribution. Despite the massive expansion of social research and research centres, the challenge set out by Bryce still remains. And Barnett House continues to respond to the challenge and pioneer new developments both nationally and across the world.

# Biographies of Presidents and Directors of Barnett House

#### Barnett House 1914–1957

1914–18 Sidney Ball (1857–1918) son of a solicitor in Pershore, Worcestershire, second of seven children, educated at Wellington and Oriel College, Oxford. In 1882 elected to a fellowship at St John's, where he already held a lectureship in philosophy. On his marriage to Oona Howard in 1891 his fellowship was removed, and only reinstated in 1902. University reformer, Fabian, excellent teacher, 'one of the generation of dons moved by the social question', he supported Ruskin College for working men, was a member of the Christian Social Union, and a strong supporter of the Workers' Educational Association. He was an admirer of TH Green and a friend of Samuel Barnett. The ideas for Toynbee Hall and later for Barnett House were first outlined in Sidney Ball's college rooms. He was dedicated to university reform, and to the introduction of social studies to Oxford's curriculum.

**1918–24 Arthur Lionel Smith (1850–1924)** master of Balliol College, second son of a civil engineer in London, educated at Christ's Hospital and Balliol where he graduated in classics, humanities, and history between 1869 and 1874. Tutor in classics at Trinity College Oxford 1874–76, he then studied at the bar in Lincoln's Inn until 1879

when he married and returned to Oxford to teach history at Balliol. Elected fellow there in 1882, he remained in Balliol for the rest of his life. He was a wonderful teacher, passionate advocate of continuing education, chairing the Ministry of Reconstruction's committee on adult education 1917–19, and keen on university reform, encouraging working class, women, and overseas entrants; a follower of Jowett, and TH Green. His wife was a keen voluntary worker, running infant welfare clinics in Oxford with Mrs Wells and involved in housing and health for the poor of the town.

1924–28 Joseph Wells (1855–1929) educated at Reading School and Queen's College, Oxford. Classicist, warden of Wadham College 1913–27, member of the Hebdomadal Council 1914–27, vice-chancellor of the university 1923–26. He was a devout Anglican, friend of Samuel Barnett. He was on the council of the Oxford House settlement in Bethnal Green. His wife ran infant welfare clinics in Oxford with Mrs AL Smith. While not a university reformer, he was on the council of Lady Margaret Hall, and delivered university extension lectures. He was a conservative in politics, and a convinced patriot.

1928-49 William George Stewart Adams (1874-1966), son of a Lanarkshire head master who was an educational reformer and great friend of Livingstone, educated at St John's Grammar School, Hamilton (his father's school), Glasgow University and Balliol College. His first post was in Isleworth at the Borough Training College in 1901. He then took a post as economics lecturer at the University of Chicago before teaching at Manchester University from 1903. After working for Horace Plunkett in Dublin from 1905 as superintendent of statistics and intelligence at the Irish department of agriculture and technical instruction, he came back to Oxford to lecture on political science. In 1912 he was appointed Gladstone professor; he held this post until becoming warden of All Souls in 1933. His influences were AL Smith, whom he had first met as a student at Balliol, Samuel Barnett and Horace Plunkett. He was a serial government adviser - on Ireland, and on rural affairs, and then for Lloyd George's wartime government. He became a development commissioner in 1924. He went on a special visit to China in 1931–32 on behalf of the Universities China Commission, of which body he became chair in 1942; he was pro-vice-chancellor in 1939–45 and a member of the Oxford University Hebdomadal Council 1912-24. He was president

of the National Council for Social Service from 1920–49. He raised pigs in his smallholding on Boars Hill during his time in Oxford, and retired to Ireland to farm in 1949.

**1949–51 David Macgregor (1877–1953)** was born in Monifieth, Dumfries, the second son of the rector of Dumfries Academy. He was educated in Edinburgh and Cambridge. He was elected to a fellowship at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1904. From 1908 to 1919 he was professor of economic and political science at Leeds University. In 1911–12 he held a Kahn travelling fellowship. During the first world war he served in the army in France and Italy. He was a member of the government's 'committee on labour exchanges' from 1920 and served on several trade boards. He was the joint editor of the *Economic Journal* 1925–37.

1951–57 Julia Mann (1891–1985) daughter of James Saumarez Mann, an editor and former fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. Educated at Bromley High School and Somerville College Oxford (1910-14). She took the diploma in social science at the LSE while living in the Women's Settlement in Southwark. Her interest in economic history stems from this time. During the first world war she served as a clerk in the Admiralty, and then in the Foreign Office; she attended the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. In that year she returned to Oxford to take the diploma in economics. She returned to the LSE to study for a PhD on the cotton industry in 1922, but by 1923 had been appointed economics tutor and vice-principal of St Hilda's College (then St Hilda's Hall), Oxford. She became principal in 1928, a position she retained until her retirement in 1955. She was largely absorbed in college affairs and research.

### Barnett House - University Delegacy 1946-1960

1946–48 Christina Violet Butler (1884–1982) first director of the University Delegacy of Social Training, youngest child of the headmaster of Haileybury College and fellow of Oriel, Arthur G Butler, she was educated at home until the age of fourteen when she spent three years at Wycombe Abbey. She returned to Oxford to take a first class honours degree in modern history as a member of the Society of Oxford Home-Students, and a distinction in the diploma

in economics in 1907. She published her first book in 1912, Social Conditions in Oxford, to some acclaim, which confirmed her as a social reformer who used patient and thorough local social enquiry to give force to recommendations for change. She gained a teaching qualification at the LSE, but returned as a tutor in social training for Barnett House and in economics for the Society of Oxford Home-Students, roles she maintained until retirement in 1948. She worked for the Ministry of Munitions in the first world war, writing part of its official history. Subsequently, she served on many government trade boards, and nearer to home on local authority committees for religion, education and juvenile clubs; she was closely associated with girls' clubs and community centres in the town, and served on school governing bodies. She was a member of the Sociological Society, a friend of Victor Branford, and supporter of the Le Play regional survey movement; her contribution to a very practical route to citizenship, emulated across the world, began in a joint venture with Charlotte Simpson on Village Survey-Making, piloted in Oxfordshire in the 1920s, using the school to revive community spirit in localities and stimulate democratic engagement. She trained and supported generations of social workers, community administrators, researchers and academics who spread out across the world but continued to write back to 'Miss Butler'.

**1948–62 Leonard Barnes (1895–1977)** was brought up in London, the son of a civil servant. In 1914, instead of continuing as planned to Oxford, he went straight to the Western Front in the King's Royal Rifle Corps. He was one of a handful of officers who survived, invalided out with shrapnel wounds shortly before the armistice in 1918. For the rest of his life he had only partial use of one of his legs and experienced intermittent pain. He continued his education, graduating from Oxford in 1921 with a classics degree. Initially he followed his father into the Colonial Office, but by 1925 had decided that path was not for him, and departed with a friend to farm in South Africa. Finding the farm was on land requisitioned from the local Zulu, he began a lifelong task of documenting colonialism in Africa and recommending reforms, first as a campaigning journalist and later as a writer. In 1932 he returned to Britain, taking up a position on the Labour party's Imperial Advisory Committee and after standing unsuccessfully as a Labour candidate in a 1935 by-election in Derby, became a lecturer in social and political theory

at Liverpool University. In the 1940s he wrote a series of anti-colonial pieces for Fabian pamphlets. He moved to Oxford in 1948 to take up the Barnett House position. After retirement in 1962, he published several more books on Africa and poetry, to add to his earlier first world war poems.

### Barnett House - University Department 1960 to date

1962-90 AH Halsey trained as an RAF pilot at the end of the second world war. After the war he trained as a teacher but then moved to the LSE, completing a doctorate on social class and educational opportunity. After a short spell as a sociology lecturer in Liverpool he moved to Birmingham University, with a visiting professorship at Chicago and work for the OECD in Paris. In 1962 he was appointed director of Barnett House with a fellowship at Nuffield College, and remained there until he formally retired in 1990. Over this period he built a reputation as one of the outstanding sociologists of his generation, and with Jean Floud was the pre-eminent figure in the sociology of education. He also acted as an adviser to the UK government on education. Throughout his career he wrote, lectured, broadcast and conducted empirical research at a prodigious rate and in an accessible and attractive form for many different audiences, usually lecturing without notes. In 1978 he delivered the BBC Reith Lectures. He played an active role in the OECD both in its country studies and as the chair of its education research and innovation centre. After retirement he has continued to write, with a steady stream of books, articles and papers including his autobiography No Discouragement.

1990–97 Stein Ringen is emeritus professor of sociology and social policy at Green Templeton College, University of Oxford. He was professor of welfare studies at the University of Stockholm and has held visiting professorships and fellowships in Paris, Berlin, Prague, Brno, Barbados, Jerusalem, Sydney and at Harvard University. He has been assistant director general in the Norwegian Ministry of Justice, a consultant to the United Nations, and a news and feature reporter with the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. He is a visiting professor at Richmond, the American International University in London and adjunct professor at Lillehammer University College in Norway.

1997–2005 Teresa Smith studied 'Greats' at Oxford before teaching in Thailand. She returned to Oxford in 1966 to take the diploma in social and administrative studies, and then worked for the Oxford Council of Social Service before being recruited in 1969 by AH Halsey to work in the West Riding EPA. She began teaching part-time in the department in 1974. Her research has focused on community, social regeneration, family and childcare, and the evaluation of communitybased programmes for young children and their families, particularly multi-agency working; she is currently a member of the consortium conducting the national evaluation of children's centres in England. She served as an elected member on Oxfordshire County Council 1985–93, advised the Cabinet Office, and was a specialist adviser to the House of Commons Children Schools and Families Select Committee during its inquiries into children's centres and social work training 2004–10. After retirement she continues to research and supervise DPhil students and does some teaching.

2005-07 George Smith completed his first degree at Oxford reading the traditional 'Greats' course (classical history and philosophy), and then taught English in south India. He returned in 1966 to take a graduate course in sociology at Oxford supervised by AH Halsey and Jean Floud. He was then research officer on action-research projects and other evaluations run through Barnett House in different parts of the UK, combining this from 1975 with a half-time teaching post in Oxford on the social work degree. His research interests include social programme evaluation, education in its social context, social security, poverty and its measurement. From the early 1980s he was research adviser for HM Inspectorate of Schools, later Ofsted, in London. He also worked as a consultant for the OECD. From the mid 1990s with Michael Noble he developed the Social Disadvantage Research Centre at Barnett House; major projects included the national index of multiple deprivation. From the late 1990s he taught on the MSc in comparative social policy, becoming course director. He was elected head of department at Barnett House from 2005 to 2007 when he formally retired, but still continues to undertake research and some teaching.

**2007–11 Peter Kemp** is vice-dean for academic affairs and professor in the Blavatnik School of Government at the University of Oxford and a member of the Oxford Institute of Social Policy. Before

his appointment to the Blavatnik School, Peter was the Barnett professor of social policy and head of the Department of Social Policy and Intervention. Prior to moving to Oxford in 2006 he was professor of social policy and director of the Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York (2002–06); the professor of housing and social policy at the University of Glasgow (1996–2002); and the inaugural Joseph Rowntree professor of housing policy, and founding director of the Centre for Housing Policy, University of York (1990–95).

2011- Martin Seeleib-Kaiser is Barnett professor of comparative social policy and politics, and professorial fellow of St Cross College. He studied political science, American studies and public law at Ludwig-Maximilians University in Munich (Germany) (MA 1989; DPhil 1993). In 2001, he was awarded the *venia legendi* in political science (habilitation) by Bremen University. Prior to his initial appointment as university lecturer at Oxford in 2004, he held appointments at the universities of Bremen and Bielefeld (Germany) as well as Duke University (North Carolina, USA). He was a visiting scholar/guest professor at George Washington University (USA; 1996), Shizuoka University (Japan; 1997) and Aalborg University (Denmark; 2008). His research focuses on the politics of social policy and comparative social policy analysis. He has worked on the relationship between globalisation and welfare systems, political parties and the welfare state, the interplay between 'public' and 'private' social protection policies and associated processes of dualisation, and more recently on the social rights of EU citizens.

# Sidney Ball Memorial Lectures 1920–2014

All the prewar Sidney Ball Lectures were formally published by Oxford University Press (except for that of Keynes in 1924, published by the Hogarth Press). The postwar lecture lists were compiled from many different sources. Some titles are not given, and other details are inconsistently recorded. From 1993 there are complete records.

Sir Horace Plunkett (1920) The universities and rural life

Sir William Ashley (1922) Scientific management and the engineering situation

GM Trevelyan (1923)

The historical causes of the present state of affairs in Italy

John Maynard Keynes (1924) The end of laissez faire

Lord Hugh Cecil (1925) Natural instinct the basis of social institutions

Sir Josiah Stamp (1926) The statistical verification of social and economic theory

Mrs Sidney Webb (1927) The English Poor Law: will it endure?

AC Pigou (1929) The functions of economic analysis

Sir William Beveridge (1930) The past and present of unemployment insurance Lord D'Abernon (1930) Foreign policy

Edwin Cannan (1931) Balance of trade delusions

The Right Hon. Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (1932) The machinery of government

RH Tawney (1934)

Juvenile employment and education

The Right Hon. Herbert Morrison (1934)

Man: the master or the slave of material things?

Dr Hermann Levy (1935) The new aspects of industrial combination

Sir H Llewellyn Smith (1937) The borderland between public and voluntary action in the social services

Sir Alexander Maxwell (1937) Treatment of crime

Dr AL Bowley (1938) The average and the individual Sir William Beveridge (1940) Some experiences of economic control in wartime

FP Walters (1941) Administrative problems of international organisation

JH Clapham (1942) The historian looks forward

HE Dale (1943) The personnel and problems of the higher civil service

Sir Walter Layton (1944) The British Commonwealth and world order

Henry Clay (1945) War and unemployment

Sir Oliver Franks (1947) The experience of a university teacher in the civil service

Robert Marjolin (1948) France's economic position and the european recovery programme

Harold Clay (1949) Industrial democracy

Edward A Shils (1949) Future developments in sociology in England

Lord Citrine (1951)
Problems of nationalised industries

Sir Douglas Copland (1953) The full employment economy, with special reference to wages policy

Alva Myrdal (1953) The social sciences programme of UNESCO

Sir Robert Hall (1954) The place of the economist in government

Francis Biddle (1955) The control of American foreign policy

Professor WA Lewis (1956) Taxation and economic development WJM Mackenzie (1957) The export of electoral systems

Barbara Wootton (1958) The arbitrator's task

Kenneth Younger (1959)

Trained manpower for new states – the scope for international action

Robert Marjolin (1960)

The common market: from customs union to economic unity

RM Titmuss (1962) Medical ethics and social change in

developing countries
Ralf Dahrendorf (1962)

Conflict and liberty – remarks on the social structure of German politics

Asa Briggs (1964) Social welfare past and present

DJ Robertson (1965) A nation of regions?

Aubrey Jones (1965)
Prices and income policy: reflections after the first six months

Sir Edward Boyle (1967) The place for educational expansion

Sir Eric Roll (1968)
The uses and abuses of economics

Professor Otto Kahn-Freund (1968) Industrial relations and the law: retrospect and prospect

Professor Leon Radzinowicz (1971–72) [No record of title available]

Professor James Meade (1972–3) Poverty in the welfare state

RHS Crossman (1973) The role of the volunteer in modern society

Tony Lynes (1974–75) [No record of title available]

Professor Edward Lipinski (1975–76) [No record of title available] In 1983 there was a term of Sidney Ball lectures:

Dr Jane Aldgate Social work and recession

David Donnison The prospects for social reform

Frank Field MP Socialism and freedom

Professor AH Halsey The social services in adversity – a review

Dr AF Heath In defence of comprehensive schools

Neville Johnson
The changing political contours of
the welfare state

GAN Smith Innovation, experiment and research in social services

In 1988 there was a term of Sidney Ball lectures:

Jonathan Bradshaw European demographic trends and their implications for social policy

David Donnison Are rights an essential component of any theory of social policy?

Robert Erikson Does the welfare state make people passive and dependent? A test against the Swedish experience

Graham Room Poverty in the European Community: trends and responses Professor Partha Dasgupta (1993) The population problem

Professor Howard Glennerster (2000) Trans-Atlantic influences in social policy

Professor Neil Gilbert (2007) The opt-out revolution: motherhood and social policy

Professor Paul Pierson (2007) Winner-take-all politics: policy and inequality in the new American political economy

Professor Greg Duncan (2009) Early childhood poverty and adult attainment

Professor Gøsta Esping-Andersen (2010) Life chances and early childhood investments

Professor Mark Lipsey (2011) Evidence-based interventions in juvenile justice: concept, research, practice, and frontiers

Professor John Hills (2012) The reform of the welfare state and the dynamics of people's lives

Baroness Ruth Lister (2013) Social policy in action: speaking truth to power

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Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford: the Barnett House Annual Reports and Statement of Accounts (1919–53); the Barnett House Old Students Association annual reports ('Green Books') (1948–94); miscellaneous publications 1916–2014.

Oxford college archives, in particular Nuffield, Wadham, Kellogg, Balliol and Lady Margaret Hall.

The Oxford History Centre: records of local voluntary organisations, council records, local newspapers, photographic archive (such as Henry Taunt). Pusey House for the papers of the Christian Social Union.

Outside Oxford: the archives of Toynbee Hall; SOAS (Leonard Barnes' papers); the LSE; the London Metropolitan Archive; the Modern Records Centre at Warwick University (social work and social administration archive, Younghusband papers, trade union collections).

Newspapers listed have generally been found in archived scrap books, with the exception of *Jackson's Oxford Illustrated Journal*, the *Oxford Magazine (University of Oxford)* and *The Oxford Times*.

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