





## Findings and highlights

- Network analysis imposes narrow boundaries around the networks to be investigated, invariably using quantitative methods like questionnaires. Qualitatively-driven approaches (particularly participatory social mapping) reveal rich accounts of the building, maintaining, dissembling, and interactions on a network.
- Combining qualitative methods help us to gain a fuller story, though we can never know the whole story about a network because they are dynamic and ever changing.
- One significant challenge in researching people's networks, neighbourhoods, and communities concerns getting at every-day interactions. Methods need to explicitly probe beyond the extraordinary and the unusual. Strategies of triangulation, through using secondary data, walkarounds, key-informants, and ethnographic immersion are important adjuncts to the face-to-face methods.
- Place is important in everyday life. The walking interviews provoke memories of events, activities, and attachment. They stimulate stories of aspiration and ontological fears and reveal boundaries hidden to the researcher.
- The reports of the death of geographically-situated communities are greatly exaggerated. Localities remain important in people's lives. Some people's networks remain very local-centric, particularly among deprived groups excluded from transport and communication technologies. Others have communities that span the globe. Communities may be reinforced daily or over considerably longer periods through a wide range of different media. However, meeting face-to-face remains the most important way in which ties are maintained.
- Communities reinforce particular identities among particular groups of people. Inequalities are perpetuated through community. These inequalities can not be adequately understood without consideration of dimensions of class, power, and relationships to other communities to achieve basic needs.

## Selected dissemination highlights

- A policy workshop with local operational and strategic policy makers in the public and third sectors
- A 'community life' exhibition held in the field-site for local residents and workers to triangulate and disseminate our findings.

See the Connected Lives Research and Publications pages of our website for outputs and publications.

## Research Team

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