NEGOTIATING POST-APARTHEID BOUNDARIES AND IDENTITIES: AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE CREATION OF A CAPE TOWN SUBURB

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DECLARATION

I the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and has not previously in its entirety or in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the complex and contested processes of drawing boundaries and negotiating identities in the post-Apartheid South African context by analysing how residents in a new residential suburb of Cape Town are working to carve out a new position for themselves in a changing social order.

Drawing on data gathered through participant observation, individual and focus group interviews, and household surveys between November 1998 and December 2000, the study examines how residents draw and negotiate boundaries in their search for stability, status, and community in a society characterised by social flux, uncertainty, ambiguity and contradiction. It explores the construction and shifting of identities believed to be embodied in those boundaries, at the levels of the individual, the household and the community. A range of everyday social and spatial practices - including streetscape design, its use and contestation, neighbourliness and sociality, household livelihoods and strategies, home maintenance and improvements - are shown to reveal residents' own conceptualisations of boundaries, their practical significance and symbolic power, as well as their permeability and transgression. The marking and maintenance of boundaries convey how social relationships, practices and power in the suburb are structured and continually negotiated. By analysing these actions and responses, the study illustrates some of the ways in which recent changes in South African society have unsettled the relationship between class, race and space to construct new boundaries and shape new identities.

The findings suggest that although social differentiation among the residents is increasingly being restructured around class, race remains a salient variable in residents' constructions of themselves and each other. Ethnic-religious prejudice is also shown to influence local conflict and constructions of community.

The study draws out four discourses through which residents contemplate and formulate circumstances and processes in their neighbourhood. The first emphasises racial integration, the second middle class suburban living, the third safety from crime, the fourth distrust and disorder. The discourses are significant, not only in their practical manifestation in everyday interaction but also because they suggest some of the ways in which connections and disconnections with the past, with the old identities and the old affiliations, are managed in a new, post-Apartheid South Africa.

ABSTRAK

Hierdie studie verken die komplekse en betwiste prosesse van die trek van grense en die onderhandeling van identiteite in die Suid-Afrikaanse post-Apartheid konteks, deur te analiseer hoe inwoners in 'n nuwe Kaapstadse residensiële voorstad te werk gaan om 'n nuwe posisie in 'n veranderende sosiale orde vir hulself daar te stel.

Op grond van data bekom deur deelnemende observasie, onderhoude met indiwidue en fokusgroepe, en opnames in huishoudings tussen November 1998 en Desember 2000, ondersoek die studie hoe inwoners grense trek en onderhandel in hulle soeke na stabiliteit, status, en gemeenskap in 'n samelewing gekenmerk deur sosiale vloeibaarheid, onsekerheid, dubbelsinnigheid en teenstrydigheid. Dit verken die konstruksie en die verskuiwing van identiteite wat gesien word as dat dit binne hierdie grense tuis hoort, op die vlakke van die indiwidu, die huishouding en die gemeenskap. 'n Reeks alledaagse sosiale en ruimtelike praktyke - insluitende omgewingsbeplanning, die benutting en betwisting daarvan, buurskap en gemeenskapsin, huishoudelike bestaansmiddele en strategieë, huisonderhoud en verbeterings - toon inwoners se eie voorstellings van grense, hulle praktiese betekenis en simboliese invloed, sowel as hulle deurdringbaarheid en oorskryding. Die afbakening en handhawing van grense deel mee hoe sosiale verhoudings, praktyke en mag in die voorstad gestruktureer en voortdurend onderhandel word. Deur hierdie optredes en reaksies illustreer die studie sommige van die wyses waarop onlangse veranderings in die Suid-Afrikaanse samelewing die verhouding tussen klas, ras en ruimte beïnvloed het om nuwe grense te konstrueer en nuwe identiteite te vorm.

Die bevindings suggereer dat, hoewel sosiale differensiasie tussen die inwoners toenemend geherstruktureer word wat klas betref, ras 'n duidelik waarneembare onderliggende veranderlike in inwoners se siening van hulleself en mekaar bly. Etnies-godsdienstige vooroordeel word ook getoon 'n invloed op plaaslike konflikte en die konstruksie van gemeenskappe te wees.

Die studie onthul vier diskoerse waardeur inwoners omstandighede en prosesse in hulle omgewing bedink en te kenne gee. Die eerste beklemtoon rasse-integrasie, die tweede voorstedelike middelklas lewenswyse, die derde misdaadsbeveiliging, die vierde wantroue en wanorde. Die diskoerse is betekenisvol, nie slegs in hulle praktiese manifestering in die daaglikse omgang nie, maar ook aangesien hulle sommige van die wyses waarop koppelings en ontkoppelings met die verlede, en sy ou identiteite en ou affiliasies, in 'n nuwe, post-Apartheid, Suid-Afrika hanteer word, suggereer.

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1. CONSTRUCTING A POST-APARTHEID SUBURB

In a time of unprecedented global interconnectedness, anthropologists are attempting to unravel a conundrum: what is the nature and meaning of locality as a lived experience in a world increasingly shaped by cultural, economic and political flows which transcend and destabilise the boundaries of the nation-state? How do people make sense of place and identity, of boundaries and belonging, when the meanings and their control are contested on both local and global scales? The conditions of global capitalism and late modernity are dissolving old boundaries and certainties, laying down new rules for engagement with society, capital and labour. Today's uncertainty appears to be of a particularly individualising kind, where past solidarities have been worn away by privatisation and competition. Contemporary living has thus been described as marked by a "combined experience of *insecurity* (of position, entitlements and livelihood), of *uncertainty* (as to their continuation and future stability), and of *unsafety* (of one's body, one's self and their extensions: possessions, neighbourhood, community)" (Bauman 2000:161). Anxiety is diffuse under conditions of moral insecurity, where "entropy, social wear and flux, ecological uncertainty and cosmic volatility" (Appadurai 1995:206) are palpable.

Seeking to understand the global-local dialectic in its contemporary forms, a number of anthropologists have called for, and produced, ethnographic case studies on the social and material production of localities, raising questions around identity construction, the symbolic boundaries of community, and the embodiment of local knowledge and practices (see for instance Appadurai 1995; Miller 1995; Donnan & Wilson 1999; Gewertz & Errington 1999; Comaroff & Comaroff 2000; Cohen 2000a). They show how social change involves a blurring of boundaries and thus the possible construction of new identities, as a new social order is forged. This process is both complex and contested, as people strive to make sense of the changing order and their position in it.

This study illustrates and analyses how residents in a Cape Town suburb are working to carve out a new position for themselves in a post-Apartheid South Africa. It approaches

the question of social change - and its lurching rhythm - by examining how residents draw and negotiate boundaries in their search for order, stability and status in a society characterised by social flux, uncertainty, ambiguity and contradiction. It explores the construction and shifting of identities believed to be embodied in those boundaries, at individual and household levels and at the level of community. A range of everyday social and spatial practices reveals the residents' own conceptualisation of boundaries, their practical significance and symbolic power, as well as their permeability and transgression. The marking and maintenance of boundaries convey how social relationships, practices and power in the suburb are structured and continually negotiated. By analysing these actions and responses, the study illustrates some of the ways in which recent changes in South African society have unsettled the former relationship between class, race and space, to construct new boundaries and shape new identities. This is particularly so in the middle classes[1], where recent expansion in the lower tier is attributed to the upward social mobility of people who under Apartheid were denied such access and opportunities. The majority of residents in the suburb discussed in this study are identified in this way; they are now consolidating their presence in the lower middle class and striving to continue their upward mobility. The changing social order has opened up possibilities for them to reinvent themselves, and this process is shaping new class and race relations, new identities, new social relations, and new patterns of consumption. It is expressed residentially in the establishment of, and aspirations toward, suburbia. But at the same time, other residents feel that the recent changes in South Africa have closed off their opportunities for prosperity and deprived them of most of the privileges they enjoyed under Apartheid. Unlike their upwardly mobile neighbours, they are experiencing downward mobility or simply living with a sense of standing still. These trajectories intersect within the particular social and spatial environment of the suburb, providing a valuable opportunity to examine lived experiences of social change in South Africa.

[1] I use the phrase 'middle classes' (plural) to emphasise the broadness and internal heterogeneity of the category.

The study thus localises broader changes in a lower middle class, non-racial, residential suburb in Cape Town. It examines the dialectical interaction between social and spatial conditions to identify and interpret processes of boundary marking and maintenance. It argues that the socio-spatial dialectic in the suburb is driven fundamentally by the physical and symbolic marking of boundaries between 'the private' and 'the public'. In other words, between spheres where residents feel they have more or less control and, concomitantly, more or less responsibility to invest resources. As their social relationships are being restructured around class rather than race, so are identities increasingly concerned with, and expressed in, the pursuit of social distinction and distance. This is sought through the protection of private property and interests, through proprietous behaviour, and through the dual practices of consumption and display. These interrelated concerns in turn reflect residents' attempts to consolidate and safeguard their achievements in upward social mobility when these are perceived to be under threat from growing social disorder and insecurity.

The findings resonate with contemporary developments on a national and global scale, where local responses to the challenges of economic liberalisation and democratisation are increasingly characterised by privatisation and fortification, as new boundaries for inclusion and exclusion are drawn. The case study presented here illustrates this general process while highlighting the particulars of the local context.

The study is based on fourteen months of fieldwork over a two-year period, from November 1998 to December 2000.

1.1 SUMMER GREENS: THE LOCALITY IN CONTEXT

The suburb in which I have chosen to explore these lived experiences of social change is called Summer Greens. Many Capetonians would not, if asked, be able to identify the suburb on a map of Cape Town. It is a suburb with only one egress, so with no thoroughfare casual or accidental passers-by are rare. The 1800 single-storey houses are hidden behind a 2-metre high perimeter wall, with only red roofs rising above it, except for a few double-storey houses and apartment blocks. Prospective home buyers seeking

property in the price range of Summer Greens may have heard of the place, perhaps even been inside to take a look. Residents explain to outsiders that they live next to Century City, a major new and upmarket retail, business, entertainment and residential complex, which opened in October 2000 to much public fanfare. For Summer Greens residents, Century City is fast becoming the key landmark by which they locate themselves in public discourse. Both places were developed by the same company, Monex. But Century City serves as an appropriate landmark to reflect residents' search for status through increased consumption activity. Also in close proximity to Summer Greens is a large industrial estate, Montague Gardens. Before the opening of Century City I had worked for two years in Summer Greens, during which time the residents located themselves in relation to Montague Gardens. Now Century City is the beacon by which they guide visitors to Summer Greens, the giant symbol which they use to tell how they have worked their way up in society and "arrived" in the middle classes, and how they are now different from those who have not.

Summer Greens is a new suburb, only ten years old. The final section - called Victoria Palms - was completed in 1998. In many ways Summer Greens typifies suburban environments world-wide with its collection of low-rise homes next to a large shopping mall. But the suburb has had its times of controversy and publicity, where the particularities of place, people and politics have been distilled. From the beginning, the development of Summer Greens was advertised as potentially giving "concrete shape to the face of the New South Africa" (Ilco Homes 1992:2). Creating a symbol which successfully embodied the new social order - or at least the part where an aspirant middle class is given new economic, social and political space in which to manoeuvre and prosper - would need a convergence of understanding among the actors involved of both purpose and process. The construction of a new, non-racial suburb required the *de jure* and *de facto* desegregation of residential space. To synthesise potentially divergent visions of the new neighbourhood required the compromise of both developer and local authorities: the former modified their designs as the latter overhauled traditional town planning principles and established new development parameters. Realising the vision was a lengthy, tense and costly process of confrontation, negotiation and cooperation,

which intensified as residents began to assert their visions of 'the community' and its needs. Generally, the decisions of the developer were (not surprisingly) guided by a profit motive, those of the local authority by legal positioning, based on fears of setting unsustainable precedents, as well as "the public interest" (roughly translated as wealthy, conservative ratepayers), while the residents' motivations oscillated between the well-being of the general public in Summer Greens to factional gain and individual self-interest.

Essentially, the negotiations concerned the positioning of boundaries - the abstract or material lines which define spaces, powers and identities. The reams of correspondence now stored in municipal archives and in files duly passed down through successive residents' association committees, the numerous meetings in council chambers or company boardrooms, in hired community halls or residents' living rooms, the lobbying and the stalling, all reflect the efforts of different groups to assert and enforce boundaries of authority and deference, based on what each regarded as the issues at stake. From the conceptualisation of the suburb's spatial design to the meticulous measurements made during building site inspection visits, the developers and the local authorities were setting out the spatial conditions under which future residents would interact, according to their respective notions of who these residents would be. Boundaries of public and private space were carefully stipulated in development plans and maps. Their position and dimensions defined the extent of ownership and thus responsibility for rates and maintenance. Unlike more traditional suburban developments, however, Summer Greens was unusual in its layout whereby the *appearance* of clearly defined public-private boundaries was deliberately reduced. According to the developer, enhancing "community spirit and a sense of neighbourhood identity" through spatial integration and fluidity was in accordance with the spirit of the New South Africa[2]. But over the years, residents responded by modifying the initial design; they began to draw out clearer boundaries between public and private space, as local struggles over control of these spaces

[2] "Summer Greens: Motivation Report for Application for Rezoning - Phase II", Ilco Homes, February 1994, File 16/3/2/4 Part 13.

intensified. The process of defining and practising community (cf. Halperin 1998) is essentially contested, but not always along predictable lines.

Therefore, to understand Summer Greens at the time of study (1998-2000), to grasp its textured meanings as a 'place' where lived experience is made meaningful in space through time, it is necessary to historicise its development. The rest of this chapter has two aims: First to situate the suburb's creation in a spatio-temporal context of a South Africa on the cusp of a new era, when the racialised (sub-)urban landscape and its technical-political management were being challenged by new non-racial legislation, new town planning principles and a new market of citizens/consumers. The second and associated aim is to introduce some of the particular socio-spatial dynamics around which locality and community in Summer Greens have been produced, both materially and symbolically, and the contested nature of this process. The following account thus reveals both some of the ways in which boundaries and identities - and responsibilities arising therefrom - were negotiated before the suburb even began to take real physical shape, and how these negotiations intensified as the financial implications of the development became clearer and the number of stakeholders grew. The central aspects and outcomes of the processes sketched here will be explored more fully in the remainder of the dissertation.

1.2 CHALLENGING APARTHEID SEGREGATION

While the development of Summer Greens was still in its early planning stages in the late 1980s, the South African government was realising that its policy of racial residential segregation was being manifestly undermined across South African cities in general. In a final attempt to control and limit the extent of urban deracialisation, the government introduced the *Free Settlement Areas Act of 1988*, which allowed the establishment of certain areas open to settlement by all race groups. Such areas were mainly to be declared on undeveloped, peripheral urban land, to avoid forcing anyone to live in an integrated neighbourhood (Christopher 1994).

Summer Greens is situated in the northern part of Cape Town, just inside the boundaries of what was then Milnerton Municipality, later known as Blaauwberg Municipality. Unlike other municipalities in Cape Town, Milnerton had until the late 1980s dealt primarily with white middle class residential areas, not least since 1976 when this part of Cape Town was declared an area exclusively for white people under the *Group Areas Act of 1950*[3]. Milnerton Municipality had less experience of desegregation than, for example, its neighbour, the Cape Town City Council, and this may explain some of its early actions as regards the development of Summer Greens.

At the time, the target market of the suburb's developer was the growing coloured and African middle classes, yet meeting this demand in Summer Greens would require the suburb to be declared a *Free Settlement Area*. The company claimed that it was "apolitical" and that "the bigger the market the happier we are" (*Cape Argus* 29/8/90). Milnerton Municipality, on the other hand, was less certain of the development. As negotiations proceeded, some white residents from nearby middle and upper class suburbs voiced their protests (mainly anonymously) in the local press and wrote letters to the local council concerning the "endless future problems" and "upheaval" which they believed the declaration would entail. They maintained that they were "not at all racialistic" and that they were "among the first to realise the need for housing other groups, but feel that it is totally unfair to create a free settlement area smack bang in the middle of three white housing residential areas"[4]. On the other hand, local residents' associations in these white areas were at pains to state that their members were "non-racist" and "very progressive" (*Cape Argus* 29/8/90).

Closed meetings at the municipal chambers heard conservative councillors concede that the prospect of racially mixed areas was no longer mere speculation but indeed an approaching reality, and opposition was ultimately futile given the reform measures

[3] Terminological ambiguity continues to bedevil post-Apartheid South Africa. Where relevant in this study, I use residual Apartheid categories to identify people, not to justify or reify the classification but to acknowledge the differential impact of Apartheid on groups so defined, and to more accurately reflect the terms still in common use. I use 'black' to refer to all those not classified as white (cf. Saff 1998; Bond 2000).

[4] Letter from 'Concerned' to Milnerton Municipality, 24 August 1990, File 16/3/2/4 Part 5.

promised by national government. Councillors' fears were barely allayed by government guarantees concerning the protection of "minority rights", and the briefing before a decisive council meeting in September 1990 called for calm, recognising that the matter was very likely to be emotional. Councillors were urged to be the "*moedige en dapper leiers*" [brave and courageous leaders] which South Africa needed in "*hierdie baie kritieke maar ook uitdagende era in sy geskiedenis*" [this very critical but also challenging era in its history][5].

In the end the council voted *for* the motion that Summer Greens be declared a *Free Settlement Area*, though one female councillor refused to be part of a decision which in fact fundamentally endorsed the principles of Apartheid; rather than establish a small non-racial enclave within an otherwise segregated city, she pleaded with the council to reject *all* legislation which prescribed residential areas for people based on the colour of their skin[6]. Her objections were brushed aside by the mayor, and the developer of Summer Greens was thus granted permission to take its application forward to the Free Settlement Board in Pretoria, that Summer Greens may be proclaimed open to all, irrespective of racial classification. Burdened with 56 applications nation-wide (Christopher 1994), the Board was slow to process Summer Greens. Thus, when Mr Clark, an estate agent and later resident of Summer Greens, sold the first few houses to black buyers in March and April of 1991, he still had to obtain permits for the buyers from the relevant authorities (which at the time was the Cape Provincial Administration) allowing black citizens to reside in areas designated for white occupation only. Mr Clark has kept one such permit, which he intends to auction some day.

Meanwhile, the final granting of approval for rezoning into a *Free Settlement Area* was intercepted by national political events; on 30 June 1991 the *Group Areas Act* and the *Free Settlement Areas Act* were repealed with the promulgation of the *Abolition of Racially Based Land Measures Act of 1991.* Nonetheless, Summer Greens became the first post-Apartheid suburban housing development in Cape Town (a local estate agent

[5] Town Planning Committee Meeting, 5 September 1990, S.CTP.1/90, File 16/3/2/4 Part 4.
[6] Minutes of Town Planning Committee Meeting, 5 September 1990, TP.150/90 File 16/3/2/4 Part 5.

claimed in the whole of South Africa) which was open to all irrespective of racial classification.

Being built on previously undeveloped land, Summer Greens presented an historical opportunity to launch a community in which no Apartheid-designated population category (i.e. racist) was more or less entitled to reside. In South Africa, the process of residential desegregation is normally conceptualised as a movement of members of one population category into an area previously zoned for, and occupied by, members of another (Hart 1996; Saff 1998). But Summer Greens was unique in Cape Town: As mentioned above, most of the northern part of Cape Town was zoned for white occupation only, but unlike other parts of the city which have experienced limited class-based desegregation, Summer Greens does not have a history of forced removal of one or more race groups to make way for another. No-one can thus claim historical rights to the land, and theoretically there should be no consequential stigma of prejudice attached to the land on which Summer Greens has been developed.

In the early stages, however, estate agents working in Summer Greens still had to contend with the perception that the suburb was a white area. Initial sales were mainly to white buyers, until the developer launched an advertising campaign specifically targeting blacks. Press releases, distribution of flyers and radio advertising in the Cape Flats (an area of Greater Cape Town to which most coloured and African citizens were removed under the *Group Areas Act*) paid off, and the racial demographics of Summer Greens began to shift.

In 2000, the racial profile roughly corresponded with the population distribution in Cape Town as a whole; around half of the suburb's residents could be classified coloured, just over one third white, and the rest African, except for a small percentage classified as Asian. This aspect has been an important attraction for a number of residents, who spoke of Summer Greens as "the New South Africa", where "there are no barriers when it comes to race". The pioneering spirit of the first residents in the early 1990s appears to have laid the foundation for what a non-resident in a letter to a newspaper considered "the

model for harmonious co-existence in South Africa" (*Cape Times* 5/9/00). My own observations suggest that inter-racial interaction in public generally ranges from the courteous to the affectionate (though exceptions do occur), but in private conversations I have encountered both subtle and outspoken racism.

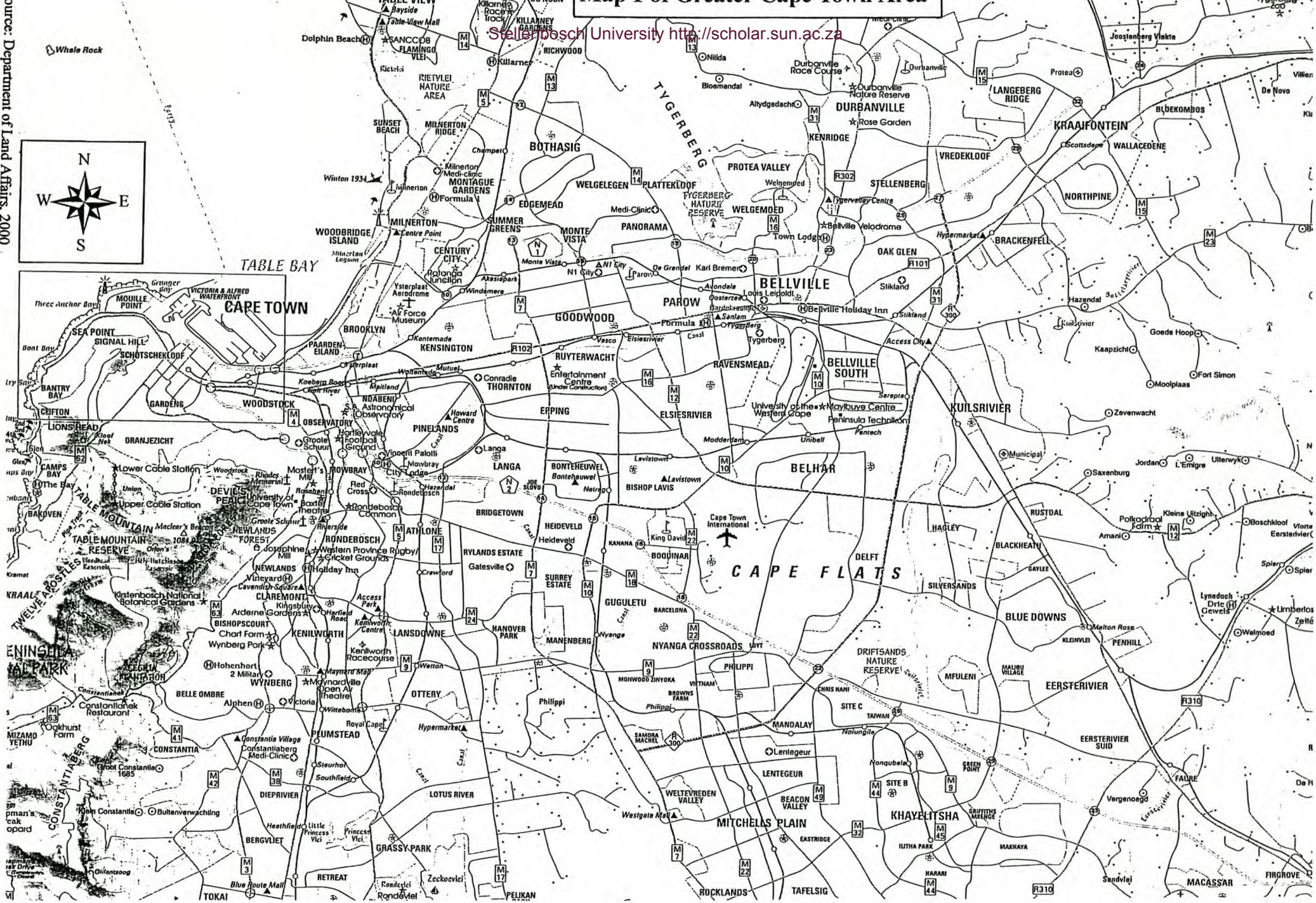
1.3 PLANNING AND DESIGN: A BREAK WITH TRADITION

Summer Greens lies only ten kilometres from the centre of Cape Town to the west and Bellville to the east. It is two kilometres from the central business area of Milnerton, which is situated along the north-bound Koeberg Road - an Activity Spine or Corridor in town planning parlance. The suburb is flanked by two national highways, the N1 and N7 (see Map 1, page 11, and Map 2, page 12). From this perspective, metropolitan accessibility and location are very favourable. Indeed, the land on which Summer Greens now stands might long ago have been considered prime land, if it were not for one major drawback: the area is low-lying and prone to floods during rainy seasons. Residents quip that Summer Greens should really have been called Winter Marshes.

From the mid-1960s onwards, several applications for the development of a residential area were lodged with the municipal authorities in Milnerton. Each of them failed, primarily because they did not sufficiently address the crucial need for a stormwater drainage outfall, which had to be developed independently of existing drainage infrastructure, imposing a prohibitive cost on would-be developers.

In April 1987, a company called Holdem (Pty) Ltd submitted a proposal to the Milnerton Municipality which promised a whole new solution to the problem: The stormwater expense could be offset by building higher residential density on smaller plots, thereby increasing profitability. However, such a development would break with the traditional philosophy underpinning town planning in Milnerton Municipality, which among other things considered higher density to be closely correlated with lower standards of living and (sub)urban decay. Or put differently, the bigger the plot, the wealthier the resident, the better the ratepayer, the bigger the asset to the municipality. Departing from this planning principle and adopting a new "flexible" approach would require substantial

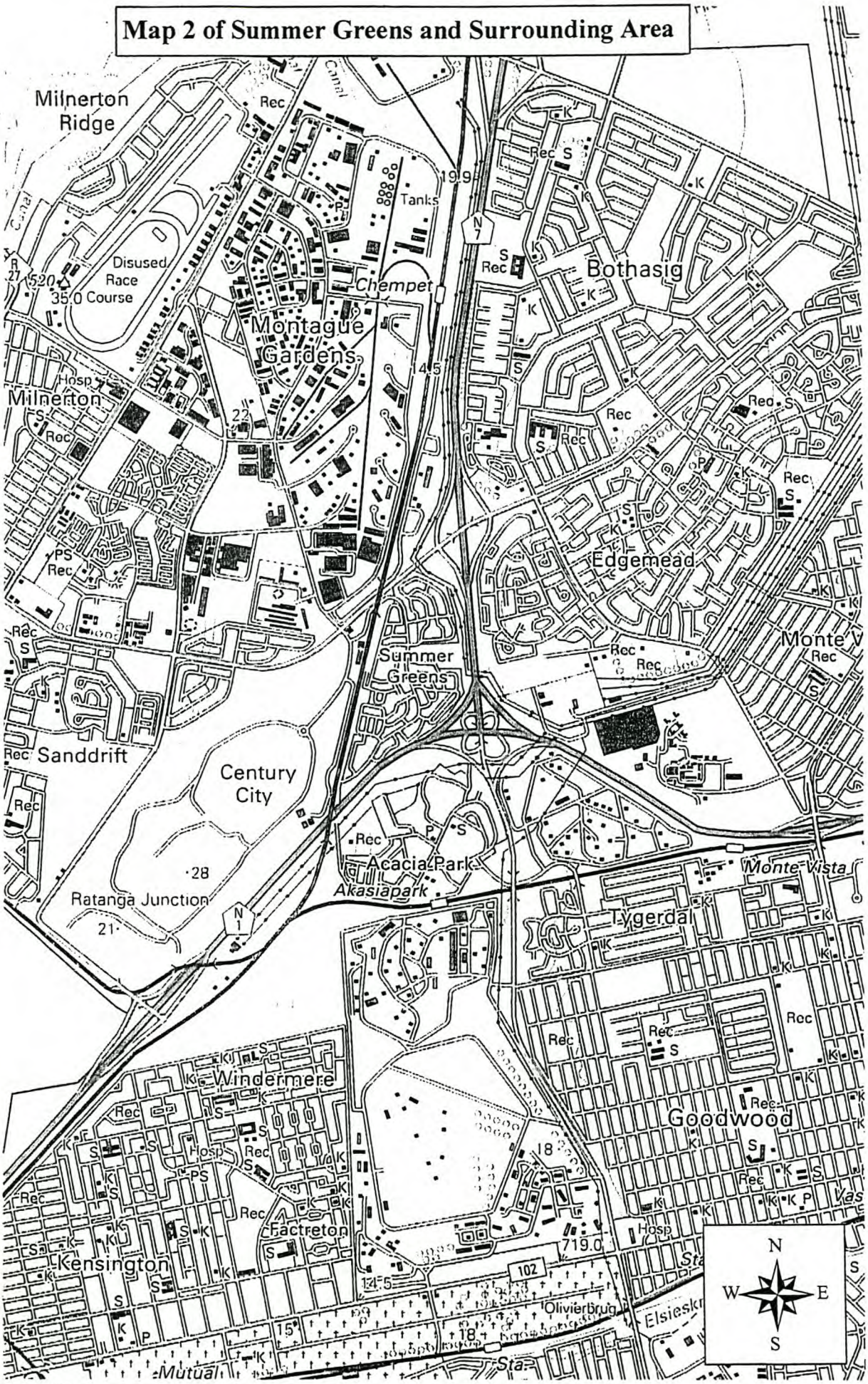
Map 1 of Greater Cape Town Area



ource: Department of Land Affairs, 2000

cale: 1:200 000

Map 2 of Summer Greens and Surrounding Area



Source: Department of Land Affairs, 1998
Scale: 1:25 000

adjustment across a range of municipal departments, and as always the municipality was concerned that "due cognisance must be given to the conservatism of the present ratepayers"[7].

Based in Natal, Holdem had by the late 1980s built a fair track record of mass housing delivery through state-subsidised contracts. With its recent success in developing the award-winning Strandfontein Village to the south of Cape Town, aimed at the higher end of the coloured housing market, Holdem had now positioned itself at the forefront of progressive design and development of middle income residential areas in South Africa[8]. The design of Strandfontein Village, where development began in 1983, was unusual in that it introduced the concept of the "*woonerf*" to South Africa.

1.3.1 The *Woonerf*

Inspired by Dutch town planning, the *woonerf* (plural: *woonerven*) is a form of medium to high density housing centred around a residential street with no sidewalk; instead the street itself is a pedestrian lane, brick-paved rather than tarred. The street is generally curved, with "straight runs" of road not exceeding 100 metres. Linear tracks such as kerb lines are avoided where possible. The street is narrower than conventional streets (down to 6,5m wide) and, faced with traffic islands and speed bumps here and there, as well as the curved design, vehicles are forced to slow down[9]. A *woonerf* may consist of up to 50 houses which are generally single residential, free-standing structures of different designs. They are placed at different angles on the properties and at varying distances from the front. The back of each property is a small yard enclosed by a 2-metre high concrete wall. The front is a grassed area which is intended to be 'open', with no fences, hedges or walls around it.

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[7] Briefing to Town Planning Committee, 6 October 1987, TP.118/87 File 16/3/2/4 Part 2.

[8] But see *Cape Argus* 22/2/99: "Young family's 60 000 rands dream home crumbles into nightmare" which tells how a family bought a house in Strandfontein from Ilco Homes in 1990, but since then the house has split open across the roof and floor, and has been uninhabitable for several years. Apparently the house has no foundation.

[9] "Summer Greens: Motivation Report for Application for Rezoning - Phase II", Ilco Homes, February 1994, File 16/3/2/4 Part 13; Carr *et al* 1992.

The *woonerf* is designed with an overriding objective in mind: to build medium to high-density housing on individual plots while still achieving a sense of - and access to - open space. Thus the streetscape is intended to provide a living environment where hard boundaries between public and private space are softened: front lawns 'flow' into the hardened street area, with no physical barriers (fences, hedges or walls) marking the different spaces allowed. The *woonerf* is a distinct break with the traditional suburban layout, where houses are built in straight lines, equidistantly spaced, and traffic-oriented streets are developed in a grid-like pattern. The differently angled positioning of properties in the *woonerf* is intended to "provide interest and reduce monotony"[10], while the street design is such that there is no clear separation between pedestrian and vehicle movement space; in other words, the narrow width and curvature of the *woonerf* street is meant to ensure that it remains the domain of the pedestrian rather than fast-moving vehicles.

The *woonerf* concept thus entails a "totally integrated design approach where the street hardened area is harmoniously combined with each individual house to create a residential precinct which revolves around a landscaped living environment and not a traditional traffic-oriented street" (page 12). The developer argued that the combination of high-density housing with a *woonerf* environment achieves several objectives that make the development attractive to prospective buyers and residents. The streets become a safe playground and meeting place for neighbours which encourages social interaction to "enhance community spirit and a sense of neighbourhood identity" (page 15). Security is improved through increased "visual and social contact" whereby the public has full view of activities in the street and in front of houses. As the developer claimed, "In our turbulent and insecure society this is an aspect which is vital to the peace of mind of the family and family head" (page 17). The streets "become semi-private/public areas which greatly reduces the impact of high density because there is no clear definition of private/public space" (page 13), and this in turn extends a sense of ownership beyond the front of the property and onto the street.

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[10] "Formal Submission of Summer Greens - Phase I", page 13, Ilco Homes, October 1989, File 16/3/2/4 Part 3; unless stated otherwise, the quotations in the following passages are from this document.

Holdem not only regarded "integrated development" as the result but also as the necessary process. Strandfontein Village had followed a so-called "Total Design" strategy, whereby all parties are involved in the development coordinate and integrate ideas and activities right from inception to completion of the scheme. By the mid-1990s, "integrated development" had become a central concept in contemporary town planning discourse in South Africa[11]. But in the 1980s the idea, and its corollary of a flexible design and planning philosophy, were considered "radical"[12]. As Mr Morris, former manager for the developer, told me:

> It gives the full overview when you integrate, for example, the civil engineers, the architects, the town planners, all of them working together, rather than separate. [As developers] we were with them from the beginning to the end. We were even part of the sales process; we stayed to the bitter end to make sure the homebuyers were happy with our product.

Total Design lessens the need for regular development and building controls. Therefore once the plans for the suburb have been approved by the local authorities, the developer should be able to proceed without too much interference from the authorities and costly delays in construction. Moreover, smaller plots and higher density mean more profit can be generated from the same large piece of land, as more properties reduce the overall costs of individual plots. For a developer motivated by profit, the benefits of constructing a suburb of *woonerven* are thus significant.

Given the municipality's concerns over plot sizes and densities, Holdem was at pains to explain which aspects of a *woonerf* development specifically benefited the municipality. These included the assertion that the design provides for affordable home ownership as the higher density reduces the cost of each plot, and that the higher density means increased rates income from the suburb. A further advantage arose from the layout itself, whereby residents' sense of ownership was to extend right into the road, which would release the local authority from the burden of maintaining grass verges or pedestrian walkways. Finally, Holdem asserted that higher densities supported the viable provision

[11] See, for example, the Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (Cape Metropolitan Council 1996) and the Municipal Spatial Development Framework (City of Cape Town 1999). See also Hall 1992.
[12] Briefing to Town Planning Committee, 6 October 1987, TP.118/87 File 16/3/2/4 Part 2.

of facilities for the whole community (public open spaces, shops, recreation facilities, places of worship etc.).

1.3.2 Negotiating Control

It nonetheless took over two years to reach some measure of consensus between the two parties on the general planning and development parameters. Tensions came to a head at a meeting on 26 September 1989 when the developer, which in November 1987 had changed its name to Ilco Homes Ltd, threatened to move its potential investment in Summer Greens to the Cape Town City Council by applying for the land to be incorporated into the city council's municipal boundaries. As mentioned earlier, Summer Greens lies at the boundary between Milnerton Municipality and the Cape Town City Council, hence the re-delimitation would not have been infeasible. Ilco Homes stated that the Cape Town City Council, under whose authority Strandfontein Village had been developed, had a far more progressive and competent approach as well as a fast-track system to avoid costly delays. According to Ilco Homes, a Council's attitude can "make or break any developer"[13]. Milnerton Municipality dismissed this as "pressure tactics" and said that Ilco Homes had an unfortunate "all or nothing attitude"[14].

However, a few days later the municipality in fact acceded to several of Ilco Homes' demands, including those concerning density and flexible building lines. In addition, the municipality waived its endowment (development contribution) requirements. The municipality had earlier insisted on being paid 5% of the 11 million rands for which Ilco Homes had acquired the land in March 1989 *as well as* 5% of the sale price of all the subsequent individual erven (plots) before they could be transferred to homebuyers. Ilco Homes successfully queried the legality of this levy on the basis of the recommendations of the *Commission of Inquiry into Township Establishment and Related Matters* (1984) and the *Land Use Planning Ordinance 15 of 1985*. Milnerton Municipality then retracted

[13] Minutes of Meeting between Ilco Homes and Town Planning Committee, 26 September 1989, File 16/3/2/4 Part 3.
[14] Briefing to Town Planning Committee, 30 October 1989, File 16/3/2/4 Part 3.

its demand but insisted that the Summer Greens development must then meet the following three criteria:

- it must be "upmarket in relation to the Strandfontein project";
- it must constitute a "community" rather than a "township" development: This implies that the developer provides "everything" at its own expense, that is, the open spaces, architectural features, sporting amenities, schools, churches, shopping complexes and similar facilities;
- it must guarantee that Milnerton Municipality would have no financial or other responsibility for the development, i.e. no costs arising from the development would be passed on to the ratepayers of Milnerton[15].

Ilco Homes accepted these conditions and in January 1990 officially abandoned its plans to move to another local authority. The project could finally proceed from paper to reality.

However, Ilco Homes' threat to transfer its resources elsewhere resurfaced after a further two years of frustration during which both parties accused the other of misconduct and blackmail. Ilco Homes argued that Milnerton Municipality continued to impose unnecessary and unreasonable development conditions and that it frequently and deliberately stalled approvals, causing enormous financial losses to the company, as it had already started construction. Ilco Homes accused Milnerton Municipality of being conservative and inflexible and unwilling to "accept modern realities and planning principles" regarding this kind of development[16]. The following incident, one of several, confirmed to Ilco Homes that Milnerton Municipality was unable to cope with the concept and scale of the Summer Greens development and was trying to hide behind costly and time-consuming bureaucratic formalities:

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[15] *ibid.*; Letter from Milnerton Municipality to Ilco Homes, 2 November 1989, File 16/3/2/4 Part 3. Note: The word "township" may conjure up a variety of positive and negative images. In popular discourse in South Africa, it commonly applies to a residential area for blacks, initially referring to the public housing estates planned as complete entities for African and coloured residents. Today the term is generally extended to the entire residential area, including informal, unplanned settlements as well as privately developed middle and upper class housing in these areas. In town planning discourse, however, "township" merely refers to a piece of land which has been subdivided in accordance with plans for it to be sold off for development.

[16] Letter from Director to Chief Executive of Ilco Homes, 12 November 1991, File 16/3/2/4 Part 9.

> Ilco was asked to stop work on its Builders' Yard because the buildings used were too high a standard, so detailed plans were required to be formally approved before the development commenced. At that stage - holding costs were running at 7 000,00 rands per day. [Milnerton Municipality] admitted that, had we used containers, wood and iron sheds and other inferior materials - as smaller developers do - no plans would be required.

Ilco Homes countered that the municipality had shown "a lack of understanding, knowledge and experience of the sensitivities, technical and logistic intricacies of large-scale residential development[17].

Of greatest concern was Milnerton Municipality's refusal to issue the clearance certificates necessary for properties to be transferred to buyers; the municipality argued that Ilco Homes had not fulfilled its obligations to the municipality in terms of stormwater drainage and road access. Ilco Homes denied it had reneged on any responsibilities. When the story hit the headlines in the local press in late 1991, "sales came to a virtual standstill, more than half of existing sales were cancelled [and] financial institutions withdrew bond approvals and refused to accept further applications" until the reputation of Summer Greens was restored[18]. Ilco Homes intimated that if negotiations reached a deadlock and the area could no longer be developed, it might be occupied by squatters, which would present the State, the Provincial Administration and Milnerton Municipality with a costly problem.

Milnerton Municipality responded that Ilco Homes' criticisms were "extremely selective and subjective", its attitude "intransigent", and that "the Ilco house is far from being in order". Several documents detail how Ilco Homes had cut serious corners with regard to the quality of construction and had proceeded with unauthorised work, which not only made a mockery of municipal procedures but would have severe implications for future maintenance, the cost of which would fall to the municipality (and thus Milnerton ratepayers). "The company has a habit of proceeding on the basis of sorting out the paperwork later", said the Town Engineer[19]. Was this what Ilco Homes meant by

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[17] *ibid.*
[18] *ibid.*; *Table Talk and Mail*, 12 September 1991.
[19] Letter from Town Engineer to Town Clerk, 3 March 1992, File 16/3/2/4 Part 9.

"integrated development"? As far as Ilco Homes' squatter scenario was concerned, Milnerton Municipality considered it a political blackmail to which it refused to yield.

However, "as an expression of goodwill" the Municipality again acceded to several of Ilco Homes' demands, for example that the municipality be responsible for providing street lighting and external services, such as sewer, water, electricity and telephone connections to the boundary of Summer Greens, and for constructing one of the road turning slots into the suburb[20]. At the same time the Municipality refused to take the blame for declining sales, saying that the bond-holding banks' reaction was due to their concern "at the problems that were visually obvious with storm-water standing over a large part of the site with many of the stands being completely water-logged together with the standard and quality of building work"[21].

Having won several concessions, Ilco Homes once again shelved its plans to relocate to the Cape Town City Council, and by mid-1992 a measure of conciliation was restored between the parties. But the delays arising from these laborious contentions and damaging media reports impacted on sales of houses in Summer Greens. The development of the suburb now required a substantial damage control exercise to improve the company's reputation, the suburb's image and sales figures. Ilco Homes distributed brochures pledging its commitment to quality and affordability, alongside its policy of sustainable development. For its part, Milnerton Municipality agreed to be more discreet with what information it circulated both within its internal structures and to the media. Sales figures began to improve. But the early 1990s were also times of political uncertainty and tension in South Africa that were affecting potential buyers. According to Mr Morris, former manager of Ilco Homes, sales up to the landmark General Election in April 1994 were erratic:

> The month Chris Hani was killed [April 1993] sales dropped to four. That was the reaction in the public. But next month sales caught up and 60 homes were sold. But then something else would happen, so sales went up and down.

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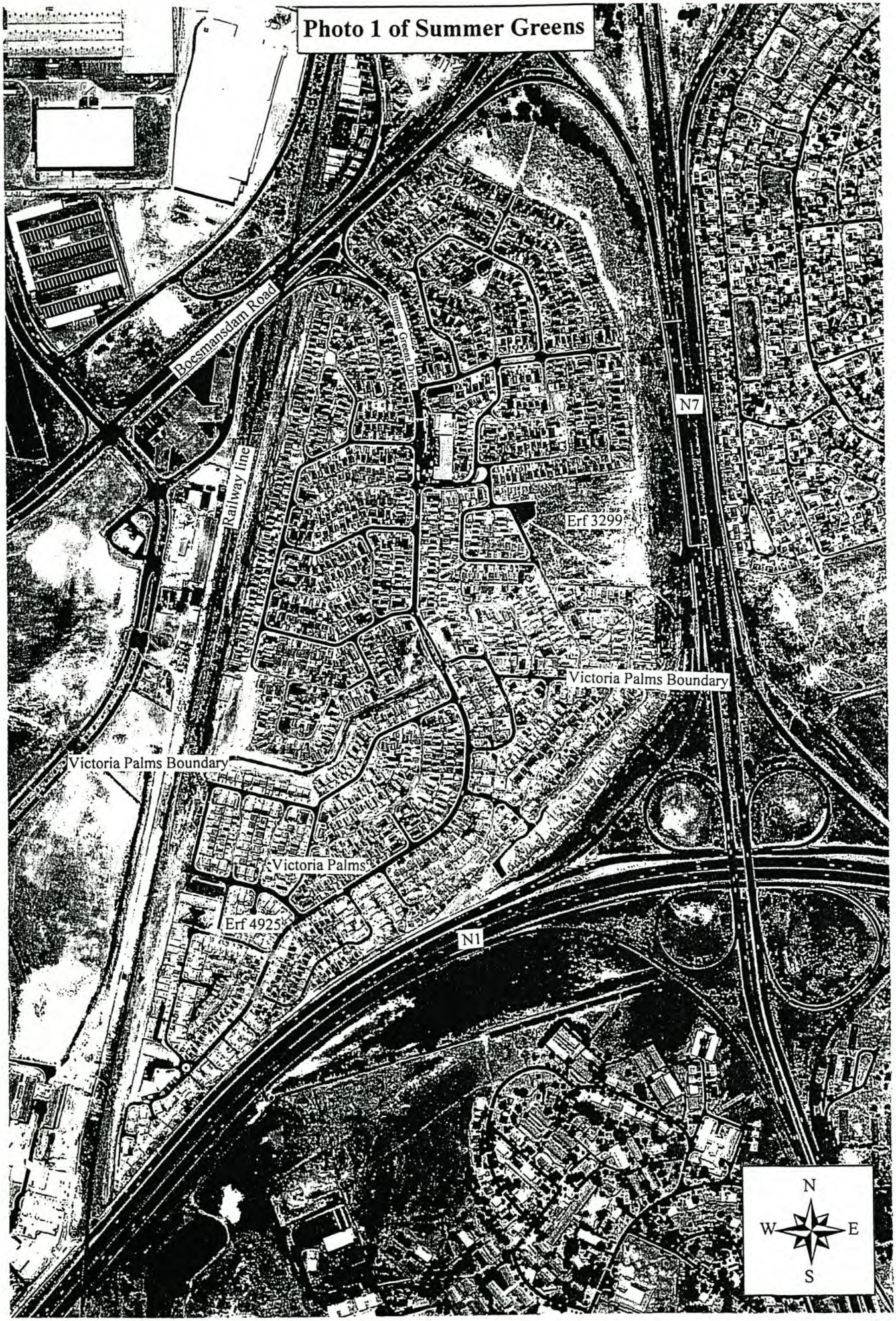
[20] Minutes of Special Strictly Confidential Meeting of Council, 10 March 1992, File 16/3/2/4 Part 9.
[21] *ibid.*

As Ilco Homes set about attracting potential buyers, current owners began voicing their disappointment with the quality of construction: major cracks and rising damp started appearing in walls and tiles were coming loose. Ilco Homes now faced serious complaints of structural defects due to shoddy workmanship and poor building practice, not just from residents but also from Milnerton Municipality[22].

The multitude of problems had taken their financial toll on Ilco Homes, compounding the debt already accumulated from other projects. By early 1995, Ilco Homes owed Boland Bank over 83 million rands. The bank urged the company to reduce its debt or face insolvency. Despite selling an option on the remainder of Summer Greens land (west of the railway - see Map 2, page 12) to a company called Monex Development, Ilco Homes remained on the brink of liquidation. A controversial deal followed whereby Boland Bank forced Ilco Homes to sell out to Monex, allegedly for one rand. The settlement was questioned by observers, not least because the chairman of Boland Bank, billionaire entrepreneur Christo Wiese, also happened to be chairman of Monex. The agreement was that if Boland Bank would guarantee continued financial support to Monex, and if Monex would obtain equity in Ilco Homes' assets after the bank had recouped its loans, then Monex would return the company to profit (*Financial Mail* 29/9/95; *Finance Week* 14/12/95). Through strategic restructuring, especially the sale of non-core assets, Ilco Homes was "back in the black" by September 1996 and the company's name changed to Monex Limited: The road was now paved for Monex to implement its plans for the three billion rands Century City development, duly underwritten by Boland Bank (*Financial Mail* 1/11/96, 7/3/97).

The change-over in management thus radically redefined both the physical boundaries and the overall design of what was supposed to have been a single major residential development called Summer Greens, covering the whole area stretching from the N7 highway in the east to the Ysterplaat Military Airfield in the west, and bisected by the railway line. In the event, Monex completed the phase to the east of the railway line,

[22] "Structural Report to Milnerton Municipality", VKE Consulting Engineers, 21 November 1994, File 16/3/2/4 Part 15.



Source: Department of Land Affairs, 2000
Scale: 1:6250

which is what remains as Summer Greens. It then redesigned the large area to the west and renamed it Century City.

1.3.3 Introducing Distinction in the Streetscape

The change of management also had a significant impact on the landscape of what remained as Summer Greens. Monex redesigned and streamlined the plans for the remaining southern half of the development yet to be completed, changing the streetscapes in the process. It discontinued aspects of the *woonerf* concept and modified others, it reduced plot and house sizes, limited the choice of architectural styles offered by Ilco Homes, and improved the quality of construction. The house prices were increased. It built several low-rise apartment blocks, each surrounded by a wall and with access-control security features. Palm trees were planted along the main road running through the suburb. Mr Morris, who continued working under Monex until Summer Greens was complete, mused that both Ilco Homes and Monex were "selling a lifestyle", but "Monex was into the minds of people, they got into the marketing, dazzling people with a bit of glitz and glamour, making things seem more exclusive". The difference between the two phases was attenuated by a new status bestowed on the second half of the suburb: Monex renamed this area "Victoria Palms" and erected signs along the main road saying "Welcome to Victoria Palms" and "Thank you for visiting Victoria Palms" (Aerial Photo of Summer Greens, page 21, shows the boundary, south of which is Victoria Palms). Outside Summer Greens along the boundary wall, billboards advertised Victoria Palms as "superb location", "secure living", "unequalled lifestyle", and the axiomatic "so central, so secure, so superb, so Victoria Palms!". The distinction has become inscribed on residents' cognitive map of Summer Greens: Victoria Palms is generally considered more up-market, more prestigious, despite its smaller properties. I met a number of residents in Victoria Palms who referred to their address both verbally and in writing as being "Victoria Palms, Summer Greens", rather than merely "Summer Greens". Some residents in the first part of Summer Greens spoke of Victoria Palms residents as "snobs", but others said that if they had to move somewhere else within Summer Greens, they would prefer the Victoria Palms section, both for aesthetics and for

quality: the houses are smaller, but they are "nicer" and "better built", adding a dash of distinction to one's address.

1.4 CONTESTING SPACE AND IDENTITY IN SUMMER GREENS

As suggested above, the spatial layout of Summer Greens has several striking features, from the single egress, the perimeter wall and the *woonerf* streetscape to the distinctly higher status accorded one section of the suburb. But other aspects of the built environment are striking for their absence: there are very few public open spaces and recreational facilities, and those that exist are poorly maintained and unattractive to most residents. Apart from a pub for those over 18 and a couple of garages which have been converted into 'games arcades' for those under 18, there are no indoor public venues for people to meet socially. This reality is in stark contrast to the original development plans for the suburb, on the basis of which many residents had purchased their properties: they were promised a variety of community facilities including sports fields, schools, a hall, and cafés (or "tea gardens", as the developer called them (Ilco Homes 1992:12), perhaps considering the term more suggestive of a leisured - English? - middle class), and the failure of any of them to materialise had aggrieved residents for years by the time of my study.

As the suburb filled up and vacant land became increasingly scarce, a battle broke out between residents and Monex, as the latter wished to continue building houses on any land still undeveloped. Residents argued that both developers, Ilco Homes and Monex, had broken their promises; they spoke of a sense of betrayal and that their needs had been sacrificed for business profits. Aspirations of suburban community life, with local facilities, were articulated through the fears of social disorder and decline. As the battle over space intensified, residents also felt increasingly let down by the municipality, which - depending on the most recent events in the negotiation process - was either regarded as stubbornly asserting its power with scant regard for residents' interests, or seen as a weak body which had allowed itself to be manipulated by the financial power of a large developer.

The struggle came to be more than just a claim to community facilities; it evoked broader issues about community and representation, for it raised the question of who, in fact, constituted 'the community' whose needs and rights were being violated? The Summer Greens Residents Association, set up in 1992, was the official body representing all residents and seeking a hall and sports fields on the vacant land. On the other hand, Muslim residents (numbering less than 5% of the 1800 households in Summer Greens) had organised themselves into a separate association and were appealing for the same vacant land upon which to build a mosque. They referred to themselves as "the Muslim community of Summer Greens" and were represented by a body called The Summer Greens Islamic Association. Their offer to share the mosque facilities where possible with all residents was rejected by non-Muslim residents for reasons which generally reflected fear and prejudice (see Chapter Seven).

The conflict over space and facilities thus became a struggle also to define the community. It framed and conveyed different ideas of what the neighbourhood should 'look like', what it should provide, protect and prioritise, and how these aims should be met. Similar concerns were revealed in a range of other disputes over the rights to, and uses of, both public and private space. In other words, the ways in which space was contested reflected a struggle to define and control identity and membership boundaries in Summer Greens.

To regulate social control, residents can engage a range of mechanisms, from avoidance, complaints to the offender or to a third party (e.g. the Residents Association, the police or the municipality), and negotiation, to legal action. The first three are most common, while legal action is hardly ever undertaken - although it is used as a threat in most disputes. A powerful instrument which residents not infrequently resort to is zoning legislation. Land use zoning is essentially about mapping particular social values and moral judgements onto the landscape, and it is thus a prime mechanism through which residents can maintain boundary control locally. In so doing, they assert their visions of the community while critiquing other models of locality.

1.5 DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

This chapter has formulated the central problem explored in the dissertation - the complex and contested processes of drawing boundaries and negotiating identities in a new residential suburban space - and set the scene for an illustration of some of the ways in which recent changes in South African society, as well as contemporary global realities, have unsettled the relationship between class, race and space. The chapter has provided an overview of the creation of Summer Greens in terms of its broader historical context and the politics of its planning and development, and introduced significant local particularities which will be examined in more detail in the remaining chapters.

Chapter Two sets out the theoretical framework and methodology with which I have approached the subject and the suburb. It defines key concepts of class and race, community and boundary, place and identity, everyday life and the suburb, as I have applied them in my research. It also discusses attempts at quantifying recent shifts in the racial composition of the middle classes, anticipating the profile of Summer Greens presented in the chapter which follows. Furthermore in Chapter Two I explain the combination of data collection methods, their value and shortcomings, and I reflect on my own position in, and interaction with, the field site. An awareness of the conditions under which knowledge was produced is critical to understanding how I approached meanings, ambiguities and contradictions in Summer Greens as they emerged during my research.

Chapter Three presents the contours of the streetscape, discussing place-meanings embodied therein, and introduces the residents appearing in the study.

Chapter Four explores notions of privacy in its discussion of ideas and practices around neighbourliness and sociality as they are both mediated and constrained by the residential streetscape. It describes the daily negotiation of rights to behave and rights to interfere, as residents assert different ideas of what is appropriate behaviour and what is considered to be a transgression of the unwritten rules of middle class suburban living. The findings show that in the new social landscape of Summer Greens, tension between neighbours arises not only from the crossing of public-private boundaries but that sometimes the very

definition of private space itself is being contested. The chapter discusses some of the ways in which residents have responded to conflicting understandings of privacy and propriety. It proceeds to explore broader social networks and activities in the suburb through which residents construct particular boundaries and contest others.

Chapter Five examines livelihoods and household strategies through which residents seek to maintain (and improve) their standard of living, and it considers the personal, material and social effects of these strategies. It considers perceptions of class status and mobility and discusses the local economic pattern which incorporates more traditional working class models of householding and the economic organisation more typical of middle class neighbourhoods, combining both formal and informal relations of exchange. The chapter shows how a number of livelihoods rely on the ambiguity and flexibility of spaces, yet the contested presence of some businesses reveals divergent ideas of what is acceptable commercial activity in a residential area and in private space.. By invoking land use zoning legislation to oppose certain businesses, residents are seeking legal sanction for a particular understanding of the cultural economy of the suburb.

Chapter Six looks at the meanings of home and home ownership and how they intersect with residents' understandings of respectability, social mobility and class status. It shows how housing tenure and consumption are regarded as an important index of class position, and how renting is considered a transitional phase before achieving the socially desirable status of home owner. One way in which home owners ward off the danger associated with the socially marginal category of tenant is to engage in home improvement activities. The chapter includes a discussion around these practices as rituals of ordering private space when boundaries are threatened, and of establishing social distance and distinction.

Chapter Seven reiterates the power of land use zoning as a mechanism for regulating both land use and social relationships, focusing now on public open space and community facilities. The chapter tells the story broached above of competing claims to the use of undeveloped land for either a mosque, or a community hall, or for housing. It

shows how divergent definitions of community - and religious prejudice - emerged during the dispute, and it discusses the organisational dynamics of the community bodies involved in the dispute, again raising questions of power and resistance as well as representation and participation.

Chapter Eight, the concluding chapter, reviews the findings and draws out four discourses through which residents contemplate and formulate circumstances and processes in their neighbourhood. The first emphasises racial integration, the second middle class suburban living, the third safety from crime, the fourth distrust and disorder. The discourses are significant, not only in their practical manifestation in everyday interaction, as shown in the preceding chapters, but also because they suggest some of the ways in which connections and disconnections with the past, with the old identities and old affiliations, are managed in a new, post-Apartheid environment.

2. APPROACHING THE SUBURB

My interest in new urban configurations of the relationship between class, race and space after Apartheid grew out of my involvement with the current process of land restitution in Cape Town (Broadbridge 1997). The process has the potential for desegregating neighbourhoods as claimants resettle in areas from which they were forcibly removed under race-based legislation and practice, but that kind of state-driven desegregation has so far been limited. The market has been a far more successful agent in deracialising residential space within a fairly short period, as several studies have shown (see for instance Ownhouse & Nel 1993; Johnson 1994; Hart 1996; Myburgh 1996; Rule 1996; Kotze & Donaldson 1998; Saff 1998). The market-driven desegregation process drew my attention to where and how the control of space after Apartheid is diffusing: while the central agent of urban Apartheid segregation was the state (Robinson 1996; Mabin 1998), new residential spaces are today being constructed by multiple agents (Dewar 1998; Swilling 1998). Sometimes the state is only indirectly involved, for example through creating an economic and political climate favourable to investment in the housing market. The escalating state withdrawal from service provision - both globally and locally - is accompanied by the growing hegemony of 'disorganised capitalism' (Lash & Urry 1987; Lipton & Simkins 1993; Sassen 1997; Bond 2000). Thus, as the capacity and legitimacy of the state is declining, the market is rendered an increasingly powerful mechanism for restructuring space and its ownership, drawing new boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, and effecting new divisions. In South Africa, this is particularly manifest in new residential suburbs developed largely by private capital. The majority of these suburbs are aimed at the middle and upper income classes.

Through a close look at one such market-driven space, this study seeks to understand the effects of these processes, who is choosing to take advantage of new sets of choices in the property market, and whether and how these changes are reconfiguring the politics of space away from primarily race-based categories towards class, blurring old boundaries and constructing new meanings in the process. Are class interests superseding those of race? When does race still matter? What expectations and experiences do residents have

of these new suburban spaces? How do residents 'manage' and negotiate the new social and cultural space of the suburb? How is life in a new suburban setting different from the areas people have moved from? Seeking possible field sites in Cape Town in which to locate the present study, I chose Summer Greens for its combination of spatial and social qualities, that is, the suburb's particular spatial layout and its modifications over time as well as the socio-economic and racial demographics of the residents. As mentioned in Chapter One, the intersection of several trajectories of upward and downward mobility within a new suburban environment (and the links or breaks with past associations) makes Summer Greens a fertile field site. In this chapter I introduce my theoretical and practical orientations to the research and my choice of methods. I also reflect on my own position in, and interaction with, the field site.

2.1 CONCEPTUALISING THE STUDY

> Ethnography is actually situated between powerful systems of meaning. It poses its questions at the boundaries of civilisations, cultures, classes, races and genders. Ethnography decodes and recodes, tilling the grounds of collective order and diversity, inclusion and exclusion. It describes processes of innovation and structuration, and is itself part of these processes (Clifford 1986:2).

This is an ethnography of class and community, of social relationships and spatial organisation, of boundaries and meanings, of ambiguities and contradictions in a new residential suburb. It addresses a central concern of anthropology, namely, the ways in which people make sense of the world around them, how they construct social categories predicated on likeness and difference, how they organise themselves around these classifications, and how they make assumptions and predictions about other people's behaviour and attitudes (Leach 1976; Eriksen 1995; Rapport & Irving 2000). In South Africa's past, Apartheid relied on a particular "logic of difference" (Thornton 1996:144), which gave hegemonic salience to the reification of difference based on distorted notions of races and nations as well as to practices aimed at enforcing the boundaries between the resulting categories. Race was thus the key signifier, reliably conflated with class - with poor whites being a threatening anomaly (Dubow 1995). The recent political transformation in South Africa - as well as global changes - has seen a new social order emerging where old ways of classifying the world are increasingly difficult to sustain,

both ideologically and practically. While continued recognition of old categories may, for example, facilitate a correction of their discriminatory effects (see also page 7 note 3), there are new, complex realities which cannot be adequately captured and conveyed by the old vocabulary. New differences and similarities are cutting across and are redefining old boundaries in ways which suggest that old categories, or rather their meanings and inherent conflations, may no longer be of much help in making sense of contemporary events, places and relationships in people's life-worlds. Negotiating social boundaries and identities in millenial post-Apartheid Summer Greens is by no means a smooth, unproblematic and unambiguous process, as this dissertation will show.

2.1.1 Locating Class and Race

The growing number of blacks moving into the middle and upper classes in South Africa (Crankshaw 1997; Schlemmer 1998; *Mail & Guardian* 2/4/99) has presented a challenge to conventional categorisations. It no longer makes sense to impose a false class homogeneity (poor/working class) on blacks nor a false race homogeneity (white) on the middle classes. However, this reality may not be easily learned or accepted, and old stereotypes may quickly be replaced by new ones. A number of white residents in Summer Greens conveyed uneasiness over how to make sense of affluence among black residents (and blacks in general), and their attempts at rationalising it ranged in explanation from nepotism and corruption to criminal involvement. On the other hand, some black residents had little sympathy for white people whose fortunes have turned over the past decade; they blamed white people experiencing downward social mobility for not taking full advantage of their historically privileged position in South Africa. Between these two relatively infrequent perspectives, however, I encountered a mutual openness, an appreciation of similarities as well as acceptance of differences. I found that shared concerns over cost of living, crime, children, property and car maintenance, and shared religious or recreational interests were the common bases of inter-racial relationships and networks in the suburb, while proximity and inter-dependence as neighbours had dispelled some long-held beliefs about cultural traditions, family organisation and household dynamics. Mixed couples, of various combinations, also

maintained that they felt more comfortable together in public in Summer Greens than in other suburbs.

Although consensus on the exact size and racial composition of the middle classes in South Africa is hard to come by, there is little doubt that the South African middle classes overall have grown over the past 25 years, with the black component expanding at a faster rate over the last decade after the official end of Apartheid (*Financial Mail* 12/8/94; Crankshaw 1997; Schlemmer 1998; *Mail & Guardian* 2/4/99). R.W. Johnson is quoted as saying "a middle class revolution is in full progress" with the "spectacular emergence of the black middle class, led by a new black political elite" whose "new policies reflect and reinforce the dominance of the black middle class" (*Financial Mail* 29/11/96). Businesses are eagerly targeting their products at the growing middle classes, crassly speaking of this new market as "black magic" (*Marketing Mix* 7/99a). As mentioned above, this development is also expressing itself residentially, as blacks move into more upmarket areas of their Apartheid-designated neighbourhood, or into formerly 'white suburbs', or into new non-racial suburbs such as Summer Greens.

Various quantitative studies have applied different methods and criteria for defining and measuring the South African middle classes and their racial composition. These studies have produced quite different estimates of their size and rate of growth. Interpreting the results is further complicated inasmuch as several studies speak of 'blacks' when they are referring to Africans only, rather than non-whites, while others include coloureds and Asians in the black middle classes (see for instance studies reported in *Financial Mail* 12/8/94, 29/11/96, 8/8/97, 18/9/98; Schlemmer 1998; *Marketing Mix* 7/99b). Generally, over the past 30 years, those wishing to argue that capitalist development has led to a decline in racial inequality have produced and/or interpreted statistics to show rapidly growing black middle classes, while those wanting to show how Apartheid deepened racial inequality have focused on figures showing consistently low wages and growing unemployment among blacks (see Crankshaw 1997 for a comprehensive review of the debate up until 1991, pertaining to the African middle class in particular). Crankshaw's thorough analysis of the racial composition of the occupational structure of the urban

workforce under Apartheid leads him to suggest that by 1991, Africans comprised almost one third (29%) of the middle classes (1997:22).

To establish a more recent picture, though less conceptually and statistically sophisticated than Crankshaw's, I obtained employment figures from the most recent population census (1996) pertaining to South Africa as a whole and to residents in Summer Greens in particular[23]. The census provided a racial breakdown of national figures for occupation, which suggest that Africans constituted 44% of all South Africans employed in middle class occupations, broadly defined. This figure is not directly comparable to Crankshaw's estimate for 1991 of 29%, due to a different methodology, but it does at least bear out the general picture of a substantial component of the middle classes being comprised of Africans. According to the census, the combined figures for the black middle classes (African, coloured and Asian components) amount to 61% of all middle class employment[24].

As noted earlier (page 2 note 1), "the middle classes" is a designation covering a broad and internally heterogeneous aggregation of people. Less rigid and polarised than the class concept developed by Marx, Weber's (1964) notion of class appears more able to handle the position and diversity of the middle classes. Following Edgell (1993) and Turner (1988), I see Weberian analysis as an extension of, rather than in opposition to, Marxist analysis, and I have therefore drawn on both Marx and Weber (property ownership and market divisions) to approach class issues in Summer Greens. Weber's analysis followed Marx's point that society is divided between propertied and property-less groupings, yet Weber argued that the class situation is further differentiated and fragmented according to the different assets, skills and services which can be offered in the labour market. A case in point is the contradictory class location (Wright 1985) of the so-called 'new' middle classes. Hindess (1987:5) describes them as "that motley collection of more or less well-paid employees who are difficult to classify as capitalists

[23] The following figures are from the 1996 Population Census undertaken by Statistics South Africa (1996a). See Appendix 1 for definitions of employment and middle class occupations and for Tables A1 and A2 which contain the raw census data upon which the calculations are based.
[24] See Appendix 1, Table A3 for the racial distribution of total middle class occupation for South Africa.

or exploited wage-labourers: managerial and professional employees, teachers, social workers, civil servants and so on", groupings in which the majority of Summer Greens residents are positioned. However, the diversity of middle class occupations and market situations raises a "boundary problem" (Abercrombie & Urry 1983:6): "with a class characterised by a great diversity of conditions of its members, it becomes difficult to decide who is a member of the class and who is not" (*ibid.*). The problem of where to draw the line - or how many lines to draw - has bedevilled much class analysis to date. Attempts to locate significant social boundaries *within* the broad middle class grouping have focused on the distribution of power, knowledge and authority in both market and work situations to distinguish between those who "exercise independent decision making and control and those who do not" (Hindess 1987:72; Savage *et al* 1992). When these - admittedly vague - criteria are applied to Summer Greens residents, the majority falls into the lower middle class category (see Chapter Five for further discussion).

Yet, while analyses and figures such as those referred to above may sketch particular and changing social divisions, they give little indication of how new social differences in terms of race and class are "learned and experienced" (Gewertz & Errington 1999:21). Class is a highly complex and essentially contested concept, and the emic perspectives on class (middle and lower middle) discussed in this study may not always correspond to social science definitions, nor be mapped easily onto a quantitative landscape. The conceptualisation of class therefore depends on the objective of the study. Quantitative enquiry, as indicated above, is driven by a primary concern with class as a 'structure' or a 'category' and seeks to divide and quantify social classes accordingly (cf. Thompson 1963; Savage *et al* 1992). While such an approach may be useful for aggregating individuals, comparing numerical values, identifying and correlating particular trends, it encourages statistical management of a highly complex reality. Moreover, the approach is less able to *explain* the meanings people give to that reality. It is therefore a kind of measurement less appropriate to a qualitative study of the lived experience of social change, but where helpful I will include quantitative data in this study to complement my qualitative information base.

Treating class in structural terms also suggests that it is static and a-historical. In my work, I approach class rather as a dynamic, as something in process, a relationship which is always evolving. In this way I hope to convey what Bradley (1996:7) calls "the two faces of social reality: continuity within change, order within variability, fixity within fluidity", to which I would add equilibrium within conflict (cf. Halperin 1998). Thompson's notion of class as "an historical phenomenon...as something which in fact happens (and can be shown to have happened) in human relationships" compels us to examine class as a lived reality in particular historical contexts, as a relationship which "must always be embodied in real people in a real context" (1963:9). His words are a reminder that class cannot be reduced to, for example, economic power in the market place, nor can it be defined as a social category only; class is a fusion of lived social relationships which arise from the ways in which society is organised in terms of production, distribution, exchange and consumption (Bradley 1996; Crompton 1998). Approaching class as sets of interactive relationships rather than a system, as something dynamic rather than fixed, is consistent with the idea of social reality as process rather than structure.

2.1.2 Constructing Community and Identity: Boundaries and Their Meanings

The idea of class as a dynamic, as something in process, sits nicely with Cohen's (1985, 2000b) notion of community as derived from the relational nature of social boundaries, whose marking and maintenance may change over time. This understanding has its roots in Barth's (1969) analysis of ethnic groups which departed from hitherto functionalist and structuralist analyses; his work shifted the focus from an interest in what boundaries encompass to an interest in the boundaries themselves, to how and why boundaries endure despite being permeated and transgressed. Barth argued that ethnic groups are socially constructed through ongoing maintenance of boundaries which mark one group off from another. The process of differentiation between 'us' and 'them' is thus two-sided, a continuous reaction of one side to another; in other words, it requires interaction, not isolation. Wallman (1978) identified two meanings of a social boundary: it is an interface between two systems of activity or meaning which evokes a sense of danger (cf. Douglas

1966), and it is an identity by which members/insiders/'us' and non-members/outsiders/ 'them' are distinguished. "The *interface element* marks a change in what goes on. The *identity element* marks the significance given to that change and expresses the participants' relation to it" (Wallman 1978:207, emphases in original).

Cohen's work on community incorporates both these meanings of social boundaries; a community exists in relation, or opposition, to another, and is thus "a relational idea" (1985:12). The boundary is the edge of difference, it is where similarities and differences are marked, rendering a community's boundary "the best place to study the everyday practices of exclusion and inclusion" (Donnan & Wilson 1999:24). A community is symbolically constructed through a common set of symbols which comes to define and give meaning to its boundaries, to the identities embodied in those boundaries, and to a sense of belonging (Cohen 1985).

The active phrasing of the dissertation title (as well as several subheadings) is intended to convey that the negotiation of community and identity is an ongoing process in Summer Greens. That identities and places are constantly in the process of 'becoming' is probably always true everywhere. But the *new*ness of so many aspects in Summer Greens (the suburb itself, the class status of residents, their experiences of neighbouring across Apartheid boundaries) intensifies the uncertainties, ambiguities, and contradictions examined in this study. The negotiations are a pervasive feature in the daily lives of residents, even if they do not continually verbalise perceptions of local identity. At particular moments, however, communal imagery and identity are expressed directly, not least when there is a local controversy. The imagery both incorporates and expresses particular notions of identity and belonging which are tied up with perceptions of class. The same communal imagery may, however, encompass different meanings (Cohen 1985); the example introduced in Chapter One (and revisited in Chapter Seven) of a controversy over land use illustrates how, alongside assertions of a united local collective identity, there was a parallel claim from a 'community within the community' ("the Muslim community" within the "Summer Greens community") who pursued a sectional interest using the broader communal imagery to justify their demands.

My work in Summer Greens thus ties community to class in several ways which are rendered visible in a range of relationships and contexts. I explore them in local discourses of community and attachment to place as well as in livelihood patterns and practices, that is, in terms of the local economy, property ownership and uses of space, ideas of private and public boundaries, sociality, respectability, and daily interaction. In this respect my study follows in the tradition of many studies on community and class[25]. The studies cover various types of residential settlement, from inner-city ghettos and housing estates to working class and middle class suburbs, and they span diverse social groups and societies. Carried out in different periods, the studies reflect different sensibilities, yet they also presage a central theme of the present study, namely, the production of identities through social relationships and spatial practices (cf. Lefebvre 1991, Keith & Pile 1993).

Embodied in the notion of community as a relational idea is the conceptualisation of identities as relational constructs, produced in dialogue and interaction with others (Rutherford 1990, Massey 1994, Bradley 1996). Identities are embedded in social and spatial boundaries and contexts in which they may be "simultaneously product and producer" of their social setting: dynamic and on-going processes, identities are never complete but rather "works-in-progress" (Knowles 1999:115). As individuals move between a variety of settings, so they construct multiple identities, not least in a time such as the present when established collectivities, such as those formed around class, race or kinship, appear increasingly to be disintegrating (Bradley 1996). Identities are constructed out of a complex of constituents, as individuals draw their sense of identity from a broad range of sources which include class, race, gender, age, marital status, sexual preference, consumption patterns, and dwelling. Whether these aspects of identity balance, how they do so, and which aspect will dominate in a particular situation, depends on a variety of factors that are contingent on both the individual and the place in which they are enacted (Massey 1994; Bradley 1996).

[25] They include Seeley *et al* (1956), Young & Willmott (1957), Stacey (1960), Gans (1962 and 1967), Rex & Moore (1967), Hannerz (1969), Brandel-Syrier (1971), Deverson & Lindsay (1973), Wilson & Mafeje (1973), Stack (1974), Gullestad (1984), Baumgartner (1988) and Halperin (1998).

The concept of 'place' and its role as a constitutive element in identity formation have thus received growing attention over the past decade, as connections and interactions between the local and the global intensify. There is now a rich body of literature which seeks to address this tension through analyses of place, locality and identity[26]. Most of these studies draw specific attention to the ways in which people feel and think about places, in other words, people's 'senses of place'. Massey (1994) and Thrift (1997) argue that senses of place and identities are embedded in and shaped by social, economic and cultural relations and articulated through processes of representation: the dynamic character of these relations and activities implies that an exploration of local sets of social relations, how they are defined and negotiated, also concerns the ways in which places are 'made'. Place is how people experience and express meaning in space through time, or indeed in space-time as the two dwell in each other; "place [...] is formed as time changes space and changed space marks time" (Rumsey 2001:102).

This study of Summer Greens thus conceptualises place-making as a process, fluid and emerging. The suburb and the subjective experiences of it exist in multiple interpretations and are subject to shifts and changes through time. The relation between the suburb (place) and the individual residents both effects and reflects these shifts and developments in meaning, the changing perspectives and altered subjectivities (cf. Lefebvre 1991). Just as residents' identities are constructed out of complex and multiple components (class, race, gender, age etc. as well as sense of place), so is the suburb - and the places within - forged out of a variety of relations which deny them a single, given identity and imbue them with internal tensions and contradictions. As I will show in the case of Summer Greens, how residents feel and think about places is neither trivial nor insignificant. On the contrary, these conceptions are central to constructions of the place through the production of meaning and are therefore tied to the issues of boundaries and identities in important, complex, and sometimes contradictory, ways.

[26] See, for example, Harvey 1989; Shields 1991; Gupta & Ferguson 1992; Jackson 1992; Appadurai 1995; Featherstone 1995; Hannerz 1996; Fog Olwig & Hastrup 1997; Westwood & Williams 1997; Fyfe 1998; Pile *et al* 1999; Cohen 2000; Nuttall & Michael 2000; and Urry 2000.

2.1.3 Everyday Life, Social Rules and Expectations of Suburbia

The approach to community, place, boundaries and identities discussed here helps to localise the concept of 'everyday life'. Following Mackay (1997), I employ the term thus: it refers to the ordinary, daily, routine activities and processes through which people make sense of the world around them. Everyday life comprises a variety of practices through which goods and services are produced, consumed and transformed, and identities and social relations are constituted and mediated. As the opposite of anonymous, impersonal state bureaucracies and market relations, everyday life embodies a spatial dimension involving a local familiarity and connectedness of community or neighbourhood, referred to by Lefebvre (1991) as 'social space', as opposed to the 'abstract space' with which the thinking of business and the state operates. In speaking of social practices I am referring to the situated practical activities and strategies in which residents engage to negotiate their way through everyday life in the suburb. The situated character of such everyday practices thus raises the critical issue of boundaries and their marking and maintenance, especially between the public and the private spheres. The relationship between the two spheres - and how there seems to be a need to create and maintain such a boundary - is a central thread running through this study.

Work by Goffman (1959, 1963) on public and private behaviour and the symbolic manipulation of public and private space draws attention to the social rules by which people interact, to the boundaries they mark and, sometimes, transgress. His dramaturgical model of social interaction and impression management suggests that lived space is characterised by, or 'regionalised' into, front stages and back stages, where individuals 'perform' socially on the (public) front stage, while the (private) back stage is where they prepare and reflect upon the interaction. He argued that in general the enactment is ritualised and coded to facilitate social interaction, helping people cope with uncertainty and flux in everyday life.

Yet social rules are relative to time and place; different rules operate in different spaces, as people interact with and adjust to the social and physical space around them. As social actors from diverse backgrounds and residential environments, residents in Summer

Greens come with different frames of reference. They bring with them normative assumptions of what constitutes, for example, orderly and disorderly behaviour that are born out of their experiences in those other settings; they bring too expectations of orderliness and social/moral standards in everyday life in Summer Greens. Such expectations relate not only to what residents, upon arrival in Summer Greens, assume they will encounter in the suburb, but also to what they believe is due to them, if not as a right then at least as a privilege. These senses of entitlement are (as the following chapters will show) expressed in terms of, for example, a newly-acquired middle-class, home-owner status, or an historically privileged - or disadvantaged - status predicated on race.

Many residents have moved from areas of Cape Town characterised by endemic crime and gangsterism, where people have been forced to cope with and adapt to fear, as violence appears to have consolidated its long-standing presence and become perversely normalised. As new arrivals in the specific context that is Summer Greens, residents are confronted with new situations and interactions, new social rules for movement and behaviour. Assumptions of what constitutes, for example, respectful conduct, privacy, or community turn out not to be a reflection of consensus but rather particularistic ideas, their manifestation sometimes discovered (with surprise) to be inappropriate and in conflict with those of other residents. The process of creating and learning new rules to cope with new social differences is another leitmotif that runs through the following chapters.

The above approach to the production of space/place, the organisation of social relations, and everyday life engages the idea of the socio-spatial dialectic (Dear & Wolch 1989; Gottdiener 1994; Knox 1995; Western 1996), closely aligned with the above-mentioned supposition that identities are at once product and producer of their social setting. As a continuous, inter-connected, two-way process, the socio-spatial dialectic captures the interaction between society and space, between person and place: people create, maintain and shape lived spaces around them and are simultaneously socially conditioned in diverse ways by those same spaces. People's values, attitudes and behaviour are

influenced by their surrounding environment and by other people in that environment, while at the same time broader processes of socio-economic, political and cultural change also interact with those lived spaces. The dialectic combines three instances (cf. Dear & Wolch 1989; Knox 1995). Firstly, situations where social relations are *constituted* through space: for example, how the particular spatial layout of streets and buildings in Summer Greens influences the way people settle and interact. Secondly, situations where social relations are *constrained* by space: for example, how neglected recreation areas discourage children's play, or how the fortification of homes impedes interaction with neighbours and strangers. And thirdly, situations where social relations are *mediated* by space: for example, when certain understandings of distance and proximity between immediate neighbours or people in the streets operate to facilitate - or otherwise - the ordinary, daily routine of everyday life in the suburb. The socio-spatial dialectic does not privilege space in shaping patterns of social organisation, but it does recognise its central importance. By looking at the ways in which residents interact with space in the suburb it is possible to draw out some of their different ideas of what their neighbourhood should look like, what they believe it should provide and protect, and how people should behave for these ideals to be met. In other words, it is possible to capture the residents' emerging constructions of a new social order in South Africa, through studying how it is imagined, defined, embodied, controlled and contested in their local suburb at a dramatic time in South Africa's history.

While the term 'suburb' now extends beyond its original meaning of a middle class residential settlement outside the city centre to include working class neighbourhoods, the term 'suburbia' remains a powerful referent to a lifestyle and culture that is almost exclusively associated with the middle classes. As Harris & Larkham (1999b:15) note, the term suburbia "is now dated though the idea is not". 'Suburbia' is, in Fishman's (1996:27) words, "a cultural creation", invented by the middle classes for the middle classes, therefore created out of particular economic forces, town planning practices and societal values which place an ideal of the nuclear family, domestic life and home ownership at their centre and which assert principles of privacy, distance and exclusion in an attempt to escape the city and its association with work, pollution and danger. In itself

a compromise between city and nature, 'suburbia' is also defined by ambiguities, tensions, paradoxes and contradictions: "Instantly recognizable though never entirely familiar. Ubiquitous but invisible. Secure but fragile. Desired but reviled" (Silverstone 1997:4). 'Suburbia' is seen as both a necessary result of urban expansion as well as an escape from and protest against such growth (Fishman 1996).

For residents in Summer Greens, some of the ambiguities and contradictions they spoke about (and were observed as) having to deal with in the suburb revolve around time, money, privacy, status and community. Definitions of private space and appropriate public behaviour are contested: there are spaces and times when bodies and noises are considered 'out of place', such as loud neighbours, or young men 'hanging out' on a street corner, or residents who sit on their front lawn to watch the world go by. These residents have been identified to me by other residents as being out of place, as making inappropriate use of both public and private space (see Chapter Four). Desires and pressures to be - and be seen to be - 'suburban' conflict with long working hours (including weekends) to pay the mortgage, the car, the children's education etc., leaving less time and not always much money to live up to the expectations that follow from moving into suburbia (see Chapter Five). Homes should be maintained regularly or residents may be accused of indifference, but renovate and decorate too much and they may be accused of competing for status (see Chapter Six). Expectations of law and order are contradicted by burglaries, drug-dealing in public, violence outside the local pub etc., and attempts at building a safe and locally active community must contend with moral minimalism (cf. Baumgartner 1988) and apathy (see Chapter Seven).

The anthropological lens has prided itself historically on focusing on the mundane, but generally the focus has been the mundane life-world of the exotic 'Other'. In recent times the discipline of anthropology has become increasingly sensitive to such colonial tags. My research admits to finding the extraordinary in the mundane world of suburbia, a world which - to the best of my knowledge - has not yet been subjected to much anthropological scrutiny in South Africa. While sociologists, geographers, historians, and urban planners have examined the distinct social spaces and practices that make up the

suburban world, there is relatively little material on suburbia published by anthropologists, especially in South Africa - an exception would be recent work on upper class suburbs in northern Johannesburg by Czegledy (2000). In addressing my subject, then, I have drawn on the theoretical insights from comparative literature and I approach the suburb as a spatial territory, a social landscape, a discourse and a state of mind, and as a site of social and cultural (re)production.

2.2 LEARNING IN THE FIELD: RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCESSES

The primary data on which this dissertation is based were collected during fieldwork in Summer Greens over a two-year period from November 1998 to December 2000. Fourteen of these months were intensive, including taking up residence in the suburb for a period with one of the families I came to know very well. At all times I kept informed of personal and community issues through regular visits and phone calls to residents.

It takes time to develop contacts and build rapport in a suburb where over two-thirds of adult residents are away every day at work and all school-going children attend institutions outside the suburb. Weekday evenings and weekends were a good time to make initial contact or follow-up visits or simply to spend time with the residents. On several occasions I also accompanied individuals to their workplaces outside Summer Greens. Meanwhile, during the week, I got to know residents who work at or from home (especially mothers of young children), those running businesses in Summer Greens, the unemployed adults, children at the local crèche, and people in doctor's rooms, in the shops, in the offices of estate agents, in the play areas and streets and in the pub.

To address the nature and scope of my enquiry - how residents in a suburb negotiate boundaries and identities in a post-Apartheid context - I employed the methods of participant observation and direct observation, in-depth and shorter interviews, focus group interviews and self-administered questionnaires. I also conducted primary archival and secondary historical research.

2.2.1 Participant Observation: Absorbing Senses of Place

Participant observation, the most distinctive research method of social anthropology (Gupta & Ferguson 1997), is a powerful method for collecting a range of data - including sensitive information - from a range of contexts. It involves immersion in the everyday life of the people under study, developing rapport and familiarity to the point where the presence of a researcher is no longer a curiosity and people continue going about their daily business as usual. Participant observation allowed me to gain fuller insight into residents' lives, how they organise themselves and the ways in which they endow their life-world with meaning, helping me develop a broader and more intuitive understanding and appreciation of the meanings, intentions and attitudes underlying the appearance of the social phenomena I was observing directly (cf. Bernard 1994; Hammersley & Atkinson 1995). In other words, participant observation enabled me to pursue both observable behaviour and its 'unobservable' meanings. As a technique applied over an extended period, it allowed me to gather material that was very difficult to obtain using other methods, what Malinowski (1922:20) called "the imponderabilia of actual life".

In my research, participant observation helped make sense of the complexity of residents' everyday lives, engaging in both the routine and the extraordinary, the safe and the unexpected, the familiar and the strange. I established solid relationships with residents through sharing breakfast with them (sometimes still in pyjamas, sometimes yet to insert their false teeth), helping to get children ready for school, taking car-less residents to work, sitting in the backlog of traffic which builds up every morning at the single exit from the suburb, fetching children from school, shopping for groceries and good deals, helping with cooking, watching television, witnessing domestic quarrels, partaking in Sunday family lunches, gardening, *braaing* (having a barbecue), worshipping in the local churches, eating out, sharing drinks and games of pool at the local pub, picking lottery numbers, helping with children's parties and religious celebrations, and assisting with job applications and assignments. I helped people move house when they could no longer afford the rent, and I joined families at the airport for nervous and tearful farewells to family members as they moved out of Summer Greens to suburban Johannesburg with dreams of a better life. I was caught between two friends who had a fall-out halfway

through my fieldwork but who continued to exchange polite interest in each other through me. This continued after my fieldwork ended, even though one of the two had moved to Johannesburg.

Did I ever feel exploited by residents? Generally, no. Certainly my car and computer were valuable resources at times when some residents had neither, and sharing them was the least I could do to repay hospitality. Since those who asked for help from me were residents whom I knew well, I took their requests as another sign of our affinity and my inclusion in their networks of support. Furthermore, helping out often generated new information useful to my study. Typing a letter or a curriculum vitae for residents gave me direct access to personal historical documents. I had some intriguing conversations with residents in my car; in fact, for one of the women I regularly picked up from work, the short journey home in the car seemed to offer a time and space in which to talk more privately than in her home. Even after parking the car, we sometimes lingered to finish the conversation. Only once did I regret giving my home phone number to a resident, a young man who was lonely and who - I believe - mistook my interest in his life and presence in Summer Greens as the beginning of a romantic relationship, until I politely disabused him of the notion.

Over the two-year period of research I attended 13 residents association meetings, two parent meetings at the local crèche, four public meetings, 24 church services and one church outing, as well as six larger social gatherings in people's homes or at the crèche. These diverse occasions offered me the opportunity to observe, for example, group dynamics, representations and debate, the social rules by which residents interact (both among themselves and with outsiders), collective and institutionalised worship, as well as the ways in which residents symbolically manipulate public and private space (cf. Goffman 1959, 1963). The variety of information on public presentation and behaviour gathered on these occasions complemented that which I collected in residents' homes or when otherwise accompanying them in public. The sometimes contradictory data confirmed the centrality of the public-private distinction to the ways in which residents negotiate boundaries and identities in the suburb.

Direct observation was undertaken at frequent intervals when I simply placed myself in a strategic position from where I could observe social interaction in shops and streets, taking notes either during or immediately afterwards. At the majority of community and residents' association meetings which I attended, I likewise observed from the background. At others I was invited to participate in discussions and to provide comparisons with my home country, Denmark, on the topic under consideration. My foreign status will be discussed below.

Participation and direct observation strengthened both the external and the internal validity of the information I gathered through other methods, of which interviewing was a central technique. Validity and reliability were further enhanced by triangulation, whereby I compared and correlated results obtained through different methods.

2.2.2 Interviews: Listening to Insider Accounts

The interviews (as distinct from casual conversations, see below) conducted with residents and non-residents varied in depth, length and structure, according to their context and purpose. Some interviews lasted only 30 minutes while others continued for over three hours. The majority were semi-structured, although even the few interviews which started out as structured invariably ended having deviated from my initial direction, as people were eager to talk about broader issues which arose from particular questions, raising new questions for me in the process. A major advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they allow people to cover issues in their own terms and from their own perspective as well as develop them in directions which reflect their interests and concerns. As the researcher, I was offered a level of detail which complemented that gathered through participant observation, and the two methods in combination allowed insight into complexities and contradictions in people's lives which quantitative and statistical research procedures do not readily provide.

Over time I was able to compile comprehensive life histories of several residents. Gaining insight into where residents have come from, their experiences in and of their

past places of residence, was crucial to understanding their dispositions, feelings, behaviour, choices and adjustments in Summer Greens in the present, and critical to where they see themselves in the future. The ways in which residents presently make sense of the world and organise their lives is thus "oriented by reference to their life experiences" (Tonkin 1995:44), and life histories are a useful means to discern continuities or tensions between past and present and how they play themselves out in people's everyday lives.

Most interviews were conducted inside people's homes, but other venues included shops, businesses, people's front gardens, playgrounds, and church premises. I interviewed the local ward councillor, municipal staff, former staff of Ilco Homes and Monex, as well as the police station commander in their respective work places outside of Summer Greens. I recorded 27 interviews on tape with full permission of those present, while extensive note-taking during and immediately after unrecorded interviews registered some statements verbatim and others with a good degree of accuracy. Any uncertainty was generally clarified during subsequent conversations, either in person or by telephone. Interviewees' gestures, intonations, bodily stances and facial expressions were recorded as cues to both their comfort with topics of conversation as well as their "claim to authority" (Tonkin 1995:40). All interviews were conducted in English which is the most widely spoken language in the suburb. My note-taking was mostly in English, but where I deemed it expedient, I switched to my mother tongue, Danish, not least when noting the above-mentioned cues in the presence of informants.

Sixty-two of the suburb's 1800 households (3.5%) were sampled, all of which provided detailed information on, for example, household composition, employment, housing tenure, history of residence, perceptions of and interaction with neighbours, social/religious/political activities, experiences of and attitudes towards crime, and their appraisal of the suburb as a whole and whether it has lived up to expectations. The 62 households comprised 216 people (out of approximately 5500 residents = 4%) of whom 126 were adults, i.e. over the age of 18.

The following breakdown of sources is summarised in Table 2.1 below: Approximately 155 interviews with 76 residents were recorded. From interviews with adults in 38 of the 62 households, I compiled 33 life histories (19 women, 14 men) and 36 shorter case studies (23 women, 13 men). A questionnaire was administered in 19 of these 38 households as well as to a further 24 households (the questionnaire is discussed below). In addition, I interviewed 13 people who did not live in Summer Greens but who either worked there or otherwise participated in life in Summer Greens. They provided information on how Summer Greens and its residents are perceived by relative outsiders. Two of the 13 worked for the municipality (the local ward councillor and a town planner), one for the developers, eight for businesses or institutions located within the suburb, and two were merely visiting friends. I also held four focus group interviews attended by between four and eight people (all but one of whom were residents) to discuss class, race, community and identity. These dialogues yielded insights on how and why people felt a particular way about the topic in question. The insights mostly confirmed information gathered through complementary methods in other contexts, thus adding to the validity of those findings. The sources are set out in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1 Sources in the field (November 1998 to December 2000)

<table>
<tr><th>Interviews only</th><th>Interviews and questionnaire</th><th>Questionnaire only</th><th>Additional interviews</th><th>Focus groups</th></tr>
<tr><td>19 households</td><td>19 households</td><td>24 households</td><td rowspan="3">25 interviews with 13 people</td><td rowspan="3">4 with 21 people in total (15 from households previously interviewed)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">155 interviews with 76 residents from which 33 life histories and 36 shorter case studies compiled</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">62 households</td></tr>
</table>

These figures do not include innumerable briefer and more casual conversations with residents in the streets, in shops, at the crèche, after church service or in the pub. The conversations would sometimes concern a particular reaction to an event, such as when the Seven-Eleven supermarket was robbed in broad daylight and the thieves ran past a group of us outside, or when the grass on an open piece of land caught fire, or when young men drove around at great speed playing loud music. On other occasions I was able to ask these additional informants about their reasons for moving to Summer Greens,

their experiences of living there, and their understandings of certain issues and people both inside and outside the suburb.

Three of the 33 interviewees whose life histories were recorded moved out of Summer Greens towards the end of my research and kindly agreed to be interviewed again after the move. One of the interviewees for whom a shorter case study was drawn also moved out during the fieldwork period.

Although no claim is made that the data presented in this study are statistically representative of Summer Greens as a whole, the following table shows how the 62 households and the individual life histories and shorter case studies may be disaggregated and compared to the overall racial demographics in Summer Greens:

Table 2.2 Distribution of households interviewed, life histories and shorter case studies compiled, according to Apartheid population categories

	Households	Life histories	Shorter case studies	Total population in Summer Greens 2000*
Coloured	28 = 45 %	18 = 55 %	15 = 42 %	55 %
White	17 = 27 %	9 = 27 %	13 = 36 %	30 %
African	11 = 18 %	5 = 15 %	7 = 19 %	15 %
Indian/Asian	3 = 5 %	1 = 3 %	1 = 3 %	<1 %
Mixed	3 = 5%	-	-	-
Total	**62 = 100 %**	**33 = 100 %**	**36 = 100 %**	**100 %**

* Source: Four local estate agents, November 2000

Table 2.2 shows that the interviews cover the spectrum of racial classifications and are proportional with the racial demographics for Summer Greens as a whole. I have also ensured that the interviewees were drawn from the range of age, gender, occupational status (working/unemployed) and marital status (single/married/divorced) categories. In terms of age, however, the vast majority of residents interviewed were adults, ranging between 18 and 75 years old.

2.2.3 Questionnaires: A Complementary Research Tool

Initial interviews and participant observation helped me think through possible ways of operationalising my ideas and formulating more informed and sensible questions in the field. Toward the end of my fieldwork, I identified particular gaps in my data which I decided to fill using a self-administered questionnaire. This data collection method was both possible - as the respondents were literate - and more appropriate due to time constraints (cf. Bernard 1994). Experience in the field enabled me to compile a questionnaire that was sufficiently focused to fill these gaps, and piloting it helped to weed out ambiguous or misguided questions. The questionnaire combined closed and open-ended questions, both to accommodate potentially threatening items among more straightforward ones and to break the monotony of a single format. I distributed the questionnaire in person to 60 households (out of 1800 = 3.3%) and the majority were collected after a period of two weeks, while the remaining questionnaires took a further ten days to collect, as people had failed to complete them by the first collection date. Obtaining data about, for example, personal incomes and expenses is rarely easy; informants generally consider it to be particularly private information and may exaggerate or decrease the true figure, even if they are able to aggregate multiple incomes from a variety of sources. Surveys are hence well known to be unreliable regarding such data, and the figures presented in the following chapters should be approached tentatively, as they provide only a rough indication. Where information is not available for all 62 households, the text will specify the number of informants from which the data is drawn.

Since the objective was not to conduct a 'scientific' survey from which precise and generalisable results might be drawn, I used a combination of non-probability sampling techniques to select households. Although such sampling yields low external validity, it served its purpose of backing up the ethnographic data already collected. For example, I knew that a number of residents worked in the police force, but my interviews had thus far included only two policemen, so I targeted several households where I had noticed police cars parked on a daily basis. Information was similarly gathered in homes from where residents ran small shops (house shops), to complement similar data collected

earlier in the fieldwork. African residents were slightly under-represented in my data, so based on observation of people's movements in and out of homes as well as African surnames gleaned from municipal records of account holders, I distributed a number of questionnaires to these households. Finally, there were also geographical areas of Summer Greens in which I had conducted fewer interviews than others; having marked on a map the location of all interviews conducted up to then, I was able to identify particular streets and sections from which I needed data to ensure an even 'coverage'. I then selected houses in the centre of these areas.

Self-administered questionnaires may be time-saving for the researcher but they generally yield a low response rate of 20-30% (Bernard 1994). Out of 60 distributed questionnaires, my response rate was as follows:

Table 2.3 Response rate for questionnaires distributed

Questionnaires	Number	%
Completed	45	75
Not done	14	23.4
Incomplete (discarded)	1	1.6
Total	60	100

(Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

I suggest the high response rate of 75% can be attributed to two factors: timing and presence. Firstly, compiling the questionnaire at the end of my research rather than earlier enabled me to formulate relevant and simple questions, to which respondents could reply without too much trouble. Secondly, when distributing questionnaires to the 24 households whom I had not met before, I talked to people about my research and about spending time in Summer Greens over the past two years. A number of them said they had noticed me at various times, for example in church or in the street, or heard about me through other residents I had met. This appeared to make them more willing to complete the questionnaire. The 19 households I knew well were happy to complete the questionnaire. While a further fourteen residents (23%) initially accepted the questionnaire from me, they subsequently declined to complete it, saying either they had been too busy or they had found it too personal.

A number of residents expressed concern over whether estate agents would have access to their information. Their concern was directly related to questions around property values, renovations, and intentions to move out of Summer Greens. I assured respondents both in writing and in person of absolute confidentiality - the questionnaire did not ask for name or address, although for administrative purposes I kept a record of the address for each numbered questionnaire. As stated in my acknowledgements, I have used pseudonyms throughout the dissertation to protect the identity of research participants.

2.2.4 Archival Research: Probing the Historical Record

Further to these methods, I carried out a detailed archival search at the offices of Blaauwberg Municipality[27] and in local and national media archives to understand the history of Summer Greens as it is recorded in correspondence between authorities, developers and residents, as well as the media. The municipal archives pertaining to the area now known as Summer Greens stretch back to the 1960s. The searches yielded a variety of interesting secondary data in a manner of styles, from revealing remarks scribbled by officials in the margins of confidential documents, to residents' idiosyncratically-worded letters, to sensationalist news reports, to the discourse of council meeting minutes. Findings were compared and correlated with those collected through the primary methods of participant observation, interviews and questionnaires, thereby enhancing the validity of the data.

2.3 THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE

> Long-term immersion through fieldwork is generally a total experience, demanding all of the anthropologist's resources; intellectual, physical, emotional, political and intuitive. The experience involves so much of the self that it is impossible to reflect upon it fully by extracting that self (Okely 1992:8).

This study is concerned with the construction of difference and commonality within a specific locality that is a post-Apartheid suburb. In examining how differences are

[27] Until the mid-1990s, the local authority responsible for Summer Greens was Milnerton Municipality. During subsequent restructuring of local government, the name changed to Blaauwberg Municipality. In December 2000, Blaauwberg Municipality was subsumed in the Cape Town Unicity.

perceived and produced at both the level of the self and that of society, it engages with ideas of individual and collective consciousness and their highly complex dialectical relationship. Anthropology as a discipline has in recent years self-consciously moved away from defining the cultural difference of an homogenised 'Other' to focusing on the ways in which differences are produced in an historical process and how they intersect in particular contexts of power (Gupta & Ferguson 1992, 1997; Okely & Callaway 1992; Cohen 1994; Wright & Nelson 1995). One of these contexts is that of fieldwork. Historically, a more positivist logic and leaning in the discipline tended to overlook not only social differentiation within populations but also the relational position of the anthropologist to those being studied. Earlier fieldwork was informed by a presumed cultural difference and distance between the observer (the anthropologist self) and the observed (the 'anthropologised' other) (Cohen 1994), which was reinforced and verified in the putative 'objective' findings in the ethnographic monograph. The authority of the anthropologist remained largely unquestioned.

As contemporary anthropology confronts the traditional subject-object dualism, it is increasingly recognised that the notion of 'scientific objectivity' is fallacious and no anthropological fieldwork data is unaffected by the researcher or the context of power in which the knowledge is produced. All research is conducted in the social world, and as an active agent - as "the research instrument *par excellence*" (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995:19) - the researcher influences events and constructions of both the social and the ethnographic text. The research process itself therefore becomes part of the social phenomena under study, requiring the researcher to reflect on his or her own role in the research. Reflexivity has been described as:

> A process of continuously moving from the intensely personal experience of one's own social interactions in the field, to the more distanced analysis of that experience for an understanding of how identities are negotiated, and how social categories, boundaries, hierarchies and processes of domination are experienced and maintained (Wright & Nelson 1995:48).

Reflexivity is thus both the self-conscious process and the method "through which the fieldworker's double perspective of insider/outsider, stranger/friend, and participant/ observer is kept in tension" (*ibid.*), both during and after fieldwork. Writing up what I

wrote down while in the field has been even more challenging than the fieldwork itself, in that I was always mindful that the fieldwork was neither uncomplicated nor uncontested in relation to my interpretations and their commitment to paper.

This study explores perceptions of difference and a web of formal and informal knowledge which I, as a researcher, became entangled in as soon as I embarked on my fieldwork. Since I am a foreign, young, white, female, middle class student (those being the characteristics more immediately observable to research participants), there were multiple strands of difference as well as similarity which entered the fieldwork situation from the outset, while others (more subjective, more intimate, more positional) emerged throughout the research, as familiarity between the participants and myself was sought and nurtured. Unable to escape completely the implications of, for example, my gender, age or race category, I sometimes deliberately emphasised some aspects above others to facilitate relationships and data collection. For example, being a woman gave me access to situations, knowledge and experiences that were highly gendered, providing data which a male researcher might have found difficult to collect: from domestic and work dynamics, to women-only socialising, to sexual histories and problems. This strength was offset by the weakness of being less able to talk to men about highly personal matters.

My age (mid 20s) made it easier for me to 'hang out' with younger residents, but it also appeared, usefully, to encourage older residents to take on the task of educating me in a range of respects, from tips on cooking and gardening to South African history. The tasks usually took on extra significance due to my foreign status (Danish). For example, not having experienced Apartheid personally, I gained insight into individual (and to some extent collective) experiences of it, as residents - often unprompted - spoke of race and class relationships, local developments and broader changes in South African society as they saw them. Conversely, a number of residents showed much interest in my home country, its history, people and customs, and often the most insightful discussions on class and race, community and belonging, culture and lifestyle, politics and entitlements took place when we exchanged comparative information. Residents' initial associations with my home country included politics, royalty, and soccer. I unashamedly capitalised

on the last two to establish a common ground. With politics I decided to tread more warily, hoping to reduce any possible negative reaction in an interviewee. A number of residents were familiar with Denmark's support for the anti-Apartheid movement; while this association did not appear to impair my acceptability among the African and most of the coloured interviewees, there were occasions with a few white and coloured residents when I sensed a hesitation, although it was never verbalised. In these - indeed in all - cases, however, I immediately emphasised that I was here to learn from them personally about their lives and their experiences of living in South Africa. The vast majority of residents were eager to give their personal account to an outsider like myself. By emphasising my national background I also hoped to downplay my racial categorisation as white, something I considered central to my attempt at discovering and understanding perceptions of difference in a society with a highly racialised history. When I spoke to residents about this issue it was clear that my nationality distanced me from white South Africans - an experience similar to Hannerz (1969) - although associations with whiteness could never be escaped.

The reality of my middle class upbringing probably had more bearing on the research. As some residents indeed noted verbally, I had a "good education" and I spoke "proper English" (although they enjoyed pointing out the South African colloquialisms I have acquired after five years in the country). I dressed in clothes and styles that did not differentiate me a great deal from them. I was familiar with, and so found it easy to observe, dress codes and etiquette for both formal and informal occasions in the field. Whether judging me in terms of social, cultural, symbolic or economic capital (Bourdieu 1986), I am confident that residents assigned me to a status of middle class, and possibly somewhere slightly above them in the hierarchy of class. I regarded the regular question when offered tea, "Do you want a cup-and-saucer or a mug?", as a way for residents to test my class affinity with them (I usually opted for the mug). In an attempt to 'neutralise' any possible uneasiness between residents and myself I frequently emphasised my identity as a student as well as a young person living away from home. The interviewees knew I drove a humble Volkswagen Golf, a popular car among students. They knew I shared a house with other students in an area of Cape Town renowned for its student

population. Some of the older mothers, whose children were also in college, made sure to give me a "good home-cooked meal", as they imagined students' fare to be lacking in nutritional value and motherly love. I believe that regarding me as a student to some extent helped residents relax formality.

While my middle class education, speech, dress and life-style may have likened me to a small group of residents, these attributes nonetheless still distinguished me from the majority, who have only recently moved up and into the middle classes. Moreover, I was pointedly reminded of the subjective nature of class distinctions (Reid 1998) when I visited two different estate agents in Milnerton, posing as a first-time home buyer and asking specifically about property in Summer Greens. The first estate agent took one look at me and concluded, "I don't think Summer Greens is really the right place for you, you should rather look for something in Sanddrift or Tygerhof", both of which are more expensive suburbs associated with an established white middle class. She explained that "The houses in Summer Greens are small, so you get small people there, you know, and they're cheap houses so you get cheap people". After a short hesitation, she continued, "It's very mixed there now, too. I don't recommend it for young whites". Having only just met me, this agent decided that I would not belong in Summer Greens for reasons of both class and race. Perhaps she expected that I not only desired but could also afford a more expensive property, which in turn would earn her a higher sales commission. On the other hand, the second estate agent I visited was happy to show me a variety of houses for sale in Summer Greens, telling me that Summer Greens is "a good place to buy because you get value for money and it's safer than a lot of other places these days". In her view, the suburb offered a rare combination of affordability and security to suit a young first-time home buyer like myself. It took over ten minutes before she mentioned (unprompted) the racial demographics of Summer Greens and then only saying, "It's mixed, you know, people come from all over, but I've never heard about any trouble there. People just seem to be getting along". Based on the same personal information and presentation of self, the two estate agents had perceived me quite differently and inferred divergent preferences in terms of my class and race identities.

Thus in order to collect the variety and kinds of data I was seeking, it was necessary to systematically assert different aspects of my identity, adopting a variety of roles (naïve foreigner, easy-going student, young woman, unofficial researcher etc.) in ways that as far as possible reduced reactivity and encouraged sincerity. Bearing in mind the differences between interviewees and myself, and the possible different interpretations thereof, I continuously monitored for means whereby such impression management affected the data I was collecting (Bernard 1994).

Ending fieldwork and 'leaving' Summer Greens was a somewhat delicate and disconcerting process as I have continued to live in Cape Town. The geographical closeness could not allow me a clear-cut departure from 'the field' in order to engage in a more detached and 'academic' analysis of my experience (cf. Wright & Nelson 1995). Subsequent social visits have been tinged on the one hand with an urge to resume data collection and on the other with a strange sense of distance, despite maintaining close relationships with several residents and ex-residents. Negotiating the dual perspective of insider/outsider, stranger/friend and participant/observer is a process and commitment that accompanies the intensely personal experience of fieldwork long after the actual data collection is completed.

3. INTRODUCING THE STREETS AND RESIDENTS

As a new residential place, Summer Greens does not have a substantive local history of a depth that is rich with symbols offering some sense of identity, continuity and belonging. Residents are first-generation and can not reliably draw on a history - imagined or recorded - of local ways of doing and being among people who have occupied the same bounded space for generations before. The average length of residence among the research population was just over four years. There are no significant local landmarks built into the suburb, although the community hall, currently and finally in the process of being built, may become such a place. As mentioned in Chapter One, at the end of my fieldwork the nearest and most important landmark was Century City, the vast retail, business and entertainment complex adjacent to Summer Greens. Nonetheless, a tour of the streetscape reveals a number of places whose particular and changing qualities have contributed over time to residents developing a sense of familiarity and belonging, as well as disaffection and disorder.

The chapter begins by painting the broad contours of the streetscape, emphasising some of the everyday sights and sounds, spaces and times, names, features and rhythms, which identify the suburb. It proceeds with a demographic profile of the research population. The information will be revisited in the subsequent chapters, but an overview at this point will draw a basic picture of the residents who constitute the main actors in the study.

3.1 THE STREETSCAPE

Turning off Bosmansdam Road into Summer Greens (see Aerial Photo, page 21), residents withdraw from a busy and noisy transport route dominated by lorries servicing the adjacent industrial estate and mini-bus taxis whose frequency (and reckless speed) exceeds any other available public transport. Inside the perimeter wall and iron fence the din of traffic is subdued, although houses on three sides of the suburb still hear the hum from the northbound highways and Bosmansdam Road. In homes on the western side, right below the railway line, conversation has to stop when trains pass, which is

fortunately not too often. No one escapes the noise of planes flying low to land at Cape Town airport, five kilometres away.

On weekdays the streets inside the suburb are fairly quiet, although those living along the main road in the suburb must tolerate the noise of an exodus of cars, which begins around 7am. After school hours, children play in the streets, adding their voices to the soundscape. As night falls, the streets quieten down. Some sounds travel far during the night, such as barking dogs and activated car alarms, alerting residents to possible danger but some people appear immune to the noises or ignore them. Over the weekend the soundscape broadens to include the drone of lawn mowers and different kinds of music, sometimes played so loudly that it disturbs the public peace and neighbours complain.

Summer Greens Drive, the main thoroughfare, runs from the entrance in the north and comes to a dead-end right at the south end of Summer Greens. It passes the small local shopping strip, which starts buzzing from about 3pm when children return from school. The busiest time is between 5 and 6pm, when the small parking lot becomes crowded with an eclectic mix of ailing Mazdas and new BMWs, and children's bicycles stacked up against shop windows. The shopping strip is dominated by the Seven-Eleven supermarket which is also the common point of orientation within the suburb; all routes are directed from the expensive but convenient supermarket and most residents shop there several times a week. Management has recently installed turnstiles at the entrance and exit to control theft from the shop.

Outside the supermarket is a small paved area with six public telephones. This is one of the few places where young people gather during early evenings, weekends and holidays. From here they can keep an eye on the comings and goings at the shopping centre and stay in contact with friends outside of Summer Greens without parental interference. The numerous spent telephone cards discarded on the ground testify to the use of these telephones for communication. Despite being a public space, some residents (and the police) claim that it is a popular place for drug dealing, and they warn their children not to hang around there.

By late afternoon, the video store next to the Seven-Eleven becomes busy. It used to have a pizza-kitchen at the back but that closed a few years ago due to a lack of demand. The oven and counters are still there, empty except for a few cardboard adverts for movies. Outside is a game machine where two rands will provide the exciting possibility of winning a small soft toy through the skilful manoeuvring of tongs behind the glass. Some children stand around the machine while their parents shop, pressing their noses and hands against the glass and whistling along to the repetitive computerised music emanating from the machine.

Next door is the pharmacy. Many residents appreciate the fact that the pharmacist offers credit, especially those who need regular medication for respiratory problems. Doctors confirm that there is a fairly high rate of asthma among children in the area due to damp conditions and pollution from the nearby Caltex oil refinery. The pharmacy advertises slimming products and skin-whitening creams in the window. There is also a notice offering assistance with alcohol abuse. Outside on the wall is a public notice board which infrequently carries messages from the local Residents Association and more often adverts for products and services offered by residents, or appeals for information about pets that have gone missing. Some notices are neatly typed on a computer with fancy fonts and graphics, others are scribbled on scraps of paper. The supermarket has also recently made a similar space available inside the shop. These boards are good places to reach residents if anyone has anything to say.

Squeezed in between the pharmacy and the local butcher is a small shop which has changed hands and names more times than residents care to remember; most recently it was called "Angel's Coffee House", although few people stopped there for anything other than the cakes and sweets on sale, which never generated enough profit to cover the high rental (in 1999 approximately 2500 rands per month). At the time of writing it stood empty. The butcher is battling to avoid his business going the same way. Some residents appreciate the butcher's special of a bag of bones for five rands, especially at the end of the month when money is tight, but others refuse to buy there, saying the meats are "cheap cuts". In October 2000, the shop was attacked by a group of young men from

outside Summer Greens who stole the day's takings at gunpoint. They have not yet been caught and the butcher is wary of their return, taking a second look at any new customer entering the shop.

The "Legends Pub" next door has also changed management a few times, each bringing a new style; one owner draped army flags across the walls and displayed police uniforms and guns, which offended a lot of residents and business was poor. The new publican, a hearty Scotsman, replaced the military décor with beer memorabilia and the militant image with a jovial atmosphere, and business has picked up. The clientele is loyal and racially mixed. The pub is, however, an eye sore for a number of residents who consider frequenting pubs to be "working class", and who object to the consumption of alcohol for religious and social reasons. In 1998, a late night knife-fight outside the pub between two drunken men caused an angry exchange of words between the bar staff and concerned residents. The residents association, led by a teetotalling chairperson, wrote to Seven-Eleven who own the property, demanding that the pub be closed. They were not successful but since then the pub has hired several local men as 'bouncers' during evening opening hours.

Next door, the launderette is busy, especially in the winter months when clothes cannot dry outside. At the end of the shopping strip is the most controversial store: taking over premises from a fish shop which closed due to lack of business, a liquor store opened in early 1998 under protest from hundreds of residents who signed petitions and held demonstrations outside the shop, concerned about the impact of the sale of liquor on the suburb, its reputation and its children. However, the store has clearly tapped into a demand, because it is well patronised by residents. Staff at the crèche next door were particularly worried about broken glass and drunks urinating against the wall outside, but to their surprise, the liquor store has handled these matters in a responsible manner.

The biggest building in Summer Greens Drive is the New Apostolic Church, the only church to have its own facility in the suburb. The only other Christian church to serve in Summer Greens is Assemblies of God which used to worship in a double garage but at

the time of research was borrowing a classroom in the local crèche for Sunday morning services. After a failed appeal for mosque facilities (see Chapter Seven), Muslim residents continue to run a *madressa* (school for religious education) from a converted garage of one of its members. They used to raise funds for this by selling food every Friday afternoon. They would set up a small canopy outside the Seven-Eleven supermarket and serve *samoosas* and curry out of huge saucepans. Residents of all ages and hues would queue for these bargain meals, but after a year the supermarket management - which owns the shopping precinct - put an end to it, ostensibly due to the competition posed by the stall's success; Muslim residents felt it was another deliberate act of prejudice against them. No one has objected to the two men who run a busy hotdog *braai* (barbecue) stall outside the crèche on Friday afternoons to raise funds for the crèche.

Some drivers show no concern for pedestrians and roar down Summer Greens Drive. Outside the crèche, children have been knocked over several times. In 1997 a child was killed. Over a two-year period, Irma Cotzee who lives on the road counted four dogs and a cat run over and killed outside her house, yet appeals to the municipality for speed bumps have been turned down. The municipality painted a pedestrian crossing instead, but residents complain that few drivers allow pedestrians - or animals - right of way. Minibus taxis also charge down Summer Greens Drive without a license to do so. Residents without private transport appreciate the taxis coming into the suburb, while those that do not need or use them are not in favour.

Also situated along Summer Greens Drive are four doctors' and two dentists' surgeries, two estate agents, and a cash loans business. The latter opened in 1999 and, although unwilling to give any figures, the manager says there is a "good demand" for the service among residents as well as people who work in the nearby industrial estate, Montague Gardens. The surgeries similarly cater for residents and outsiders. The estate agents advertise some of the houses for sale in Summer Greens as well as in nearby suburbs. According to the agents, there are approximately 50 houses for sale in Summer Greens at any given time - as a proportion of total housing supply (50/1800 = 2.8%) this is around

half the national average (5%) but apparently normal for a new housing development such as Summer Greens[28]. Moving around the suburb, however, creates the impression that more than 50 homes are on the market; 'For Sale' signs are dotted in people's gardens all over the suburb, sometimes three or four in the same street.

Further down the road are two undeveloped plots of land. For years, the Church of the Province of South Africa has reserved first right to purchase one of these plots, without exercising the right. The plot is overgrown with grass which during a hot spell in November 2000 caught fire, apparently when someone carelessly tossed a burning cigarette into it. While children crowded around, residents hauled hose pipes over their back walls and controlled the fire until the fire engine arrived. The other vacant plot used to house the post boxes which residents reluctantly rented from the Post Office until their complaints were heard; since June 2000 postal delivery has been made direct to homes. The area is empty except for a few hawkers who once or twice a week mark a corner with black plastic bags and spread out their goods, which vary from pink porcelain dogs, plastic picture frames and kitchenware to second-hand clothing and toys. Mainly women, they come in from Khayelitsha and Gugulethu in the morning and sit through the day until most of the residents returning from work have passed by. Business is never brisk but every so often a sale makes the effort worthwhile. The owners of a house adjacent to the hawkers have opened a house shop in their front room. The sign outside says "AJ's Superette" and is clearly sponsored by Coca-Cola. From here the owners sell milk, bread, sweets, cigarettes and cool drinks to neighbours and passers-by (see Chapter Five for a discussion of house shops in the suburb).

The houses along half of Summer Greens Drive come in different sizes and styles, a few of them in bright colours, most of them white. Halfway down Summer Greens Drive, at the entrance to Victoria Palms, the streetscape changes (see boundary on Aerial Photo, page 21). Houses are smaller and closer to each other; some are semi-detached or even terraced, resulting in long rows of identical white houses along both sides of the road. Without a prominent display of house numbers, it is not easy for a visitor to distinguish

[28] Interview with Du Saart Properties, Summer Greens, March 1999.

one house from the other. As explained in Chapter One, the second developer, Monex, redefined the final phases of Summer Greens as both different and superior to the others: Victoria Palms was promoted as more up-market due to higher quality housing, and the differentiation has gained currency among residents, both those who live in Victoria Palms and those who do not. Ironically, sections of Victoria Palms are also popularly - and negatively - associated with a higher congregation of residents from Nigeria and Mozambique, although local estate agents dispute this impression[29].

At the south end of Victoria Palms Drive is Milton Manor, one of three apartment complexes in Summer Greens, enclosed behind a high wall and with electric gates at the entrance. A few residents opposite the complex have also invested in private security, raising the walls around their properties and topping them with barbed wire to keep intruders out. These properties stand in stark contrast to neighbouring houses, which have yet to even build a garden fence, although they have security gates on their front doors and burglar bars on their windows.

In the suburb's hierarchy of roads, there are three classes. Summer Greens Drive is the major collector road leading into and out of the suburb. From this road residents turn into a smaller street, also tarred, fairly straight and with slower-moving traffic on it. Finally residents turn into the brick-paved *woonerf* street, which is a minor road. They enter a streetscape with similar contrasts in terms of security to those described above, but with a different layout; as described in Chapter One, the *woonerf* is a design which generally favours pedestrians, especially children, rather than cars, and which attempts a different way of relating to and integrating public and private space.

In marketing Summer Greens to prospective buyers, the rhetoric of developers centred on representations of Summer Greens as a "community" with a "village atmosphere" embodied in the *woonerf* design and contained by the perimeter wall (Ilco Homes 1992:10). They argued that this combination of qualities rendered Summer Greens a safe

[29] More generally, there is no evidence of any streets or areas deviating noticeably from the racial distribution of residents presented in Chapter Two, Table 2.9.

and desirable place not only to live in but also to invest in. They invoked the image of garden cities, those post-World War I experiments in town planning and design which deviated from traditional suburban land uses in terms of housing style, road patterns, vegetation, public facilities and so on (see Stuttaford 1972 for a history of the garden cities concept in South Africa; Gottdiener 1994). Although Summer Greens is not a garden city, Ilco Homes presented the garden cities model as a suburban ideal to which Summer Greens conformed, albeit at the lower end of the market compared to other garden city developments in Cape Town, such as Pinelands or Edgemead (Stuttaford 1972). Even at the time of research, Summer Greens fell far short of the lush bush and greenery characteristic of garden cities: the few tall, windswept palm trees along Summer Greens Drive are something of a betrayal of the suburb's name.

Some houses and properties are mute on the outside, others speak of care, affection, propriety, personality, fantasy and fear. The developers conjured up a variety of place-images through different house designs called, for example, Cape Dutch, Brazilian, Mexican and Moroccan, styles which evoke distant and exotic places or periods. Many residents have bought into these images by mounting on their front walls brightly coloured clay figures of Latino-looking men sleeping under big Mexican sombreros or leaning against palm trees in the sunshine. Some residents have adopted a pseudo-Greek style with bright white columns forming archways onto the front stoep or holding up the carport, and they have arranged small garden statues in the form of ancient Greek goddesses. There are well-kept lawns, carefully nurtured flowerbeds and plants hanging in baskets next to properties with patchy lawns and wilting shrubs. There are driveways laid out with bricks in neat patterns and garden paths similarly paved, sometimes straight, sometimes curved, leading to the front door, past water features and garden gnomes. There are post boxes shaped as wooden barrels and miniature houses. There are burglar bars and gates painted in matching colours and walls of concrete or brick, some topped with barbed wire disguised as ivy.

Developers also attempted to establish a sense of place through street names. *Woonerven* were grouped together into four sections and each conferred a unique identity through

distinct street names. None of the names are African or Afrikaans or otherwise particularly South African, most of them are variations on a 'green' theme. Thus, one section is given an Irish lilt with street names such as Emerald Way, Shannons Green, St Patricks Green, Bally Green, Shamrock Green and Dublin Road[30]. Another section moves us into nature with names such as Heath Road, Park Green, Shepherds Green, Hunters Green and Green Way. A smaller section has a fruity flavour with Apricot Lane, Plum Lane, Peach Lane and Pear Lane. The remaining streets are bestowed with names which the development plan nostalgically places under the heading "Ancient Activities". These include Ploughmans Crescent, Woodcutters Way, Tillers Green, Reaper Green, Shearer Green, Riders Green, Archers Green, Runners Green, Blacksmith Way as well as Tailor Green, Sailors Green, Bakers Crescent and Soldier Way. Tinkers are rewarded with three appearances, which confuse not only visitors but also the residents themselves as they navigate around Tinkers Place, Tinkers Road and Tinkers Crescent. However, this attempt at fostering a 'sectional' identity within Summer Greens appears to have been ineffective, as no one attaches any significance to the distinctions. By far the most important cognitive differentiation is that of Victoria Palms, as discussed earlier. The name, Victoria Palms, in itself conjures up images of nobility and exotica, while Summer Greens merely suggests sunshine and easy (healthy?) living. Following the special status accorded to Victoria Palms, the main road running through the suburb changes its name from Summer Greens Drive to Victoria Palms Drive at the intersection leading into Victoria Palms. Three apartment blocks which form their own individual gated and barb-wired complexes are somewhat ostentatiously called Milton Manor, Marlboro Mews and Malvern Mews.

The street and place names were submitted by Mr Morris, the former manager for the developer, to the municipality and approved by its councillors[31]. In a later interview, Mr Morris was unable to explain his choice of names other than that they were "flashes of inspiration" from various activities he was engaged in at the time. The naming process was, however, always more than the ideologically neutral and administrative procedure

[30] All apostrophes are omitted in the names.
[31] Minutes of Town Planning Committee 16 January 1991 File 16/3/2/4 Part 5.

he made it out to be; as Yeoh (1996:221) argues around street naming in colonial Singapore, the naming process also "embodies some of the social struggle for control over the means of symbolic production" within the built environment. Names in Summer Greens were never up for debate with residents, nor has any resident officially contested them. None of the residents I spoke to had any complaints about the names. Yet a critical reading of the street and place names in Summer Greens might suggest that the absence of explicitly local South African names implies a disassociation from the Apartheid past which is far from neutral; apart from the royal-colonial association of Victoria, no streets are named after figures or events which appear historically important to the residents (except, perhaps, anyone Irish or acquainted with Milton's 17th century poetry). Although the suburb was promoted by the developers as the "face of the new South Africa" (Ilco Homes 1992:2), the opportunity to commemorate a new post-Apartheid beginning was abandoned in favour of supposedly neutral foreign/English/Irish names. It may even be argued that the developer in fact sought to engage residents on ideas of 'Western' suburban living through the mental images of a dominant English culture in Cape Town, as reflected in the street names. In his witty review of place names in South African suburbs, Barry Ronge (*Sunday Times* 29/8/99) defines as "residential snobbery" and "die-hard colonialism" the sweeping and indiscriminate use of names drawn from Britain's Home Counties as well as from Mediterranean and South American countries. Names such as Willowbrook Downs, Merrydown Meadows, Casa del Sol or Villa Grande are applied to places to which they bear no resemblance. Yet these names, like many of those in Summer Greens, indulge in residents' (and/or developers') fantasies of elsewhere, of nature, of the exotic, of the traditional.

The perimeter wall was a further deliberate intention on the part of the developers to create a sense of place: they regarded the physical boundedness of Summer Greens as crucial to the development of a significant, discreet place-meaning for the residents through which they could articulate their new social status. The wall is intended to symbolise not only the distance from danger and disorder beyond it, but also the sense of belonging to a safe community within.

Thus, invested in the spatial layout of streets, plots, houses, open spaces, the perimeter wall as well as in the place and street names are a variety of meanings, ideas of suburban living, social classification, cultural values and moral judgements. Together they make up what Gus Silber calls "the Great South African Suburban Dream" (*Style* 9/94). As Western (1996:3) has argued, the morphology of urban space does not evolve at random, nor is there "an omnipotent 'hidden hand'" working entirely independently of human control (see also Hall 1992; Japha 1998). In Summer Greens, past and present intentions of developers, residents and local authorities permeate the streetscape. Chapter One explained how the streetscape was initially designed according to the particular ideas of planners and developers and shaped through years of negotiation and compromise with the local authorities. As the remainder of this dissertation will show, some of these meanings have been accepted and adopted by residents, while others have been contested. The *woonerf* concept represents a particular idea (and ideal) of suburban settlement and interaction among residents, of private and public spaces, and of relationships between neighbours which foster a sense of belonging and community. As a model for such living, the *woonerf* also contains a series of controls through which the intended kinds of socio-spatial behaviour are engineered in practice. This will be explored in Chapter Four.

3.2 A RESIDENTIAL PROFILE OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION

The 1996 Population Census (Statistics South Africa 1996a) counted 1222 households in Summer Greens containing 3939 residents, 35% (1378) of whom were 19 years or younger and 64% were over 19 years (age was not specified for 1% of the population). Fifty-one percent of residents were female, 49% male. By late 2000, Summer Greens consisted of approximately 1800 homes with 5500 residents. The research population in the present study comprised 62 households covering 216 residents. Figures compiled from these households show that 42% (90) were 19 years or younger and 58% (126) of the residents were over 19 years. There were few retired residents in the research population (only 4 of the 126 adults were over 60 years old). Women accounted for 51% (110) of the residents, men for 49% (106).

The average household size was 3.5 people. The range of household sizes in the research population is shown in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1 Distribution of household sizes, Summer Greens November 2000

Household Size	Number of Households	Total residents
1	3	3
2	11	22
3	14	42
4	15	60
5	13	65
6	4	24
	62	**216**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

Table 3.1 shows that the research population includes a range of household sizes which reflect the general profile of the suburb: 52% of households had four or more members, and 48% had three or less.

According to local estate agents and residents themselves, the majority of households are organised around the nuclear family. This form of domestic organisation - or a variant thereof - accounted for 58% (36) of the 62 households interviewed. In the remainder of the research population, a variety of household types which did not conform to the powerful suburban ideal of the nuclear family was also found. The distribution is shown in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2 Distribution of household types

Household Type	No. of Households	% of Households
Nuclear family (with children under 19)	31	50 %
Nuclear family (with adult children resident)	3	5 %
Non-conjugal household with children	2	3 %
Couple with no children (incl. pensioners)	8	13 %
Extended family with 2 generations	5	8 %
Extended family with 3 generations	5	8 %
Non-conjugal household without children	3	5 %
Single person	3	5 %
Single parent household	2	3 %
Total	**62**	**100 %**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

Table 3.2 shows that the largest household type remains the nuclear family containing adults and children (50%). Another 5% (3) are also classified as nuclear families; however, the 'children' were adults over 18 and still living at home. Added to these figures are a further 3% (2) of households which are recorded as non-conjugal households with children, such as single parents with live-in partners, and which in practice operate as a nuclear family. Extended family households (two or three generations) together made up 16% (10). A total of 72% of households interviewed included children of school-going age. In terms of households consisting of adults and children (including the nuclear families with adult children resident), the figures bear out the 'family'-oriented atmosphere of Summer Greens. Non-conjugal households with no children, such as friends sharing a house, accounted for 5%. Overall it is important to note the variety of household types in the suburb, a variety which contradicts the, often untested, assumption that suburbs largely consist of nuclear family households (cf. Whitehand & Carr 1999 - this point will be revisited in Chapter Eight).

Levels of gross household income ranged from approximately 2000 rands gross a month (for example, several pensioner couples who bought their properties for cash and at the time of research drew a state pension supplemented with savings) to more than 16 000 rands a month (households with multiple salaries earned by financial accountants, human

resources managers and lawyers). The distribution of stated incomes is shown below in Table 3.3:

Table 3.3 Household income per month for 40 Summer Greens households, correlated with distribution among household size, and average number of earners, November 2000

Income in Rands	Number	%	Average household size	Average number of earners per household
0 - 1 999	2	5	3	1
2 000 - 3 999	-	-	-	-
4 000 - 5 999	9	22.5	3.7	1.8
6 000 - 7 999	8	20	3.3	1.6
8 000 - 9 999	6	15	3.9	2
10 000 - 11 999	3	7.5	3.7	1.7
12 000 - 13 999	5	12.5	4.2	2.2
14 000 - 15 999	4	10	3.5	1.5
16 000 +	3	7.5	4.7	2.7
	40	**100**	**3.5**	**1.9**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

The figures show that approximately two thirds (62.5%) of the 40 households earn less than 10 000 rands a month and have at least three household members to support. This bears out the commonly expressed experience of financial difficulties conveyed during interviews. Overall the residents cover a range of income categories, gathering at the lower end of the middle income spectrum. The table also shows that, on average, incomes in all households are earned by two household members. As discussed in Chapter Two, income figures must be approached with hesitation, but they provide a rough indication of the range of incomes in Summer Greens at the time of enquiry.

According to the 1996 Population Census, 72% of working adults in Summer Greens were employed in middle class occupations, broadly defined (Statistics South Africa 1996a). The residents interviewed in this study included civil servants, teachers, nurses, human resource managers, bank officials, office administrators, clerks, law enforcement officers, technicians, artisans, clergy, insurance consultants, and business people, as well as lawyers, university lecturers and estate agents. The remaining residents worked in

lower sales positions and semi-skilled occupations, such as shop assistants and truck drivers. Table 3.4 below shows the occupational status of adults interviewed in this study:

Table 3.4 Occupational status of adults interviewed in November 2000

Occupational Status	November 2000	
Employed full time only	91	72 %
Employed part time only	6	5 %
Employed full time and part time	6	5 %
Unemployed	9	7 %
Housewife	5	4 %
Student	5	4 %
Pensioner	4	3 %
Total	**126**	**100 %**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

Table 3.4 shows that, as of November 2000, 82 % of adults interviewed were employed in formal work. Unemployment (7%) is substantially lower than the 15% reported for the city of Cape Town as a whole in a recent council document on the economy of Cape Town (City of Cape Town 2001). Over the two-year period of fieldwork, some residents became unemployed, while some that were unemployed when we first met found work (though some more quickly than others). The findings in Summer Greens suggest that chronic unemployment is not present in the suburb, and its absence supports the classification of Summer Greens as an emergent middle class residential area. Table 3.4 will be discussed further in Chapter Five, which examines the livelihoods of residents.

Levels of formal education were ascertained for 109 adults and are set out in Table 3.5:

Table 3.5 Education levels of adults interviewed, November 2000

Highest education level attained	Number of adults	%
Tertiary	30	27
Grade 12 (Matric)	51	47
Grade 10	25	23
Less than Grade 10	3	3
	109	**100**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

The table shows that three quarters of adults surveyed had attained a high level of education. Tertiary or post-grade-12 education is an indicator of middle class status (Schlemmer 1998), and 27% of the research population had completed tertiary education. The figures in Table 3.5 therefore endorse the classification of the majority of residents in Summer Greens as emerging middle class. The majority of residents had gone further in the education system than their parents, something which they in turn associated with upward mobility (Lohnert *et al* 1998 made a similar finding in their study of Retreat, a largely coloured Cape Town suburb).

Over the years as the suburb has grown, the racial profile has changed. Based on figures compiled by estate agents and the developers, as well as the 1996 Population Census, Table 3.6 shows the percentages in each racial category from the early years of the suburb to late 2000:

Table 3.6 Residential profile in terms of Apartheid categories for Summer Greens 1992-2000 (%)

Year	African	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	White	Un-specified	Total
1992*	-	30 %	-	70 %	-	100 %
1994*	5 %	35 %	-	60 %	-	100 %
1996**	11 %	31 %	1 %	46 %	11 %	100 %
1998*	10 %	50 %	<1 %	40 %	-	100 %
2000*	15 %	55 %	<1 %	30 %	-	100 %

* Source: four local estate agents, Monex staff and Fakier 1998.
** Source: 1996 Population Census, Statistics South Africa.

Table 3.6 shows two clear trends over the period 1992-2000: a steady increase in the proportions of residents classified African or coloured and a steady decrease in those classified white. The figures warrant the following comment: It must be borne in mind that the total population of Summer Greens has grown from around 500 in 1992 to 5500 in 2000. In other words, while the proportion of whites decreased over that period, it increased in absolute number as more houses were constructed. The development of the 1800 houses making up the suburb was completed in 1998.

It might be possible to detect in the figures for 2000 the beginnings of a re-segregation trend which suggests that whites moving out are replaced by non-whites (whites dropping from 40% to 30%, while Africans and coloureds each rise by 5%). This process is often associated with the notion of 'tipping', which refers to the phenomenon whereby whites move out of desegregating areas when the black population exceeds what they consider to be an acceptable level, referred to as 'the tipping point' (Knox 1995; Keating 1996, see also Hart 1996). Where this point is set is difficult to establish, but studies in America indicate that it lies somewhere around 30 per cent occupancy by non-whites (Knox 1995). Those studies, however, refer to formerly 'white suburbs' undergoing racial transition. Summer Greens is different in that it was only developed after Apartheid and consequently has no history of segregation (see Chapter One), but if one were to identify a tipping point for tolerance it would appear to be closer to the 1998 figure of 60 % non-white occupancy (10% African and 50% coloured). Although the decline in white residents between 1994 and 1996 appears the largest (down from 60% in 1994 to 46% in 1996 while only dropping a further 6% by 1998), the parallel growth in absolute numbers of residents reduces the significance of the decrease: by 1998, when construction was complete, the population size was almost at its highest, and the subsequent decline in the absolute number of whites exceeds the decline between 1994 and 1996.

The distribution of households in the research population in terms of Apartheid categories is shown below in Table 3.7:

Table 3.7 Household distribution according to Apartheid categories for 62 households in Summer Greens

Apartheid categories	Number of Households	%
Coloured	28	45
White	17	27
African	11	18
Indian/Asian	3	5
Mixed*	3	5
	62	**100**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)
* Different racial categories present in the same household

Comparing Tables 3.6 and 3.7, it is clear that the research population of 62 households is a sound reflection of the overall racial profile of the suburb. This enables the study to relate its findings from the research population to the remaining population in the suburb.

Estate agents estimate the housing tenure in Summer Greens to be between 80% and 90% owner-occupied and 10 to 20% rented, figures to which my own correspond: Of 62 households interviewed, 87% (54) were owner-occupied and 13% (8) rented. Of the current 54 home owners, 63% (34) were first time home owners. The average length of residence was just over four years, irrespective of housing tenure. The high level of home ownership in the suburb is a further indication of middle class status (cf. Crow and Allan 1994).

In early 2001, house prices started at 145 000 rands for a 2-bedroom freestanding house and moved up to 280 000 rands for a 4-bedroom house with two bathrooms and a swimming pool. The average 3-bedroom house costs approximately 185 000 rands. When houses first went on sale in 1991, prices ranged from 75 000 rands to 130 000 rands. The owners in the research population paid an average of 129 000 rands for their homes, with prices ranging from 75 000 rands for a 3-bedroom/1-bathroom house purchased in 1991 to 200 000 rands for a 3-bedroom/2-bathroom house bought in June 2000. The average length of residence among households interviewed was just over four years.

Data on the financing of property purchases was collected from 45 owners. Their distribution is shown in Table 3.8:

Table 3.8 Utilisation of financial sources to purchase property, for 45 households in Summer Greens

Financial sources	Number of Households	%
Mortgage only	24	53.5
Mortgage and subsidy	11	24.5
Mortgage and cash	1	2
Mortgage, subsidy and cash	1	2
Subsidy only*	5	11
Cash only	3	7
	45	**100**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)
* Housing subsidy from employer

Table 3.8 shows that these owners had made use of a variety of financial sources to purchase their property. While 7% of owners had purchased their homes outright in cash, 82% (37) had sought assistance from banks through mortgage loans. Of these 37 households, 28.5% had also used other financial means (housing subsidy and/or cash).

Tenants in the research population paid a basic rent of between 1600 and 2250 rands per month for houses, averaging at 1900 rands per month (no gas, electricity or water included).

People's places of residence immediately prior to moving to Summer Greens are set out in Table 3.9 according to broad areas of Cape Town (see Map 1, page 11). Where possible, the areas are broadly defined according to their Apartheid classification under the *Group Areas Act*, and the distribution reflects the racial profile of Summer Greens:

Table 3.9 Previous place of residence for 62 households in Summer Greens

Area of previous residence	Number Of households	%
Kensington, Factreton, Bonteheuwel, Elsies River, Bishop Lavis (coloured), Thornton, Goodwood, Ruyterwacht (white)	16	26
Kenilworth, Diep River, Plumstead, Muizenberg, Fish Hoek (white)	8	13
Parow, Bellville, Brackenfell (white)	7	11
Gugulethu, Khayelitsha (African), Blue Downs (coloured)	5	8
Cape Town central, Seapoint, Green Point (white), Salt River (grey*)	5	8
Lotus River, Grassy Park (coloured)	4	6.5
Tableview (white), Phoenix (est. 1995)	4	6.5
Rondebosch, Rosebank, Mowbray, Observatory (white)	3	5
Athlone, Hanover Park (coloured)	3	5
Other South African cities	5	8
Other African countries	2	3
	62	**100**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)
* 'Grey' refers to areas where different Apartheid-designated population groups resided together, despite this being prohibited by law (Christopher 1994).

Table 3.9 reveals that residents moved to Summer Greens from all over Cape Town, as well as from other South African cities and elsewhere on the continent. When previous places of residence are identified on a map of Greater Cape Town (see Map 1, page 11), it appears that a large proportion of residents moved from areas less than ten kilometres away from Summer Greens, a quarter (26%) from within a five-kilometre radius. This suggests, among other things, that maintaining connections and networks with a previous place of residence - if so desired - would not be overly difficult.

Reasons for moving from these areas and to Summer Greens were primarily related to housing (type, size and quality), neighbourhood or community aspects, and employment. The reasons also revealed a combination of push and pull factors, although the need for affordable space emerged as the main and urgent reason for residents' move to Summer Greens. The principal reasons given by residents for moving *from* their previous place of residence are presented in Table 3.10:

Table 3.10 Primary reasons for moving from previous place of residence ranked for 62 households in Summer Greens

Reason	Number of Households	%*
Needed more space	40	65
Wanted quieter/safer neighbourhood	38	61
Wanted home ownership	34	55
Wanted shorter journey to work	21	34
General dissatisfaction with neighbourhood	16	26
Job change or transfer	6	10
Could no longer afford home	2	3
Other	3	5

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)
* Total percentages do not equal 100 as residents were allowed to give more than one response.

Moving out of a previous residence was primarily motivated by a need for more space (65%). Approximately a quarter of those citing this reason lived in their parents' home, either alone or with partner and children. Residents' desire and financial capacity to purchase their own home ranked high (55%); "we wanted our own home", they said. Fear of crime, and personal experience of it, was another common reason (61%); many parents did not want their children to grow up in a violent or unsafe neighbourhood. A third of residents (34%), tired of a long journey and high fuel costs every day, wanted to move closer to work. A quarter of residents (26%) expressed broad dissatisfaction with their old neighbourhood, citing dirt, noise, general disorder, and in two instances the racial change taking place in the neighbourhood (from white to black).

Everybody had looked around in Cape Town for alternative places to live; some had spent up to a year looking, others had viewed, bought and moved to Summer Greens within two weeks. The principal reasons given by residents for moving *to* the suburb are presented in Table 3.11:

Table 3.11 Reasons for moving to Summer Greens ranked for 62 households in Summer Greens

Reason	Number of Households	%*
Affordable free-standing house	37	60
Quiet	23	37
Close to work	21	34
Promises of facilities	21	34
Non-racial population	20	32
Security	15	24
Child-friendly	15	24
Streetscape	12	19
Other	2	3

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)
* Total percentages do not equal 100 as residents were allowed to give more than one response.

Table 3.11 suggests that for the majority of residents affordability, "the right price for us", was the primary reason for choosing Summer Greens specifically. In other words, they came primarily for factors relating to the house. Being close to work ranked relatively high (34%) among the households. A similar priority was given to the promised provision of public and recreational facilities by the developers (which have barely been fulfilled). The remaining reasons concerned the social qualities of the neighbourhood. At the time of house-hunting, Summer Greens appeared to offer a quiet (37%), safe (24%) and child-friendly (24%) living environment. The motive of a quiet neighbourhood referred to low levels of disturbances (ranging from noise to serious crime), explained by the majority as being in contrast with previous places of residence (see Table 3.9). Approximately a third (32%) of households were attracted by the non-racial character of the population (see Table 3.6). The streetscape also featured in the priorities; 19% stated that they appreciated the spatial layout of the streets which they considered to encourage neighbourly interaction and a "sense of community". These qualities of Summer Greens will be discussed in detail in the chapters that follow.

Poor provision of public transport in Summer Greens means that residents, where possible, rely on private transport. While 16% (10) of households interviewed did not have direct access to a car, 58% (36) owned one car, 23% (14) shared two cars, and 3%

(2) drove three cars. Fifty-three percent of households had a garage, of which 12% had a double garage, while 47% had no garage.

There are no primary or secondary schools in Summer Greens so children must leave the suburb for schooling. They attend schools mainly located in the northern suburbs (Bothasig, Edgemead, Milnerton), although some children remain in the schools they attended before moving to Summer Greens and so return to, for example, Bonteheuwel or Athlone, every day. Several schools are less than five kilometres away from Summer Greens, and children must cross and walk along a dangerous main road to get there. Consequently, most parents make use of the school buses which are available for the majority of children at these schools, while others rely on their parents or lift-schemes. Of the 45 households with children in the research population, 65% of parents considered their children to be happier in Summer Greens than where they lived before. 35% believed their children were less happy, citing lack of play areas, sports facilities, and public transport to enable them to attend after-school activities outside the suburb.

The local Seven-Eleven supermarket stocks a variety of newspapers and magazines, aimed at the demands of local residents. English-language newspapers are most popular, with two Cape Town daily newspapers being prominently read (69% of 62 households read at least one of them daily). Two "community newspapers" (one English, one Afrikaans, both free and home-delivered) were read by 59% of households in the research population.

In the home, 65% of households interviewed spoke English only. Afrikaans and Xhosa were spoken exclusively in 8% and 2% of households respectively. English and Afrikaans were spoken simultaneously in 20%, English and Xhosa in 5% of households.

Fifty-seven of the sampled households described themselves as religious (92%). There are two churches in Summer Greens; 18% (11) of households attended the New Apostolic Church, while 8% (5) were members of the Assemblies of God, which uses a room at the local crèche for Sunday worship. The remaining households interviewed were Catholic

(6), Anglican (6), Methodist (6), Old Apostolic (5), Baptist (4), Muslim (3), and Jehovah's Witnesses (2), Hindu (1), as well as 8 other faith denominations. All but one of these 41 households travelled outside Summer Greens for worship (the Hindu family worshipped at home). Upon moving to Summer Greens, half of the 62 households had changed their place of worship to somewhere closer. Some still returned to Bonteheuwel and Khayelitsha for worship.

Membership of political parties was low; 22% of households interviewed contained at least one person who was a member of a political party. Half of these people claimed active membership in a local branch. At least one adult in 30% of households was a member of a trade union. Voting patterns in local and national elections showed a gradual shift in the population:

Table 3.12 Election figures for Summer Greens 1994-2000

Elections	National Party	Democratic Party	African National Congress	Other
1994 National*	75 %	10 %	10 %	5 %
1996 Provincial**	53 %	21 %	17 %	9 %
1999 National**	33 %	30 %	26 %	11 %
1999 Provincial**	39 %	27 %	25 %	9 %
2000 Municipal**	67% (alliance)		25 %	8 %

* Source: Rough estimate by staff at Blaauwberg Municipality, October 2000, as no exact figures are available for individual wards.

** Source: Independent Electoral Commission <http://www.elections.org.za>

Table 3.12 shows a steady decrease in the support for the National Party and a corresponding increase in support for the Democratic Party and the African National Congress.

The consumer patterns of households in the research population generally fell into the upper middle levels of the Living Standards Measure (LSM)[32]. The LSM is a ranking of households into eight groups from LSM1 (lowest living standard) to LSM8 (highest), based on 20 variables such as ownership of housing, cars and household appliances as

[32] The LSM is an exercise undertaken by the South African Advertising Research Foundation.

well as use of financial services (Ungerer 1999; Haupt 2001[33]). The ownership of various household appliances and items was collected for 45 households. The results are shown in Table 3.13, sorted according to prevalence:

Table 3.13 Household appliances in 45 households in Summer Greens, November 2000

Household item	Number of households	%	Household item	Number of households	%
Braai (barbecue)	45	100	Cellphone	32	71
Oven	44	98	Freezer	31	69
Washing Machine	40	89	CD player	28	62
Television	40	89	Lawnmower	18	40
Telephone	40	89	Computer	15	33
Video recorder	38	85	Tumble-dryer	12	27
Vacuum cleaner	37	82	Internet modem	6	13
Hi-fi	37	82	Satellite/Cable TV	5	11
Microwave Oven	35	78	Dishwasher	2	4

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

Table 3.13 shows that a high proportion of the research population had access to a variety of household appliances used for both household maintenance and recreation/ entertainment. Eight households had more than one television set. One household had two computers. Three households had more than one telephone (landline), while nine households two or more cellphones. Of the households interviewed, 49% (22) had bought several of household appliances and furniture on credit or hire purchase arrangements. Of these households, 55% were still paying off the items. The overall patterns of consumption placed the research population in LSM categories 6 and 7, providing a further indication of the suburb's status as emerging middle class (cf. Schlemmer 1998). The presence of at least one *braai* (barbecue) in every household suggests the importance attached to this appliance and the social occasions on which it is used. The common weekend *braai* will be discussed in the following chapter which examines ideas and practices of neighbouring and sociality in the suburb.

[33] Haupt (2001) claims that neither occupation nor income nor education strengthens the measure significantly, and these variables are thus excluded from the ranking.

4. *WOONERF* LIVING: NEIGHBOURING AND SOCIALITY

Summer Greens is a new space in and of itself. Its particular streetscape, characterised by the *woonerf*, is a new experience for the majority of residents. They have moved to the suburb from quite different residential environments, arriving with certain ideas, hopes and expectations of neighbourliness and community in the new setting of Summer Greens. The open layout of the *woonerf* streetscape captured their imagination: in principle, the *woonerf* suggests that the blurring of public and private boundaries is beneficial to social interaction and fostering 'community spirit'. Residents have experienced the streetscape and their neighbours in different ways which reflect both their diverse backgrounds and their expectations of living in Summer Greens. While the *woonerf* has satisfied the expectations of some, others have expressed a need for more clearly defined boundaries. Contrary to the communal intentions of the street design, a number of residents have begun to modify the layout in response to their experiences of insufficient privacy and security, raising boundaries onto neighbouring properties and the street in concrete and iron. Efforts to establish firmer boundaries are also revealed in more subtle forms of behaviour and speech. The newness of the environment and lifestyle has brought a sense of insecurity around social interaction, particularly with neighbours, a "fuzziness" (Crow & Allan 1994:187) about who belongs and what that belonging means, an uneasiness about how to behave, not only in terms of class but also in terms of race. Emerging from the findings is a series of ambiguities around ideas of neighbours and neighbouring. They suggest an uncertainty over how to grasp and navigate the new constructions and configurations of class, race and space, how to engage with what for a long time has been considered 'the Other' but which is now literally on their door step and no longer seems to conform to conventional social categorisation.

This chapter examines notions of privacy, reciprocity, propriety and trust as they are played out in everyday neighbourliness and sociality in the suburb. These ideas and practices are both mediated and constrained by the residential streetscape. As I show below, tensions in regard to social difference and distinction relate directly and dialectically to tensions over space. The chapter analyses the daily negotiation of rights to

behave and rights to interfere, as residents assert different ideas of what is appropriate neighbourly behaviour in the suburb and what appears as a threat to the aspirations and achievements of individual residents, and to ideas and possibilities which many residents expected to be collectively shared. The analysis shows that in the new social landscape of Summer Greens, tension between neighbours does not always simply arise out of different boundaries between public and private space, but that sometimes the very definition of private space itself is being contested. The chapter discusses the main ways in which residents manage the conflicts arising from the spatial layout. It proceeds to explore broader social networks and activities in the suburb through which residents construct particular boundaries and contest others. While the networks aim to help residents cope with the new environment, some contain a more implicit agenda of (re)socialising residents, women in particular, into middle class suburbanites. The analysis thus draws out some of the ways in which residents continue and discontinue past dispositions in the new setting of Summer Greens.

4.1 UNWRITTEN RULES AND HIGH EXPECTATIONS

For the *woonerf* to work as intended, it would appear to require consensus on, and conformity to, certain norms and values embodied in the design but not always explicitly stated. These include behaving in ways which are deemed both respectful of and responsible for property and space, public or private. But when the design contains quasi-public and quasi-private areas and offers no clear definition of public and private space, maintaining the invisible - or at least blurred - boundary between the two must rely on social discipline and adherence to standards of behaviour that are accepted by the majority (Suttles 1972; Perin 1977, 1988).

As discussed in Chapter Two, Summer Greens residents have brought with them a diversity of experience from elsewhere; they have come together from different areas where there are different "ground rules" (Ardener 1981:11) for behaviour, movement and interaction. In the new setting of Summer Greens, some of these rules now appear inappropriate. New social rules are formulated from ideas and assumptions about middle class suburban behaviour, developed from a variety of sources such as the mass media

and popular culture (Chaney 1994, 1997; Medhurst 1997; Harris & Larkham 1999a) as well as personal contact with middle class suburbia through, for example, family, friends or work. Private space, personal distance as a particular zone of private space, and noise levels emerge as prominent to residents' attempts to reinvent themselves (cf. Goffman 1959). Privacy, distance and quiet may, of course, not be universally or constantly valued (Perin 1977; Ardener 1981), nor may their meanings be universally agreed upon. As will be shown below, not all Summer Greens residents share the same understanding of private space and what constitutes its 'invasion'. Nor do they all agree on how to manage any conflicts that may arise from different understandings.

The different meanings entail different expectations and interpretations of responsibilities. In their review of the *woonerf* concept in Holland, Carr *et al* (1992) argue that the *woonerf* design anticipates people's participation in ways that reflect their (shared) responsibilities. For example, they must obey the traffic management rules implied by the *woonerf*, that is, people may walk anywhere on the street, children may play anywhere, and cars must not drive fast or park in a place which impedes pedestrians, who on the other hand should not unnecessarily obstruct drivers. Through design features such as brick-paving and traffic islands, people are encouraged to observe these rules. Residents are also expected to obey the unwritten rules mentioned above concerning social behaviour, show respect for people's property and right to privacy, refrain from disturbances to the public peace, and not impede people's perceived rights to enjoy a quality of life which they believe they are entitled to in the suburb (all of which are indeed highly relative concepts).

As will be shown below, privacy and security concern a number of residents, some of whom have sought alleviation by making alterations to their properties. Yet social contact and interaction between neighbours remain prominent features in the *woonerf* streetscape of Summer Greens, especially around common everyday activities. From speaking to and observing residents in the street, it is clear that the *woonerf* streetscape is child-friendly insofar as cars are relatively few and mostly slow moving, while the open layout encourages children to move their play around. For many residents this stands in contrast

to their previous areas of residence (see Table 3.9, page 76), where violence and crime make the streets unsafe and play-space is restricted, due to traffic or crime or property development, whether in Hanover Park or Sea Point. Residents also agree that to some extent the layout does encourage neighbourly interaction, as anyone passing by has full view of the front of the property. Activities such as gardening, car-washing or playing with children are thus not entirely 'private', and friendships have been established on front lawns. It appears that mere proximity to neighbours is not in itself sufficient for relationships to be established - that also requires social contact and interaction around everyday activities. Such contact is most easily initiated and sustained through common interests, such as children, gardening, or car maintenance where assistance, tools, knowledge, and opinions can be exchanged and shared.

To further understand residents' responses to the *woonerf* streetscape, it is helpful to examine their ideas and ideals of neighbouring. The following section explores the most common forms of neighbouring and draws out residents' perceptions of trust, reciprocity, propriety, as well as privacy, in that context. Their understandings both reflect their experiences from previous neighbourhoods and reveal their expectations and opinions of neighbour relations in Summer Greens. The findings suggest that for the majority of residents, neighbouring in the suburb is an important activity through which they organise themselves around similar needs and interests, often forging new relationships across old racial boundaries as residents discover commonalities hitherto unexplored. Yet these everyday relationships with neighbours also embody a number of ambiguities and "frictional undersides" (Perin 1988:7) which may not only threaten the relationships themselves but also challenge constructions of 'community' and class.

4.2 TRUST AND RECIPROCITY: THE AMBIGUITIES OF NEIGHBOURING

Residents in 62 households were asked for their definition of a good neighbour. "Someone you can trust" was a common prefatory phrase, leading into whichever further quality residents associated with good neighbours. For some it is what they believe is lacking in their neighbour relations in Summer Greens, but for the majority it is a phrase they would apply to at least one or two of their immediate neighbours. 'Good

neighbouring' in Summer Greens is charged with a variety of meanings, as will be shown below, but trust is central as well as being what most residents wish to offer their neighbours in return. Trust may be defined as an assumption of support and a resource in times of personal or public need (Jacobs 1961). Depending on the context, trust relies to a greater or lesser extent on a modicum of shared values and a sense of moral obligation to respond and reciprocate in ways which meet the needs and expectations of other party.

As numerous studies of new residential settlements have shown, the building of trust between strangers who become neighbours in a new environment takes time, even if they come from similar backgrounds (Seeley *et al* 1956; Whyte 1956; Young & Willmott 1957; Bracey 1964; Gans 1967; Deversen & Lindsay 1973; Chambers 1997; Stevenson 1999). Relationships that have developed over the years are disrupted when one party moves out of the suburb, and residents who consider their stay in Summer Greens fairly transient appear to put less energy into neighbouring than those who intend to remain for a good few years. Thus neighbourliness (like 'community') has many meanings and involves different sets of experience for different groups. Indeed, its meanings may differ for the same people at different times in their lives (Bracey 1964; Gullestad 1984; Crow & Allan 1994). As with many new suburban developments, the population of Summer Greens is relatively young - most adults are in their 30s or 40s - and contains a high number of children. These attributes suggest particular needs in the population which residents may seek to meet through their neighbours.

Everyday acts of neighbourliness usually begin with a greeting. According to their definitions, most residents appreciate a neighbour who "knows your name and who greets you with a smile and a wave", as Colin Farrell, a 44-year-old coloured pastor, phrases it. Friendly greetings that "make you feel welcome" (Abdul Noordien, 36, car salesman, coloured) are valued, both by residents and visitors. Yet Patricia Erasmus (54, data capturer, coloured) complained that in her street "there's no spontaneity, no one says good morning until you greet them, it's always me who has to do it first. I don't know if they are scared or what, but sometimes they just seem to retreat when I wave". A neighbour declining to greet is also sometimes taken as a sign of arrogance. Charleen October, a 36-

year-old coloured receptionist, commented that, "Some coloureds here are snobs, they think that because they live here now they are white, and they don't bother greeting other coloured people. It's so stupid".

A regular, friendly greeting is also a way of keeping open lines of communication. Residents consider it easier to raise a concern about, for example, noise or parking, if they have maintained some routine contact with their neighbours, and they regard this as reciprocal: "I want my neighbour to be honest and to speak up if they have a problem with me or my family" (Andile Nyathi, 32, correctional officer, African); "you must have good communication both ways" (Breyton Solomons, 27, technician, coloured). Thus, it is clear that residents appreciate conversational friendliness, but given that only a few people registered it as a prominent expectation of their neighbours, it suggests that most residents do not go out of their way to have that kind of neighbourly conversation in their daily lives. In his comparative study of two new middle class suburban developments in the USA and Britain, Bracey (1964:74) found a similar emphasis among residents upon greeting but a low demand for "gabbing".

Neighbouring, however, comprises more than a regular "hello or polite chatting about the weather" (Gans 1967:181): it involves interaction between neighbours around a variety of needs which range from regular daily activities to unexpected, emergency situations. Being willing and able to offer help under special circumstances is high on the list of expectations from neighbours. "To me, a good neighbour is someone who will help you when you need it", says Julia Thornton, a 58-year-old white data capturer, summarising the common reply. Some were more specific, saying "someone you can trust to look after your house when you are on holiday" (Denise Vieira, 33, clerk, coloured); "someone who will notice and react if there are strangers on your property" (Kobus du Plessis, 36, computer technician, white); or even "someone who would come and enquire if they hear you scream" (Marcia Swart, 24, university student, coloured), conjuring up a graphic picture of cries for help being ignored by indifferent neighbours. Residents emphasised the reciprocal nature of these expectations, offering the same kind of trust, responsibility and vigilance in return.

4.2.1 Childcare: Parenting Neighbours' Children

One need that has brought some neighbours together is childcare, mainly short-term (and at short notice) baby-sitting but also long-term care. Sometimes this support is remunerated, sometimes neighbours provide it for free, depending on the circumstances. Alicia Scott (28, coloured) is a mother of three girls under eight and says that looking after them is a "full-time job", which is why she resigned her position in a hair salon a few years ago. She helps her neighbour, Wendy Parker (37, bank official, coloured), with the care of three children aged 11, 5 and 1 when necessary, and Wendy reciprocates when Alicia asks her for help. "We're all in the same boat, so we try and help each other out", said Wendy. They both moved to Summer Greens in the middle of 1996, Alicia from Grassy Park and Wendy from Factreton. Over the years the two have become friends, visiting each other for tea and talk. Alicia also regularly looks after the three children of another (white) neighbour, a single mother who either works long hours or "disappears with a man for a couple of days and wants me to look after the kids [...] Things aren't going so well for her at the moment, so I try and help out". But helping out is not always unproblematic. Although the neighbour pays money towards the food that Alicia prepares for the children, Alicia is not too happy with the situation:

> It's really not easy, because I feel sorry for the children. They're sweet kids, you know. But I sometimes feel like she takes me for granted, like I'll just be there when she decides to go away. And sometimes she doesn't pay me for weeks, and it gets awkward, you know. I mean, the kids eat here and bath here and sleep here. I clear my lounge floor for them to sleep here [...] It all affects me and my own kids too. And it all costs money, you know.

Since then, Alicia's own situation has changed. She discovered that her husband had failed to tell her that he lost his job as a security guard until a whole month had passed and that he owed money to various people. It caused much tension in the household, and eventually Alicia decided to find a job again (cleaning gemstones for a Cape Town jeweller). She has organised childcare with family and an affordable crèche. She does not expect the neighbour to offer help, nor does she want to leave her children in the care of the neighbour - "I don't think she'd look after them that well" - but the work has limited the time and help she can now offer her neighbour. Alicia also draws a distinction between being friendly towards her neighbour in terms of helping out with childcare and

being as close to her as she is to Wendy, who is both a neighbour and a friend. Alicia believed that, with less time to spend on neighbouring and assistance, her friendship with Wendy would take priority in times of need: "I always try not to let her down because she's my friend and she's there for me, you know". The distinction between degrees of friendship with neighbours is also noted in other studies (Allan 1979; Gullestad 1984; Willmott 1987) and will be revisited below in a discussion of friendships in the suburb.

Elizabeth Thompson (39, coloured, municipal administrator) is married to Mervyn (human resource manager, coloured-Indian, mid-40s). They have a 10-year-old daughter, Sandra. They moved to Summer Greens from Blue Downs in 1992, primarily to shorten their journey to work but also because they wanted their child to grow up in a non-racial environment: "I don't want my child to run around with the [racial] hang-ups we grew up with. I don't want my daughter to look at the person twice because your colour is slightly bit more purplish than mine", explained Elizabeth. She grew up in Athlone and was educated at "a very political high school there in the dark years of Apartheid", recalling that she was "not shy to throw a stone or scale six-foot walls to escape the police". Her mother worked in a knitting mill, earning extra money as a domestic worker for a wealthy lawyer, while her father was a municipal electrician. Mervyn was raised in Newlands until the suburb was declared a White Group Area and his mother was forcibly removed with nine small children to the Cape Flats:

> I was very angry with whites in this country. But I've worked hard to overcome that, and I want my daughter to grow up in a different kind of environment to where I come from. I think our parents' generation are now too old to be interested in the new South Africa. We're the generation that grew up under Apartheid and we have lived through the changes so we know both sides of the story. But I want my daughter to just grow up with everyone here, not to think 'oh, this person is black' or 'this person is white'. There's everyone here in Summer Greens.

The Matetes live two houses away. They are Africans from Lesotho and also have a 10-year-old daughter, Mapaseka. When the Matetes arrived in 1995, they asked Elizabeth and Mervyn for advice on where to send their child to school. The Thompsons recommended the Catholic school in Milnerton that Sandra attends, even though Mapaseka was not Catholic. The two families started a lift scheme together, where one

family took the girls to school and another picked them up. At one time, the Matetes, both nurses, asked the Thompsons to look after Mapaseka while they temporarily worked night shifts. Elizabeth remembered: "We didn't think twice about it, it was a need that had to be met. It was maybe a little bit strange first, but [looking after an African neighbour's child] was a new thing for us, you know…I think it was definitely a good experience".

However, in November 1999, a disagreement occurred between the two sets of parents over the disciplining of Mapaseka for a particular incident. The Thompsons considered it to be too harsh. The lift scheme continued for another month until one morning when the Matetes took Mapaseka to school without picking up Sandra. Rather than confront the Matetes, the Thompsons asked Mapaseka to ask her parents to discuss the lift scheme with them. They never came and the issue was simply left unresolved. While the lift scheme was convenient for both families, it was not imperative: the school was en route to the work places of both families. However, the Thompsons believe the disagreement a month earlier was to blame for the abrupt and unilateral ending of the lift scheme. Sandra and Mapaseka continue to play together but they make their separate way to school. The two sets of parents greet each other but the lift scheme has never since been mentioned between them. Their relationship has shifted from one of trust and reciprocity to one of relative estrangement. Today, if the Thompsons need emergency childcare they call upon their extended family in Athlone, more than ten kilometres away, rather than their immediate neighbours.

The Thompsons' telling of the friction that sparked the conflict was soon reinforced by more critical comments on the Matetes' methods of child rearing. Mervyn interpreted the Matetes' regular use of physical discipline and Mapaseka's lack of parental guidance with homework as signs of neglect which, he felt, partially explained why Sandra achieved the higher marks at school. He insinuated that the different approaches to discipline and homework were evidence of class differences between the two families, locating his own family firmly in the middle class. In his study of Levittown, Gans (1967) found that differences over discipline reflected perceived class differences in child rearing, by which working class parents were, for example, more likely to administer physical punishment

than middle class parents. Baumgartner (1988) suggests the same, although he offers no conclusive evidence of such differences.

For a number of residents (including Alicia and the Thompsons), neighbouring has brought them into closer contact with people whom they might not otherwise interact with due to old prejudice. A shared concern for children's safety and well-being has helped them overcome certain fears and biases, as the unfamiliar becomes more familiar, less different, less threatening.

For the Millers and the Lawrences, the open layout of the *woonerf* played its part in bringing them together. They have been neighbours since 1996. Harold and Jean Miller (white) are pensioners in their late sixties, he an auto-mechanic, she a retired hospital warden who recalled with pride that she was on duty in 1967 when Dr Chris Barnard performed the world's first heart transplant operation at Cape Town's Groote Schuur Hospital. Old prejudices are revealed in their reference to Africans as "natives" and to African residential areas as "locations". They moved to Summer Greens in 1994 after spending ten years in Ruyterwacht, a white working-class area. The racial demographics of Ruyterwacht were changing by the time they left: "Other people were moving in and there was a lot of noise", Jean explained, referring to the coloured people moving into the area. The Millers sold their house to "a Malay[34] man, which was fine by us, we didn't have a problem with that". Jean noted that in 1994 the majority of Summer Greens residents were still white, but "now we have non-European neighbours but they are, you know, respectable coloureds" unlike the "coloured chaps who come begging at the door". Vicky and Basil Lawrence (both 37 and coloured) moved to Summer Greens in 1996, when Vicky became pregnant with their third child and they needed more space than was available in their house in Bonteheuwel. At the time of research, their children were aged ten, eight and four. Vicky works as a secretary for a large electronics company, while Basil is a salesman. From a fragile beginning of greeting through nods and the odd wave, the Lawrences took the initiative to come across and introduce themselves to the Millers.

[34] Malays were brought to Cape Town as slaves in the 17th and 18th centuries. Apartheid legislation considered Malays a subgroup of "coloureds" (Sparks 1990).

From then on, the neighbourliness increased; as Harold pottered with his car in the open garage or Jean tended to the flowerbeds outside, the Lawrence children came by to watch. There are no walls or fences around the Millers' property, just a low-lying wooden beam to mark the physical boundary onto neighbouring erven. Then the children came inside for a drink or a snack, and the level of trust and help invested in the relationships has developed to such an extent that the Millers keep house keys for the Lawrences and several other neighbours whose children return home from school before their parents. Jean sees to it that they are let in and that they are okay, maintaining, "I don't mind doing that, it's safer than the children carrying keys around at school all day". As well as having 12 children, 25 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren of her own, Jean expressed a sense of grandmotherly concern for the children of her coloured neighbours, saying, for example, "They know they can pop in any time they like".

For the Millers, learning to live with their coloured neighbours has turned out to be easier than expected; they have been surprised - and grateful - at how open and friendly the 'respectable coloureds' have been. The Lawrences are happy about the arrangement with house keys and consider themselves to have "a good relationship" with the Millers: "It's nice to know that they're there when we're not", explained Vicky. The relationship between the two neighbours centres on care of the children, and both families appear content with that - neither expressed any interest in increasing social interaction between the two.

Forty-five households with children were asked, 'on whom do you rely for childcare in an emergency?'. Of these, five (11%) came from households with older family members with whom children could usually be left. One (2%) would turn to a family member living elsewhere in Summer Greens. Four (9%) replied that they would turn to a neighbour. The remaining 35 households would rather call upon family (53.5%) or friends (24.5%) outside Summer Greens. The Lawrences are fortunate that the Millers are retired and spend most of their time at home. When Alicia was at home with the children, Wendy could depend on her in an emergency. Since then, unless Alicia happens to be available, she has turned to family in Hanover Park (15 kilometres from Summer

Greens). The high number of adult residents working outside the suburb may in part account for the low dependency on neighbours, at least during weekdays, in the research population, an observation which resonates with several studies of both working class and middle class neighbourhoods (see, for example, Stacey 1960; Chambers 1997; Stevenson 1999; Strong-Boag 1999). Networks with friends and family outside Summer Greens will be discussed below.

4.2.2 Borrowing: Affinity or Dependency?

A special situation in which neighbours do appear to help each other is in the lending of gardening tools. It is not considered embarrassing to ask, and lending the tools is in fact seen as a show of neighbourliness, even friendliness (it also allows the lender to feel generous and possibly even superior). However, the borrowing of food or basic household items seems less acceptable. For some residents, this is very different from their former neighbourhoods. Patricia Erasmus (54) and Charmaine Alberts (51) (both coloured) moved from Kensington and Brackenfell respectively. They met each other in early 1999 when Patricia came to buy a bed from the shop where Charmaine works as a saleslady, and they realised they both live in Summer Greens, albeit at different ends of the suburb. They started sharing transport to work, as they both work in Montague Gardens (Patricia as a data capturer for an electrical hardware company), striking up a friendship. They both said that they would rather walk to the shops than go next door and ask for the proverbial "cup of sugar". "It's just not what you do here", observed Patricia, adding that:

> People are proud here. We say we'll provide for ourselves. We deprive ourselves that way, but so be it. We say, we don't want Mrs Jones to know what I lack. People would think you were funny or not able to manage your household budget or shopping or something, [but] where I come from it's different, people borrowed all the time.

While wanting to avoid the negative judgement anticipated from such requests, the last statement may in fact be more revealing and in part explain the difference: according to Patricia, most people in Kensington would participate in networks of borrowing, thereby setting up mutual and reciprocal relationships between neighbours, even at the risk of

such networks being sometimes unbalanced and exploitative. In Summer Greens, neither Patricia nor Charmaine felt they had such networks of support. Wendy, on the other hand, has a couple of friends in Summer Greens whom she also knew when they lived in the same neighbourhood of Hanover Park, and she is not embarrassed to ask them for something because, she explained, "we go back a long way", but she conceded that she does not often take advantage of such contacts: "I think I'd rather go and buy whatever I need myself, it just seems the better thing to do here".

The least common and acceptable form of borrowing among neighbours appears to be money. Of 40 households in the research population, 80% (32) said that in an emergency, they would first ask family inside (12=30%) or outside (20=50%) their home for money. More people would seek assistance from their work place (5=12.5%) than from friends (3=7.5%). Of the last three friends, two of them lived outside Summer Greens. The third case refers to Alicia who now and then reluctantly asks Wendy for financial help. No one I spoke to admitted to ever visiting the cash loans business on Summer Greens Drive, which offers both small and large amounts of money because of a demand for cash which cannot be met elsewhere. As with the borrowing of food items, it seems that the general image projected to the world outside the immediate family is one of independence and self-sufficiency. (Chapter Six discusses these values in the context of the home and home ownership).

These findings concur with many studies of suburbs (for example, Bracey 1964; Gans 1967; Deversen & Lindsay 1973, Chambers 1997) and generally distinguish middle class from working class neighbourhoods (see for example, Young & Willmott 1957; Stacey 1960; Stack 1974; Gullestad 1984; Halperin 1998; White 2000). In middle class suburbia, borrowing food or basic household items does not so much signify affinity and intimacy as a weakness in domestic and/or financial management which suggests that the borrower might not be competent in the social codes of suburbia. Such borrowing, particularly if done regularly, is associated with 'the lower classes', or the 'roughs' as Stacey (1960) called them, and thus in the context of suburban Summer Greens with shame and embarrassment. Borrowing thus appears to signify a crossing of lines between classes and

related notions of propriety and impropriety, of independence and dependence, and it exposes both real and perceived inequalities among neighbours, thus disturbing the myth of class homogeneity in suburbia (Perin 1988).

For some residents the economic hardship following their move to Summer Greens has been a lonely battle in which they cannot even turn to their family for help. Anita Godfrey (40, part-time sales assistant, coloured), whose move from Lotus River on the Cape Flats to Summer Greens in 1994 was considered an act of snobbery by her family, sells Tupperware in her spare time to supplement her main income and that of her husband, a truck driver: "[My family] think we have lots of money, but we don't - sometimes it's a struggle to make ends meet and you just wait for pay-day. But I could never tell them that, so I try and hide it". She is too proud to admit to them or her neighbours the financial difficulties they have had in setting up a new home in Summer Greens and bringing up three small children (see also Chapter Five). A neighbour has owed her money for three months for a couple of Tupperware bowls which Anita gave her when the neighbour was desperate but did not have the cash to pay her. She finds herself too "embarrassed" to ask the neighbour to "pay up" and thinks the neighbour is "avoiding" her. A benevolent act of helping out a neighbour in need has turned into a thorny issue of outstanding debt, and Anita admitted that she feels her trust has been betrayed.

About a year after they had met, Patricia and Charmaine's friendship floundered, primarily over money to cover the petrol costs of their shared transport to work. Patricia maintained that Charmaine owed her 15 rands for a week of lifts, while Charmaine insisted that she had already paid. It came to a head one rainy morning when Charmaine asked to be picked up at home, and an exchange of phone calls followed during which both of them slammed down the phone. A week later Patricia offered Charmaine a lift home from work, but it was too early for Charmaine to take up the offer, something she believed Patricia was fully aware of. Lingering in both their minds was a minor dispute between them which had occurred earlier that year when Patricia sold Charmaine some fish for which she was paid only a while later. Following the argument over petrol

money, the friendship was over. Both women, in separate interviews, expressed the view that money should not be exchanged between friends, as it so easily leads to tension.

4.2.3 Vigilance and Care: Looking Out For Each Other

Mr Boston, the sales manager for Monex, spoke of many residents as "Mitchell's Plain-type refugees", that is, people who have "fled the townships on the Cape Flats, to get away from the crime and gangsterism and violence". This powerful image was projected to me over and over again during the research. People were tired of fear. They no longer wanted to worry about their children being in the wrong place at the wrong time (and "it's always the wrong time in Hanover Park", noted one mother of two teenage boys), being caught in a gang shoot-out, or even becoming gang members. They wanted their children to be able to play safely in the streets and their homes to be secure, and they identified a certain level of trust and care between neighbours as crucial for this. The level was generally determined by experiences in their past places of residence and their expectations and experiences of Summer Greens as a 'community' of like-minded, caring and conscientious citizens.

One of the "refugees" Mr Boston was referring to is Colin Farrell (44, pastor, coloured) who declared that his two teenage children are much happier in Summer Greens than in Elsies River where they lived before: "The townships are bad, kids aren't safe there. Here we have a community where people are neighbourly and respect each other. It's safe. My son is now 18 years old and he hasn't really been exposed to gangsterism". He and his wife considered the move to Summer Greens in 1995 a way of saving their son from becoming affected by, or even involved in, gangs and of helping him lead "a good life". At the time of research, their son was doing well for himself, finishing high school, playing soccer in a club in Edgemead, and working part-time in Century City, the shopping mall adjacent to Summer Greens. "The neighbours here are decent people", which, Colin concluded, makes for a relatively safe street and community.

Comparing her old neighbourhood, Factreton, to her new one in Summer Greens, Wendy Parker (37-year-old bank official, coloured) also felt there was a higher degree of community in Summer Greens. She based her assessment in part on what she regarded as indifference among her former neighbours whom she left in 1996:

> I was fed up with that place. We had our house burgled five times and it turned out to be our neighbour's son! There's just no support there from your own people. Here it's much safer. My kids can play outside and I don't have to check on them every five minutes to see that they're still there and then go into a big panic if they are not. That's what it was like there. Here people look out for each other and help each other. There's more community here.

While still recognising her former neighbours in Factreton (a mainly coloured working class area) as her "own people", she felt increasingly unable to trust them with her property or her children. Moving to Summer Greens had been a "vast improvement": here she had quickly developed a greater sense of security and community through both the *woonerf* layout and her "decent neighbours".

For Patricia Erasmus (54, data capturer, coloured), the decision to move to Summer Greens three years ago was prompted by a brutal attack on her teenage son not far from their home by a gang of youths. She and her family had been living in Kensington - a coloured area - for almost 20 years, not because she could not afford to move, but because she had strong social networks there (see above). However, the attack was the final straw after years of living with violence and crime in the neighbourhood. At the age of 54, and with a terminally ill husband aged 75, she said Summer Greens had offered her a safe haven and peace of mind:

> This place is safe and quiet [...] my son is safe, my husband who's at home alone most days is safe. Some of the neighbours pop by now and then to see that he's alright. It's very kind of them. I feel we got out of [Kensington] just in time.

Although his scars are still visible, her son recovered and finished his education. At the time of research he worked as a computer programmer, took evening classes in German and was hoping to work for a German airline in the near future. Like Pastor Farrell, Patricia feels her son has "found himself since we moved, he hasn't got all the worries he had before".

According to a 1998 survey of crime in Cape Town, all citizens - regardless of class, race, or location - perceive an escalation in criminal violence and lawlessness (Camerer *et al* 1998). As Oldfield (2000) has shown in her study of community-based crime prevention in poorer, crime-ridden areas of Cape Town, neighbours are the key to feelings of safety and security in neighbourhood, as long as residents believe they can trust their neighbours. On the other hand, Robins (2000:414) argues that in many middle class suburban homes, a general economic self-sufficiency among residents means that they do not need the "street-level interpersonal relations and neighbourhood networks in order to meet their basic needs". They can withdraw into their fortified and protected private space and rely on private 'armed response' security companies for protection. It is far more likely to be an alarm system detecting the presence of danger than neighbours' vigilance. Summer Greens as a whole falls somewhere in between these two classes of neighbourhood.

Records at Milnerton Police Station establish that crime in Summer Greens almost doubled in 1998. Reported offences showed that on average, two cars were stolen per month, one business and ten homes and ten cars were broken into every month. Between January and June that year there were two armed robberies and one reported rape. Records of minor crimes had not been processed and collated, but according to Sgt Oberholzer all crimes in the suburb were increasing by about 20% per year[35]. Just over half of residents interviewed said that they have been victims of crime in the past two years; a few have had their homes and cars broken into and been mugged in the streets at night, but the most common property crimes have been washing stolen off the line, children's toys and bicycles removed, and gardening equipment taken. Residents concede that these are potentially less serious crimes but nonetheless expensive, irritating and disturbing. Charleen October, a 36-year-old receptionist, and Anita Godfrey, a 40-year-old sales assistant (both coloured), had their washing stolen shortly after they moved in some years ago, and then again recently. Charleen recalled:

> Both times it happened at night and we never heard them, but they must have jumped over our back wall and taken it all off and then run off with it. It was

[35] Milnerton Police Station could not provide any figures for Summer Greens for 1999 or 2000. In August 2000 a government moratorium on the release of crime statistics was implemented.

> mainly bed linen the first time but it was clothes the second time. It's so annoying...these things aren't cheap, you know, and the whole thing just doesn't make you feel safe.

Anita's experience was similar, but on the one occasion her husband actually retrieved most of the goods:

> Everyone told us that the thieves get away by running over to the railway line [the western side of the suburb] and then run away along the tracks there. So my husband went the next morning and walked along the tracks and there he found some of our clothes. I think they must have dropped them. [...] I don't leave my washing out overnight anymore.

Anita and her husband showed me the brochure for the security spikes they were considering buying for the house: razor sharp spikes disguised as branches and twigs of ivy. "I want something, and these don't look as bad as barbed wire. I don't want barbed wire, it's so ugly", said Anita, pleased with the more aesthetic alternative.

The majority of crimes are committed by "outsiders", "strangers", "people who don't belong here", "unemployed" and "unsavoury characters" who "roam our streets", as residents variously put it. But police confirm residents' reluctant suspicions that several of the criminals in fact live within the walls of the suburb. Some residents may rightly ask the alarming question: can a neighbour be trusted?

In 2000, several residents reached out to help their neighbours in need, three people who had recently arrived as refugees from war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). All young men, they had fled war in that country, leaving their families behind. Coming via networks of people in Pretoria and Johannesburg, they ended up for a while in Summer Greens in a house owned by a Congolese businessman who himself lives mostly in Uganda but whose partner looks after the house. In early 2000, she took in a variety of foreigners (refugees and economic migrants, the latter mainly Tanzanian) who were all waiting for permission to stay and work in South Africa. They contributed towards expenses from what money they had managed to escape with. The 3-bedroomed house was sparsely furnished and somewhat crowded with anything up to nine adults staying there at a time, but it was a welcome temporary shelter for someone like Abraham from

the DRC. A 30-year-old high school teacher, he was desperate for work in Cape Town, but was not having any success in finding it. Summer Greens, he said, was safe, yes, but also "too quiet and boring", echoing other young and/or single residents in the suburb. Without money or transport "it's difficult to go anywhere". I first met him soon after he had arrived, and he complained that people in Summer Greens kept themselves very much to themselves and, understandably, he felt a stranger. A month later, however, he was full of praise for several residents who had offered support: a woman across the road had typed and posted his job applications, and one of the priests in the local New Apostolic Church helped him join the church choir and get a part-time job delivering magazines to subscribers around Cape Town. Through the care and concern of neighbours, Abraham had developed a more optimistic outlook on the immediate future than when I first met him. He eventually moved in with the priest and his family and said he felt "part of the community now" (even if he still found Summer Greens a "boring" place).

However, the common tail-piece in Julia's definition of a good neighbour (given earlier) - "someone who will help, *when you need it*" - suggests that neighbours should not offer their assistance unless it is clear that their help is needed and will be appreciated. One resident recounted how his actions as a conscientious neighbour were not welcome. A year before we first met, Brian de Villiers (48, receiving manager, currently unemployed, coloured) had noticed someone breaking into a neighbour's house during the day. He managed to apprehend the thief and with the help of another neighbour march him off to the police station. But he was dismayed at the owner's reaction:

> She told me I should just have called the police and then mind my own business. I went straight back to the police station and asked them to release the guy. If that's all the thanks I get, then she doesn't deserve to have him punished.

As the owner did not lay charges, the thief was released. The owner has since left Summer Greens and moved to Bothasig. Brian also recalled how, a few months earlier, a man was breaking into three houses further up his street but a woman who witnessed the break-ins did not call the police because, according to Brian, "she had called them once before when her house was burgled and the police never came". Other neighbours - less

disillusioned with the police service - did, however, alert the police and the thief was caught (although he was released on bail and the trial is still pending).

Clearly, not all neighbours can be trusted to respond at critical moments, nor can gratitude be taken for granted. Kobus' earlier definition of a good neighbour as "someone who will notice and react if there are strangers on your property" appears not to be universally shared or practised, and neighbours must sometimes walk a fine line between vigilance and trespassing.

4.2.4 Guarding Privacy: Innocuous and Judgmental Gossip

As examples above have shown, residents express several disparities in terms of the degree of friendliness that is appropriate between neighbours. Under the spatial conditions of the *woonerf*, neighbours are to some extent recognised as constituting a threat to privacy, and definitions of a good neighbour in Summer Greens place an emphasis on maintaining privacy. Sometimes this is stated directly; "a good neighbour is someone who respects your privacy" (Nazreen, 24-year-old bank clerk, coloured). The disappointment over neighbours whose noisy behaviour is regarded as an invasion of privacy reflects expectations of "quiet and considerate" neighbours (Olivia, 30, hairdresser, white). Definitions are couched in terms of behaviour that violates their sense of privacy: "someone who isn't nosy or pushy" (Beverley, 42, in human resources, white); "someone who minds their own business" (Lerato, 33, sales assistant, African); "someone who doesn't interfere and isn't nosy" (Nicci, 39, bank clerk, white); "someone who doesn't gossip" (Wendy, 37, bank official, coloured); "someone who doesn't pry into your private life and spread rumours" (Alida, 36, teacher, coloured).

For Alida Willemse and Wendy Parker, neighbours indulging in gossip conjure up pictures of the life they have left behind in Bonteheuwel and Factreton respectively, where neighbours could be "gossipy and intrusive" (Wendy) and "you'd tell them something personal and next minute everyone would know" (Alida). For these two women (and many others), a good neighbour is someone whom they can trust to respect

their privacy. Even if neighbours are sometimes exposed to areas of another's private life - and the houses in Summer Greens are built closely enough together for sound to travel through to neighbours - there is trust that they will not gossip about it. They are both happier with their neighbours in Summer Greens than they were in Factreton and Bonteheuwel. Alida explained,

> There's a good balance here in Summer Greens, you know, I chat now and then with my one neighbour but I never get the feeling she's being nosy in a bad way. We've actually got to know each other quite a bit, I'd say, but we don't socialise.

In other words, since moving in to Summer Greens she and her neighbour have successfully established the line between what is an appropriate level of interest and what constitutes prying, and it is a boundary which they both respect. However, the line also appears to have slowly shifted as the two have become more familiar with each other, and enquiries which may at first have seemed nosy might now be considered acceptable. They have found commonalities around which they have redefined their relationship from polite to friendly neighbours, both aware of the time it takes to develop mutual trust and of the need to show mutual respect for each other's privacy for this trust to be sustained.

In anthropological studies of small-scale societies, gossip has long been regarded as a form of informal social control, pervasive in all societies yet more effective as a deterrent in bounded, close-knit communities than in open, heterogeneous societies (Goffman 1959; Hannerz 1969; Merry 1984). Gossip is not necessarily backbiting or malicious; it is generally indulged in to forge social relationships, intimate friendships, and to confirm a sense of belonging to a group through the sharing of information. Moreover, it is a way of 'testing' personal morals and ethics on other people; people engaging in gossip relate discursively to a common moral code when they gossip about how so-and-so is behaving or what so-and-so is saying. By gossiping about those who, in their opinion, defy social rules, they reinforce rather than challenge certain norms and values held in high regard. As Merry (1984:277) argues, "only when the gossipers share moral views is the soil fertile for gossip. The person sharing a juicy tidbit expects the listener to join in

condemning that behaviour, not to approve it".[36] The information about residents' private lives circulating in Summer Greens ranges from "the assured truths of gossip to the collective myths of rumour" (Suttles 1972:36).

One family felt particularly victimised and ostracised by neighbours and other residents over an unexpected predicament. Five months into her pregnancy, Charmaine Alberts' daughter Moira, a small and fragile 19-year-old (coloured), could no longer hide her condition and told her mother; however, she refused to name the father of the child. She was ashamed and scared - and unemployed. At the time she was living with her mother and sister. Charmaine was furious at first, then concerned, not least for her daughter and the baby, but also anxious about how people around her would react. As devout and active members of the New Apostolic Church in Summer Greens, the family was worried that Moira's situation would generate gossip, and worst of all, the contempt of the church leadership. In fact it did both. Moira and Charmaine stopped singing in the church choir for a while, and pleas for the church leader to bless the unborn baby were countered with a demand for the father to come forward and for the parents to be married before the baby was born. Her youngest daughter's unwanted pregnancy out of wedlock, as well as the condemnation of her own church, caused immense distress to Charmaine who almost suffered a nervous breakdown. She swore that she had seen members of the church leadership sit in their cars across the road from her front door, "trying to see what men came to visit, as if we're loose here or something", but she was too shocked by the whole matter to confront them. Finally, Ricky, the 24-year-old father, came forward, confirming a rumour that had been circulating both in the church circles and in Moira and Ricky's own circle of friends. Also a resident of Summer Greens, Ricky works in a metal plant. He and Moira started being seen in public together, and although they intended to live together after the baby's arrival, they refused to get married. Less than a month before the baby was due, Charmaine's prayers were answered and the church leader came to their home to bless the child and allow for it to be baptised in the church. She believes that the

[36] During fieldwork I heard a fair amount of information being conveyed as gossip and gossip transmitted as information. I was able to verify some of it by tracing it around the suburb and determining the networks through which it travelled. However, I probably only observed "natural gossip" (Merry 1984:273) when residents temporarily ignored my presence or took my presence for granted as if I belonged.

church leadership "eventually realised that they were not being very Christian" and softened their approach to the matter. Towards the end of 2000, the couple and their baby girl moved into an apartment in Milton Manor at the south end of Summer Greens. For Charmaine, it was a painful experience that helped her decide to move to Johannesburg to join her husband (whose work had transferred him there a few months earlier) and get away from "the stares in church and in the street".

The gossip circulating around Moira's pregnancy out of wedlock was judgmental: it insinuated that Moira had betrayed the middle class, suburban, moral ideal of a "correct chronology in life" (Perin 1977:42), i.e. marriage first, children second. Charmaine recognised 'loose' as describing the social type (Hannerz 1969) upon which not just Moira but the entire family would be evaluated, not least in the moral community of the church. As a parent, Charmaine felt censured by the gossip flowing between neighbours and fellow choir members: "They make you feel like you're a bad parent, like you've failed or something". Charmaine admitted that her daughter's behaviour had not been "the proper way to start a family", and she recalled her own situation when she was Moira's age:

> I grew up with a very religious father [now deceased]. I was never close to him or my mother. I was taken out of school early to go earn money to pay for us kids, school, clothes and that. There's seven of us. I earned more than my father did as a postman but I had to hand all the money over to him. I suppose I rebelled against that, got into trouble with men and that. I got married when I was very young but it didn't last long. Of course my parents were mad. Then I got married again and had my two children, but then I got divorced again and ended up bringing up the girls on my own. For 15 years I was on my own. Then I met this man, he was so caring, and he courted me for a couple of years until I gave in. We got married in 1998. The point is, when I was Moira's age, I wasn't ready for the responsibility of a child, or a marriage for that matter. But my family was never there to help me through those times. I'm not close to my family at all. And I think in those situations, you need family to be there to support you and not to condemn you. There's enough people out there who'll do that. I'm not exactly over the moon with what Moira's done, I wish she'd done things differently, but it's done and now we just have to deal with it.

She felt hurt at the intrusion of neighbours into their personal lives: "It's private, you know, it's between [the family] and it's for us to sort out. It's none of their business". In a later interview, she suggested that the tension which eventually led to the breakdown of her friendship with Patricia Erasmus (see above) was in part fuelled by her refusal to

reveal the name of the father to Patricia: "She was dying to know, but I just didn't feel it was right to expose him to anyone then, so I kept quiet, and that probably really annoyed her".

4.2.5 Propriety: Tensions over Private Space and Public Behaviour

Closely related to the emphasis on maintaining privacy is that of propriety, of showing respect for private property, both one's own and that of one's neighbours: "A good neighbour is someone who respects your property and keeps their own property clean and tidy" (Marcelle, 28, secretary, coloured); "someone you can trust to respect your property" (John, mid-30s, purchasing manager, coloured); "someone who takes pride in looking after their property" (Susan, 49, self-employed seamstress, white); "someone who keeps their garden neat and their dogs quiet" (Brenda, 37, housewife, coloured); and "someone who disciplines their children and makes sure that they don't damage your property" (Fakier, 31, unemployed instrumentation fitter, coloured).

"Slummers Green" was how Lucy Jordan, a 48-year-old white legal secretary, referred to Summer Greens, because "it fits a lot of the people here, there's a lot of low class behaviour. Some people aren't very sophisticated, you know". She was alluding to those adult residents who drink alcohol on their front lawns, spread clothes out to dry on the front lawn, and sit directly on the ground rather than on garden chairs to watch the world go by. They do not intend to offend neighbours, but under the spatial constraints of the *woonerf* layout they engage in these activities in full view of the public. One of "them" is Lerato Shakoane (62, African) who moved to the suburb in 1995 with her daughter and son-in-law - both high school teachers in Khayelitsha - and her three grandchildren. Lerato worked for many years as a live-in domestic worker in Bergvliet until her employer passed away in 1993. Without work, she moved in with her daughter and looked after the grandchildren, but their flat in Mandalay (Khayelitsha) soon became too small for them, and the daughter and son-in-law decided to buy a house in Summer Greens. A year after moving in, Lerato found full-time work in the launderette on Summer Greens Drive. She is generally happy with life in the suburb: "There are good

schools for the children close by. And on hot days one of the neighbours down the road invites the children to come and use their swimming pool, which is nice of them". She is also impressed by how clean the streets are and the regularity of refuse collection: "In Mandalay it was dirty and rubbish was always lying around so the children got germs so easily". But she recognises that on several occasions she has unintentionally caused offence to some of her neighbours:

> Like the president, I am an African and we have customs. When you move into a new house you must make beer outside and have people sit and talk outside. But one neighbour complained to me about that and we were told to stop singing. We can't make fire outside either, which is necessary for our beer. [...] They also complained when we were singing after a funeral. [...] It's a problem for our customs. We try not to upset the neighbours too much, but we also have a right to be here.

Other residents also continue to exercise their perceived right to behave as they wish on private property. In addition to Lucy Jordan, several others clearly considered such activities to be indecent and inappropriate in the suburb. Clothes should not be dried on the front lawn but in the back yard. People should not sit at the front and "stare at the rest of us going about our business", one (white male) resident observed. Sometimes residents' objections were followed by identifying the offender in racial terms and explaining to me the "cultural habits" that are associated with "those people". This reaction came from both white and coloured residents, but I never heard it from African residents. Reacting to one incident of African men consuming alcohol in public, a white woman disapprovingly asked, "What do they think this is? Langa?", referring to an African township in Cape Town. She did not consider white men drinking beer while having a barbecue on the front lawn - as I also observed - equally offensive.

Yet even the back yard is not always safe from 'intrusion' by neighbours: Bulelwa Mabuza, a 53-year-old African teacher who moved to Summer Greens from Khayelitsha in 1996, complained about her neighbour lighting a barbecue near her washing line, even when her washing is hanging there to dry, leaving the washing dirty and smelly: "It's so inconsiderate. He could either move the *braai* stand or better still, he should inform me so that I can make a choice. He should show more respect". Having lived in Khayelitsha for many years, Bulelwa Mabuza decided to move away from the crime, noise and dirt which

she alleges characterises the area, so she sold her house there and bought one in Summer Greens: "I've worked my way up by working hard and improving my education" to the level of a Bachelor's degree. A single mother, she shares her house with three adult daughters and one grandchild. Despite her irritation over the neighbour's *braai* activities, she felt that, "This place...it's much better than the townships. It's quiet and clean [...] This is the middle class of the previously disadvantaged groups". Her sense of belonging under this classification is accompanied by a sense of hard-earned entitlement to privacy and respect from neighbours to whom she extends the same courtesy - and a corresponding disappointment at signs of blatant disrespect and inconsiderate behaviour. Her interaction with neighbours is not eased by her having to contend with white and coloured residents in her street who, she said, "see me as one of the domestic workers who work around here". (See Chapter Eight for a further discussion of her experience of such race-based attitudes).

Marcus and Annabel Clifford (both white) bought two properties in Summer Greens in early 1998, one to live in and one to rent. Having moved from Parow, an historically white middle class suburb of, predominantly, Afrikaans speakers, they are beginning to regret their investment because, they explained, "things have not turned out how we expected it. It used to be much nicer here, but standards are dropping". While Marcus (40) runs his own business in market research, Annabel (35) is a housewife and looks after their three sons aged 10-15. They are particularly disappointed with a neighbour who accused Annabel of being racist after she complained over washing being dried in public. Recounting the incident, she emphasised the Muslim identity of the neighbour:

> My life was threatened by my Muslim neighbours because they had put their washing all over the grass on the front lawn and their car and walls and I asked them to remove it because it is illegal. They said I complained because I'm white which is not true.

The constraints of the layout itself also give rise to another form of tension over private space. Depending on the angle at which a house is positioned on its plot, some residents have a smaller area at the back than others. In March 1996, residents in 12 households whose properties back onto a neglected area of public open space (in reality a dirty canal running alongside a derelict and flood-prone play area) applied to the municipality for

permission to buy or lease the land in order to extend their back yards. They asked for more space for growing gardens, for children to play in, and for privacy. Their request in part arose from the use of front lawns for parking: while all plots have some provision for parking, whether a garage or a driveway or both, there are a number of households where the layout provides off-street parking for only one car. Of the 62 households interviewed, 26% drove two or three cars. Because streets are narrow, residents with more than one car are often forced to park on their front lawns during evenings and weekends, making it difficult for children to play there or front gardens to be cultivated. Dating back to the early days of Summer Greens, a hand-scribbled note from the municipal town planner agreed with the developer that proposed parking space could be reduced, asserting that "parking of cars has to be considered but let us bear in mind that Summer Greens is serving an income group where cars are not as greatly used. I cannot quantify"[37]. The 12 households' application for more space at the back of their properties was turned down by the municipality, which argued that the open space in the suburb was suitably balanced between "need" and "supply", taking into account the *woonerf* design's provision of "informal" public space. The municipality feared the precedent the permission might set for other residents similarly disappointed by the restrictions on private space[38].

Although some, like Lerato Shakoane or residents drying clothes on their front lawns, do not generally let themselves be discouraged or culturally compromised by the spatial limitations of the *woonerf*, others thus consider it a restraint on their ability to enjoy a social life in their own homes. Several complain that the small space at the back makes it difficult for them to host a social occasion in private.

Lucy Jordan emigrated from England 25 years ago to marry a South African, and after their divorce four years ago she moved from a 4-bedroom house in Plumstead to a 2-bedroom house in Summer Greens - "downsizing" she called it. Her previous house had a "big garden and a patio big enough to have a dinner party for eight people outside". Now she has a small back yard, mainly tiled, with a small patch of grass, where "there's hardly

[37] On the back page of Minutes of Council Meeting 18 November 1993, File 16/3/2/4 Part 13.
[38] Correspondence between residents and Milnerton Municipality, March-April 1996, File 16/3/2/4 Part 17.

room for a *braai* and the garden furniture set out at the same time". Her front lawn is big enough to park two cars on it. When I suggest the possibility of entertaining visitors on her front lawn, she replies that it would just be "too embarrassing". The lawn is open - she intends to "put something up around the front, maybe a fence or maybe a wall, when I have enough money", but until then "it is not private", and she considers hosting a social occasion in full view of the public to be "working class".

Abby Davis (early 50s, white) has lived in Summer Greens for six years and works in the local crèche. She also immigrated from Britain 20 years ago with her two children and settled in the southern suburbs of Cape Town. In the mid-1990s, she and her husband experienced financial difficulties and decided to move into a smaller house in Summer Greens. Keenly aware that they were "moving down", she observed that "some sections of the community in Summer Greens don't adapt their lifestyle to their new surroundings. They just don't know the code of conduct for living in a [middle class] suburb": Her experiences of her African neighbours, who, she claims, are "noisy and leave rubbish lying around", lead her to believe that different understandings of personal distance can be attributed to 'race', although her argument quickly moves from ideas of 'race' to 'culture':

> I think there are different concepts of space between blacks and whites. Some of them [blacks] have no respect for it. They'll have a whole conversation with someone across the street, shouting. And some of them always stand right in front of you when you talk to them. It's too close for me but that's the way they do it. I think it's a cultural thing.

She related the story of a friend who moved out in late 1998 because she was "fed up with her black neighbours". They had "slaughtered a goat in the back yard for some ritual thing they do, and the blood sprayed across the wall and into [her friend's] garden and some of it was on her washing. That was the final straw". Unable to track down either the friend or her former neighbours, I had to rely on Mrs Davis' version of events, a version which seems to have become something of a legend, as I encountered it in several other interviews.

Marcus and Annabel Clifford complain that their social life has been affected by the noisy behaviour of other residents. Apparently, even hosting visitors inside the house can not guarantee privacy and quiet: "We don't invite people here often, it's just too embarrassing. The neighbours make a racket, they shout, play loud music and hoot constantly. We can hear it inside and it's disturbing". Abby told me of her experience with her African neighbours who "party all night long with loud music". When it gets "too much" her husband approaches the neighbours and asks them to turn down the noise, yet:

> They do it for five minutes then turn it back up again. There's just no respect for other people's privacy here. It's been getting worse [...] Maybe they can get away with it where they come from, I don't know. But I think some of them don't know how to behave in a middle class suburb.

These examples illustrate a tension and uncertainty over where to draw public-private boundaries in the suburb. Residents are regularly faced with several dilemmas: How much can they interfere with someone's behaviour on their private property? Who decides when the public peace has been disturbed? Who defines what constitutes a 'public nuisance'? The offending behaviour may be in public view and earshot but the physical space is private. In designing the layout of streets and plots, the planners assumed that their provision of small, private, enclosed backyards would satisfy people's need for privacy, but this has proven to be a mistake which has had unexpected outcomes. The general underestimate of demand for privacy has threatened to undermine the social reasons behind the streetscape itself, which were to establish and promote social interaction and cohesion and thus foster a community spirit. It appears that the planners assumed that everyone shared the same understanding of the concept of privacy. Some of the examples given above suggest that tension arises not simply out of different boundaries between public and private space, but rather that the definition of private space itself is being contested. How does one find consensus when *both* parties feel that their private space has been invaded and their rights to privacy infringed?

As revealed in the words of Lucy and Abby, these tensions are bound up with ideas around class and understandings of propriety in a middle class suburb regarding private

space and noise levels. But, for many home owners - and all of the above complainants were home owners - perceptions of improper behaviour are also linked to housing tenure: In their eyes, tenants are less likely to maintain a property and, due to their assumed transience in the suburb, "less interested in building a community", as one owner put it. Marcus and Annabel echo the majority of owners interviewed when they blame property rental agencies as well as private landlords (themselves excluded) for not being sufficiently discriminating in choosing tenants, many of whom they believe are criminals:

> They are letting a bad element of renters in here who sublet and bring other criminals in here [...] they let in the riff-raff and the drug-lords. These people don't care about maintaining any standards here or that they are the ones causing property values to drop.

Their noisy neighbours are tenants and in their view, the associations between tenants (and foreign tenants, in particular), declining standards, impropriety and even crime are clear. However, the residents causing offence in the other examples were all owners, which may suggest that tenants are conveniently constructed as a category of resident with whom deviant and improper behaviour is associated, even if owners know of tenants who are quite 'proper' and conscientious. During one focus group discussion, several owners railed against tenants who apparently showed no "respect for the houses they lived in or their neighbours", until one participant (Alicia) mentioned that she was in fact a tenant and proceeded to inform the rest of the group of the improvements she had made to the property, at her own cost, because the landlord was unwilling to do so. The owners declared her the "exception to the rule", and the prejudice appeared to linger.

The claim by Ilco Homes that the *woonerf* design "greatly reduces the impact of high density because there is no clear definition of private/public space"[39] is further disputed by residents: the lack of clearly defined boundaries between neighbouring properties and the street has given rise to a number of other grievances. Many residents complained about children and dogs wandering freely onto their front lawns and "making a mess". Sandile Phoza, a 36-year-old African policeman, said,

[39] "Formal Submission of Summer Greens - Phase I", p. 13, Ilco Homes, October 1989, File 16/3/2/4 Part 3.

> I don't know whose dogs they are so I can't talk to their owners, but it is very irritating and not very clean. [...] I have a small child and I don't like letting her play on our front lawn until I've checked if the dogs have been to visit.

Beverley Feldman (42, white, works in human resources) was fed up with "large dogs barking [...] and people not cleaning up after their dogs...the faeces brings flies and it stinks. Must I always clean it up? I've reported one neighbour to the municipality but it only helps for a while".

"If anyone out there is thinking about moving to Summer Greens, I'd tell them not to do it!". This stern warning comes from Heidi Claasen (39, white, nurse) who has been greatly disappointed by a careless and malicious act, which she suspects was carried out by her neighbours. Returning from church one Sunday in late 2000, she found a special flower she had planted in her front garden in memory of her late mother broken. She believes it might be the neighbours who "park their car in such a way that they have to drive over our front garden to move their vehicle". Alternatively, she thinks it could be the neighbours' children who ride their bicycles on her lawn: "The parents are irresponsible. They should be teaching their children about how to respect other people's property. Even if they can ride around on my front lawn doesn't mean they should be doing it". Her distinction between possible ('can') and appropriate ('should') behaviour reveals her frustration over the lack of social discipline among her neighbours. After living in Summer Greens for less than a year, her appraisal of the suburb is largely negative: "We've been sadly disappointed". She was too upset initially to confront the neighbours directly and chose instead to write to *Table Talk*, the local community newspaper, about the incident, hoping the culprit would emerge and apologise. She never received a response to her letter and, although still upset about the incident, has decided not to take it any further with her neighbours. She is, however, considering installing a fence around her front lawn.

4.3 MANAGING CONFLICT: NON-CONFRONTATIONAL STRATEGIES

The examples given so far have indicated some of the ways in which residents interpret and manage conflicts over space and behaviour in the suburb. Racial, ethno-religious, and

class prejudice appear as the main lenses through which transgressions are interpreted. At the extreme end is Abby Davis' friend who removed herself from the problem by moving out of the suburb. While unable to identify the dog owners, Sandile is prepared to approach them over the problems caused by the dogs. Annabel and Abby in fact confronted the neighbours with whom they had grievances yet encountered an unsympathetic response. Beverley sought to avoid confrontation by complaining anonymously to the local authority, although she lives in small cul-de-sac and the wrongdoer was likely able to identify the source of the complaint. Heidi was also reluctant to approach the neighbours she expected were responsible for the damage in her garden. The Residents Association regularly receives complaints about barking dogs, noisy neighbours, unkept grass verges, or rubbish on front lawns. The examples illustrate another dilemma facing both residents and the Residents Association, one which is closely related to the difficulty of interfering on private property discussed above: should the offended party confront the person(s) they believe to be responsible for transgressing the boundary between public and private space (as they perceive it)? Should they report the problem (maybe even anonymously) to an authoritative body? Or should they simply be avoided as far as possible, the differences tolerated and only grumbled about privately to family or friends?

Studies of conflicts between neighbours in suburbs have stressed the high degree of tolerance which is attributed to residents' middle class position (Dobriner 1963; Bracey 1964; Clark 1966; Gans 1967; Baumgartner 1988, Perin 1988). Certain features characterising the lives of middle class suburbanites in these studies - for example, the significance attached to privacy and propriety, freedom of association, weak ties and atomised social networks - discourage confrontation and promote "moral minimalism" (Baumgartner 1988:10), that is, a restrained and minimalistic form of social control through tolerance and avoidance. In a study of moral order in an American suburb called Hampton, Baumgartner (1988:93) makes the following observations, some of which are echoed in the data from Summer Greens:

> The loosely woven texture of life in Hampton makes avoidance on an everyday basis an easy alternative should an aggrieved person choose to take any action at all against an offending neighbour or friend. There is little pressure to associate

> with particular individuals, and few occasions are likely to bring together those who would rather stay apart. The sheer spatial arrangements, with most families segregated on their private lots, makes avoidance easy. If tensions escalate, the parties can simply ignore one another without disrupting a larger network of associates. In many cases, their avoidance will not even be noticed.

In Summer Greens, an emerging middle class suburb, it appears that a variety of annoyances and misdemeanours caused by children, adults or animals are indeed tolerated. In addition to the reasons given above concerning privacy, propriety, social ties etc., the new setting, the newly-achieved class status of many residents in Summer Greens, and the new experience of living in a non-racial neighbourhood, all carry a sense of uncertainty over how to deal with conflict among neighbours and what the consequences of possible action would be for neighbourly relations. However, unlike the spatial arrangement in Hampton, the open layout of the *woonerf* in Summer Greens and the propinquity of houses do not offer the same amount of private space into which residents can withdraw to avoid an offending neighbour.

The findings suggest that Summer Greens residents prefer non-confrontational strategies of conflict management rather than open conflict, tolerating behaviour which they consider to be deviant and simply avoiding the offending party. Others go as far as modifying the *woonerf* design in their attempt to address problems pertaining to the layout and to neighbours' compliance with its implied principles for behaviour. Some residents have forgone their open front garden and extended their home forward on their property, building an extra living room or bedroom or a garage, trying to utilise the limited space they have most effectively. Few residents choose to build upwards - there are only a handful of double-storey homes. One resident, who has extended forward rather than upward, suggested that the installation of a staircase would consume too much space on the ground floor (see Chapter Six on alterations inside the home). Some have built low walls and put in a small front gate. Hardly anyone has planted a hedge or small row of trees or even put in a wooden fence to act as a barrier - the choice of concrete or iron materials suggests that residents wish to convey a sense of durability and solidity of the boundary. These measures are primarily aimed at keeping out wandering dogs,

children and parked cars; in other words, they provide a small measure of privacy rather than security as such, as they hardly pose a deterrent to serious criminals.

Other modifications to the *woonerf* layout are motivated by residents feeling (and being) vulnerable to crime against their property and themselves. From the residents interviewed, the added privacy gained from their actions to enhance security appeared to be a secondary motivating factor, but in their understandings of private space they nonetheless included security as an essential aspect. As crime in the area has increased over the years, residents shake their heads at the developer's promise that the open layout would discourage crime. As mentioned above, the design aims to make the street a safe playground and meeting place for residents, as this should encourage "eyes on the street" (Jacobs 1961:45), a mutual and almost "natural" surveillance. Apart from being a "soft" ordering of people's behaviour (Pile *et al* 1999:108), encouraging a "civilised street" (Valentine 1998:200), the purpose and power of this surveillant gaze is also to watch for strangers who may pose a risk. The perimeter wall enclosing the suburb reinforces the perception of the inside as both defensible and defended space (cf. Newman 1972).

Their experiences of insufficient security have prompted a number of residents to cordon off and enclose the front areas of their properties with high walls and gates, access intercoms and, in some cases, barbed wire. Residents are sealing off their property from the public eye as well as (supposedly) reducing their vulnerability to crime, hoping to keep unwanted bodies out and enjoy more security within.

Since moving into their home in June 1996, Kobus and Irene du Plessis (both white) have undertaken a lot of work to improve its security. A self-employed computer technician, Kobus (36) says they moved from Parow to be closer to work, especially for his wife Irene, a 31-year-old insurance underwriter, who works in Cape Town. Their house is among the larger properties in Summer Greens as it is situated on a corner. With their two children aged six and three, they enjoyed the open space around their house and believed they had moved into a safe area, until their house was been broken into three times, their car once, and items were stolen from outside their house. This persuaded them to install a

number of security features - at the cost of thousands of rands - such as a high vibracrete perimeter wall topped with barbed wire, a security gate on their front door in addition to the solid one in the perimeter wall, burglar bars on the windows, and an alarm system. They also have a pet dog which doubles as guard dog. They feel safer but concede that all their efforts cannot guarantee that they will never be burgled again - or worse. Kobus blamed crime on people from outside Summer Greens, saying the wall around the suburb does not keep crime down: "They still come in as usual without being stopped". This, he felt, was the fault of the developer who has failed to raise the wall sufficiently. However, he also expressed disappointment with his neighbours over their lack of vigilance: "No one questions or searches [outsiders coming in] and there's no active crime patrolling or visible policing. There's too many unsavoury characters moving about on the roads, and neighbours here don't seem to be used to observing any irregular incidents". Ironically, given their endeavours to close off their property from public view, Kobus and Irene define a good neighbour as "somebody that cares about your place security-wise the same as their own, someone *visible* and friendly" (my italics).

Zanele, Siphiwe and their 3-year-old daughter moved into their 2-bedroom house in October 1997, having lived for several years with his parents in Gugulethu. Zanele (28, African) is a medical technologist at a major research institute while Siphiwe (35, also African) works for Nestlé in their sales office. "We wanted our own place [and] the houses here are nice, not the carriage houses you get in the townships". But like Kobus and Irene, they have been victims of crime in Summer Greens, their house having also been broken into three times and their car twice. They suspect the criminals come from inside Summer Greens but no arrests have been made. Their response has been to add extra burglar bars on windows and a security gate on the front door, to raise the perimeter wall and put barbed wire around the back of their property, which faces the railway on the western side of Summer Greens. They share Kobus' and Irene's concern for the safety of their daughter: "Summer Greens is not as safe as we thought it would be, but [the security installation] makes you feel a bit safer, especially when we have a small child", said Siphiwe.

Whatever happens behind the high walls of Susan and Philip Parson's house is not visible to neighbours or passers-by. Susan (49, seamstress, white) and Philip (37, massage therapist, white) have lived in Summer Greens for seven years, during which time they have had one burglary. They recently decided to take precautions after several of their neighbours were burgled over a short period. They too walled in their property, put burglar bars on all windows and - like Kobus and Irene - installed a security gate on their front door besides the solid one in the boundary wall. They also have four dogs which yap at anyone approaching the property.

In addition to the physical changes to the *woonerf* landscape described above, a number of households subscribe to the services of private security and armed response companies (a growing trend, say estate agents and police). Or at least the households appear to: I spoke to several residents who have not removed the security signs on the house left behind by former owners/subscribers. They do not wish to incur the monthly subscription fee, but they hope the signs will at least act as a deterrent. Of the research population, 25% had an alarm system installed, and most of them were connected to an armed response company. The remaining residents rely primarily on the trust and vigilance of neighbours.

While security features such as walls and gates set up clear rules of exclusion and inclusion, some residents reinforce this separation by not even providing a bell or intercom for neighbours or strangers (including the anthropologist seeking an interview) to get their attention. This suggests that in the event of an emergency outside their property, assistance might not be readily available, as there is no easy way of alerting the residents behind the gates, aside from shouting for help. But the growing number of residents taking steps to protect their property and themselves from unwanted contact with other people would appear to agree with the three couples above that this is a price worth paying for personal security as well as privacy. They are exercising a perceived right to private space by turning inwards and closing themselves off from the street, their neighbours, and strangers.

These actions thus significantly modify the *woonerf* streetscape, as boundaries onto neighbouring erven and the street are drawn and raised in concrete, redefining the criteria for inclusion and exclusion which the *woonerf* design intended to be less physically defined. Such modifications impede casual contact with strangers. To some extent they also discourage social interaction with neighbours, though this does not bother one resident I spoke to:

> Our houses are so close together and I can hear most of what's going on next door, and they're often fighting and yelling [...] Sometimes they stand in the garden and they don't care that the rest of us can hear everything [...] Since they've built the wall, now we still hear them but at least we don't have to see them having a go at each other. It was a bit embarrassing, you know, if you were out in your garden and they were having a go.

However, other residents regard the walls as an understandable but sad indictment of society. This was the opinion of several residents who are active in the local residents association. Mervyn Thompson (human resource manager, coloured-Indian, mid-40s) is the current chairperson of the association, and he lamented the modifications to the *woonerf* layout:

> It's bad that people feel they have to barricade themselves [in] like some of them do but I understand why they do it [...] We want respect for *everyone's* privacy in Summer Greens, but we also want to get people involved in the community and it's not easy when people just disappear into their homes like that.

Leonard Carolus (38, compositor, coloured), also serving on the committee of the association, is similarly uneasy about the residents who live behind high walls, referring to them as "people who want to do their own thing, in their own little house". Both have experience of what they called a "close-knit community" - Leonard identified an area of Stellenbosch where he grew up and Mervyn referred to his former neighbourhoods in Athlone and Blue Downs - in which residents, rather than walls, helped to regulate social interaction. They both believe that building a "close-knit community" seems to require even more effort when walls are where there were none before. They are supported in this view by a number of studies on the fortification in suburbs, a growing trend, both in South Africa and beyond (Davis 1990; Knox 1995; Blakely & Snyder 1998; Bremner 1998; Pile *et al* 1999; Czegledy 2000; Robins 2000). As mentioned above, walls and gates around private properties within a neighbourhood draw exclusionary boundaries,

the crossing of which is restricted for both neighbours and strangers. Summer Greens as a whole is also surrounded by a 2-metre high wall and iron fence, except for a section of undeveloped land which is enclosed by a wire fence. The suburb has only one egress point. Some parts of the wall are topped by barbed wire. The wall is intended to provide a sense of status and belonging, and a measure of safety within, through exclusion of the public, the strangers and the undesirables beyond the wall. One elderly white man went so far as to say, "Thank God for the wall, it keeps the Devil out". Yet walls alone do not bring about a sense of community. As Mervin and Leonard recognise, social interaction between neighbours and fellow residents is needed.

4.4 MAKING AND MAINTAINING FRIENDSHIPS

> In the street where I live, I know everybody, it's a very close relationship because Summer Greens is so small and the streets are open, so residents' faces become familiar. You see them at the Seven-Eleven [supermarket], at the post boxes [before home delivery was implemented] and you start to develop friendships. One of the attractions in Summer Greens is the amount of new friendships you develop. It's a massive difference to where I grew up [Steenberg, a coloured area of Cape Town]. There's a real sense of community here. It has a village atmosphere here...we all know each other.

These are the words of John Petersen, a purchasing manager in his mid-30s (coloured), who moved to Summer Greens with his wife and daughter in 1997. He is one of a minority of residents who have had experience of living in mixed areas prior to living in Summer Greens. The vast majority have moved from areas that to a large extent continue to be segregated according to Apartheid classifications. John wanted to live in a suburb where he and his family would "feel comfortable with the neighbours" and where his young daughter could play with other children from all racial categories: "The whole demographics [of Summer Greens] was what I wanted to be in, where I wanted to rear my kids". Before buying in Summer Greens, the family looked in a number of historically white suburbs, such as Bothasig, Sanddrift and Richmond, which have undergone only limited racial desegregation. John was not persuaded to buy there:

> Obviously, you have to look at where I come from. Most of my life I lived in Steenberg [coloured area] and my kid grew up basically in Rosebank and in Mowbray [formerly white areas, now mixed]. I wanted an area where she could fit in, and where I as a person also could, sort of, fit in with people. I couldn't see

> myself living in Richmond with the kind of people living there, or Sanddrift. I couldn't see myself blending in and becoming a part of that community. Here I could feel at home.

He suggests that the *woonerf* design has fulfilled his expectations of being a 'people-friendly' environment where residents become familiar with each other and friendships are formed, not least across racial barriers. Several studies have shown that 'friendship' has many meanings and comes in various degrees (Allan 1979; Gullestad 1984; Willmott 1987). The above discussion of neighbouring showed that neighbours may be defined around proximity, trust and reciprocity. Friendships are also expressed and maintained through trust and exchange, yet the latter is not simply the tangible exchange of, for example, garden tools but also of "companionship, concern and mutual regard" (Willmott 1987:90).

As suggested above, building trust between neighbours takes time. Likewise, close friendships between adult residents require time, skill and effort. Half (51%) of the 49 adults with whom I discussed this issue stated that they have close friends in Summer Greens, but almost three quarters (73%) of these adults have lived in Summer Greens for just over four years. Conversely, 49% do not call any of their fellow residents close friends, even though a quarter of them (27%) have lived in Summer Greens for over four and a half years. Frank and Julia Rodgers have lived in Summer Greens for eight years, yet they do not count anyone in Summer Greens as their close friend. Nor do Mervyn and Elizabeth Thompson who have also lived there for eight years. They have developed many acquaintances in the suburb through their involvement in the local residents association, but they think that working long hours has prevented them from socialising regularly with anyone in the suburb and developing close relations. Mervyn also believed that the fact that neither of them drink or smoke discourages some neighbours from inviting them round: "They think we'll spoil the party". On the other hand, the close friendships I have encountered among adults have been formed through shared experiences in the suburb; they have grown out of shared lift-schemes to work, through religious activities, and even a shared moment in the local pub between two men who had recently become unemployed, initiated a friendship.

Indeed, the Legends Pub is a frequent meeting place for men, although in the evenings after eight o'clock (probably when housework and childcare has been taken care of) several women also join in at the bar or stand around the jukebox. "They are regulars", according to Bill, the publican, who lives in Bothasig. His fellow bartender estimates that there are between 20 and 30 'regulars' who call in at least three times a week. Most of them are local, although 'outsiders' also frequent the pub, mostly people who work in Montague Gardens (the nearby industrial estate) and stop by after work. "It's a working man's pub, really. We're not doing anything fancy here, it's not a wine bar", said Bill, implying that his business is not aimed at any bourgeois residents. Nonetheless I met both a lawyer and a university lecturer there, wearing suits but no ties. Both residents of Summer Greens, they agreed that the pub was a "nice place" to unwind.

Men start drifting into the pub from 3.30pm onwards. Some leave after a drink or two, others stay longer, playing pool, or watching the sport on the television hung from the ceiling (Bill subscribes to satellite TV which allows him to show sport all the time), some silently as others provide a running commentary. During the afternoon the volume is kept low, also on the jukebox. The pub is fairly small and the bar counter is L-shaped, which seems to encourage conversation. Some of the men are unemployed and cynical about their future. Gerhard Louw who had lost his job two weeks earlier, urged his fellow patrons to "Smile, it's not that bad, there's worse to come". The topics of conversation I heard included work (or lack thereof), sport, cars, the neighbourhood, women and wives, and their children's education. The 'regulars' also offer each other support in navigating through dilemmas and hazards in the labour market, the housing market, the banking sector and the do-it-yourself industry, suggesting that "You should go and see so-and-so" or "Give so-and-so a ring, tell him I sent you" or "So-and-so will give you a good deal, for sure".

None of the residents I met in the pub had known each other before moving to Summer Greens. At the time of research, several of them also socialised together outside the pub, particularly over weekends when their families met for a *braai*. The tradition of having a *braai* at the weekend is widespread. These are occasions when men (mainly) gather

around a barbecue, grill meat, drink beer and "talk *kak*" [rubbish, literally 'shit'], as one man called it. In other words, the conversation is generally kept light-hearted but people also indulge in a good gossip about other residents, colleagues, and celebrities, besides exchanging views on sport, politics, and television programmes. *Braais* are important ritual events in the weekly suburban cycle: they mark a special time and place of sociability and relaxation, with clear, gender-defined duties - men are in charge of fire, meat and drinks while women are in charge of the rest. It is a time for men, in particular, to temporarily withdraw from everyday demands and worries, to catch up with friends and family, to communicate affection through carefully cooked meat (to the individual's specification) and a shared meal. While *braais* are generally informal occasions - reflected, for example, in people's dress and in the relaxing of 'table manners' - they are also an opportunity to show off the home and garden to neighbours, friends and family, telling visitors of their social and material achievements.

A form of socialising generally aimed at women only is the tea party associated with the direct sales industry. Summer Greens has its own sales representatives for Tupperware (kitchenware), Avon and Avroy Schlain (cosmetics), Herbalife (herbal remedies), Terrapotta (clay items for house and garden), and Sportron Health & Wealth (exercise equipment and health products), to mention a few. The central ingredient in their sales formulas is the home party, at which a representative demonstrates products to a group of invited consumers in the living room of a person who has agreed to act as party hostess in return for a product. (Direct selling will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five, which examines the cultural economy of the suburb).

The Tupperware Party appears to be the most popular form of sales party in Summer Greens. Despite being ridiculed by many, it has established itself as a remarkably successful suburban institution. Residents in Summer Greens explain that the 'parties' are "a good way" to socialise, not only because they provide a reason to invite neighbours and friends into the home but also because each party usually generates more parties and thus more invitations for residents. Patricia Erasmus (54, data capturer, coloured) hosted a Tupperware party at a time when she could not get out and socialise much herself. A

large lady with a heart to match, she spends much time and energy looking after her sick husband, while a car accident had left her without her own means of transport for several months. Since moving into Summer Greens two years earlier, Patricia had lost contact with friends in her previous neighbourhood: "I was called a snob for moving out of Kensington to here. Some of them don't visit me here. I think they feel threatened by my new standard of living". Hosting the Tupperware party was a social event as well as "a good way of showing off my home". The seven women (five from Summer Greens, a colleague from work and myself) attending her party enjoyed the sales demonstration as well as the lavish afternoon tea, during which advice on household products, stain removal and jazzing up leftovers was shared. Alongside its social properties, the party was significantly about buying Tupperware. And the more purchases, the higher the reward for the hostess; indeed, the line between sociality and coercive consumption wore a little thin during the party, as we, the guests, felt compelled to buy so as not to appear disloyal or disappoint Patricia, a tension deliberately exploited by the Tupperware sales strategy. Nonetheless, everyone considered the party a success. Three of the residents had attended Tupperware parties other than Patricia's: they had been collecting Tupperware for almost 20 years at parties in their former places of residence (Tupperware was officially introduced to South Africa in 1964).

Direct sales parties offer more than just sociality and neighbourly reciprocity. They provide the context and the means for making a symbolic statement of middle class status and for engaging in conspicuous consumption. They address residents' desire to publicly consolidate and confirm their material and social achievements through products and displays, including the lavish tea, which signify respectability and modernity. Like *braais*, direct sales parties present an opportunity for hosts to show that they are on an equal social footing with their neighbours, in other words, that they are 'keeping up with the Joneses'. As Gewertz & Errington (1999:70) argue in their study of the new middle class in Papua New Guinea, such activities seek to "create and nurture connections with like achievers [...] connections that allow them to confirm and to perpetuate their status as middle class". Moreover, the global operation of companies such as Tupperware and Avon offers the potential for women in Summer Greens to make connections that go

beyond the local. They become cosmopolitan consumers, identifying with global and well-known corporations and consuming products which they believe symbolise affluence and convey their, sometimes newfound, middle class status (this point will be revisited in Chapter Five; see also Broadbridge, forthcoming). Nonetheless, in reproducing global capitalist discourse locally the women are generally engaging with highly localised contacts, their neighbours, friends or colleagues. The two Tupperware agents in Summer Greens state that the majority of women attending parties there are residents in the suburb.

Another social gathering which is explicitly and exclusively for women is a so-called Ladies Group consisting of between seven and twelve women - all residents - who gather once a month on a set date in each other's homes. The meetings are held in the evening as most of the women work outside the home. Husbands are usually enlisted to look after the children, though as one of the women admitted, not always without protest. The women take it in turns to host the group and serve a fairly lavish tea at around 9pm. A monthly fee of 25 rands goes mainly towards birthday presents for each other. The group was set up several years ago by Elizabeth Thompson, a 39-year-old city council administrator, and Lucia Martins, in her early 40s and a lecturer at one of the main medical schools in Cape Town, after they heard of a similar group in Parow, a suburb east of Summer Greens. Away from the group, Elizabeth explains the purpose of the group in the following way:

> We felt that we should help some of our friends who were finding it a bit difficult here in Summer Greens. You know, suburbs can be quite lonely and bewildering. And competitive I think as well. We see our Ladies Group as almost like a healing process from within, you know, it's somewhere where we can come and talk about childcare, husbands, jobs, ourselves, how to dress and so on. It's very social but we also try and help each other. One of the women in our group, her husband had an affair, and she finally told us and we tried to help her get through it.

The group has grown over the years, as members have introduced new friends to the group, yet they agree that they should no longer expand. More than 12 members would present a problem at meetings in terms of space and - as Elizabeth said - also in terms of the intimacy and bond between current members: "We want to keep the group fairly small and informal". The group has no committee and takes no minutes at meetings.

Sometimes they just chat, other times members "run their own programme" on something they are interested in. Once in a while the group invites a guest speaker, although they insist that the meetings must still be "relaxed". In April 2000 several members organised a public lecture by a leading (male) gynaecologist from a local private hospital. Held in a classroom at the local crèche, and attended by 22 female residents (all coloured), the meeting addressed the women's questions around menopause, contraception, hysterectomies, breast cancer, and hormone replacement therapy. Some women were shy, others were more outspoken, but everyone agreed it had been a good, informative meeting. Usually, however, the Ladies Group meets on its own. Recent meetings have included advice and practice on how to use accessories to brighten up clothing and the planning of a successful weekend away at a nearby hot springs resort: "wives only and no children - it's not the husbands who should get the break!" Elizabeth explained:

> These women aren't maybe as confident as Lucia and myself, some of them come from rough backgrounds, so we want to help them have experiences that they might otherwise not have. So we also organise trips to the Baxter [theatre] or even to the Spur [steak restaurant] because, you know, they are sometimes too scared or maybe just too shy to go there themselves. Eating out is not something really special to me because I do it often, but to them it was a real treat.

Elizabeth and Lucia's determination to re-socialise their friends from 'rough backgrounds' into middle class suburban residents who attend the theatre and dine at restaurants carries an almost missionary zeal. Indeed, the women are all Christian but from a variety of denominations; some are Catholic, some attend the local Assemblies of God congregation, and some attend other evangelical churches. Three of them are active in church groups, attending Bible study and prayer meetings, none of which are restricted to women.

The women in the Ladies Group would also all be classified as coloured. Given that new members have been introduced through their friendship with others, this suggests that to a certain extent race divisions still shape socialising in Summer Greens. I heard about another women's group only after finishing fieldwork, but this group is ostensibly only for African, Xhosa-speaking residents. No doubt performing a similar social function to the Ladies Group discussed above (and perhaps also a credit/savings club?), a further

purpose of the African ladies' group appears to be to provide a forum in which Xhosa is the sole medium of communication. Communication in the suburb (and in Cape Town at large) is generally either in English or in Afrikaans. The majority of residents speak English exclusively at home, but a number of households are bilingual, with Afrikaans being the second language. The households who communicate principally in Xhosa are on the whole also fluent in English. Church services in the suburb deliberately interchange between English and Afrikaans to cater for members. Communication between members of the coloured Ladies Group similarly switches between Afrikaans and English, though members thought that, on the whole, they spoke more Afrikaans (English predominated at the meetings I attended, yet that probably reflects their accommodation of me and my limited Afrikaans).

The bilingual quality of these particular settings suggests that many residents are open (and able) to converse in more than one language. Nonetheless, communication in a first language remains important for socialising with neighbours (or colleagues or fellow churchgoers), for personal acts of religious worship, and for establishing an identity and sense of belonging in general. Neethling's (1998) study of attitudes to language among residents in Kensington and Factreton, two primarily coloured areas of Cape Town (and prior residences of several Summer Greens residents), found that while residents practised bilingualism - English/Afrikaans - they considered English to be a sign of middle class status. The study observed that even among the working class there was a shift towards English as the preferred language. In Summer Greens, the predominance of English in public discourse (despite the varied linguistic background of residents) is an indication not only of its convenience as a medium of communication but also its associations with a middle class position.

In order to establish a sense of residents' connections with their prior place of residence, their family and other networks beyond Summer Greens, 45 households were asked to list the adult visitors they had received socially in the past two weeks from outside Summer Greens. Their responses are shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4.1 Social visits received by adults in 45 households in Summer Greens, during the first two weeks of November 2000

	Number of households	%
Family only	14	31
Friends only	5	11
Family and friends	24	53
No visitors	2	5
	45	**100**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)

Table 4.1 shows that 84% (38) of households interviewed had been visited by family members and 64% (29) by friends living outside the suburb. It also shows that 36% (16) of households received no visits from friends, while 16% (7) had received no visits from family during the two week period in question. The number of visitors per household ranged from none to seven: seven households had only one visitor in the two weeks, while three had seven visitors. The average number of relatives and friends visiting in the two-week period was 1.8 and 1.7 respectively.

Studies of friendship and kinship networks argue that, put simply, "middle class people have friends, working class people have relatives" (Willmott 1987:97, see also Allan 1979). Moreover, studies reviewed in Gale (1999:155) indicate that upward mobility, which is often accompanied by residential movement, weakens kinship ties, increasing social distance and loosening economic obligations between family members, an observation made much earlier in Young and Willmott's (1957) classic study of a London neighbourhood and the relocation of working class residents to new lower middle class housing estates. As the figures given above show, Summer Greens residents were visited by more or less the same number of relatives as friends, which suggests that both are considered important to residents in their new residential setting. According to the class distinction offered above, Summer Greens residents appear to be in between: their liminal position is reflected in the fact that they have not yet developed the larger friendship networks characteristic of middle class people, nor have they cut connections with their kinship-based networks. Furthermore, the majority of Summer Greens residents have in fact not moved across great geographical distances: as shown in Chapter Three, the prior

residence of a large proportion of residents is situated less than ten kilometres from Summer Greens, and a quarter come from within a five kilometre radius. This suggests that kinship and friendship connections with former areas need not be compromised by socio-geographical mobility but can be maintained, if desired. However, other residents claimed that the physical distance between Summer Greens and their relatives' or friends' places of residence, coupled with the cost of petrol, were the reasons why they had reduced contact with those networks. This claim was made by several residents whose family and old friends lived within eight kilometres of Summer Greens, and it suggests that for some residents social distance transcends physical distance (see also Gale 1999), even when, as Patricia maintained, it was former friends insisting on the social distance rather than she.

The high number of households with young children in the suburb generally means that neighbours are of similar ages and at similar stages in the household life cycle. Alicia Scott (28, jeweller's assistant, coloured) moved from Grassy Park to Summer Greens in 1996 with her husband and three small children. She remarked that "It's so nice here, the kids can run around safely and go play with their friends. It's really through the kids that I've met most of my neighbours, and Wendy and I have become friends" (see above). The shared experience of bringing up children has formed the basis of several close friendships between adult residents (especially women) in the research population. This observation echoes numerous studies (Young & Willmott 1957; Bracey 1964; Gans 1967; Deversen & Lindsay 1973). As mentioned in Chapter Three, there are many children in the suburb: the 1996 Population Census found that 24% (934) of residents were aged nine years or less and 11% (444) between the ages of 10 and 19 (Statistics South Africa 1996a). Figures compiled from the research population in the present study show 25% and 17% in the respective age cohorts. In other words, just over a third of the population was 19 or under.

According to the local municipal authorities, the number of children in Summer Greens does not warrant establishing a school within the suburb. Beyond pre-school age, children must therefore attend school outside Summer Greens in neighbouring suburbs or as far as

central Cape Town. Most residents have long lamented the lack of a school, as it would meet a range of needs in the neighbourhood, not least as a community activity centre. Schools are enormously important in the lives of school-going children and their families, and the presence or absence of a school makes a great difference to local opportunities for interaction, not simply between children but also between adults. While parents meet at the local crèche, Kidz Buzz, or through other private day care, and while some have organised lift schemes to schools outside Summer Greens, residents suggested that a school would encourage parents to come together.

Nevertheless, friendships have developed between children who either live and play in the same area or who attend the same school outside Summer Greens and hence share travel time daily. Many friendships among children are racially mixed. However, staff at Kidz Buzz say that now and then they have problems with children who express racist ideas. Abby Davis (early 50s, white) observed that, "It's always the white kids saying something [offensive] to the black kids, never the other way round". She blamed the parents whom, she believed, the children copy: "They hear it over breakfast or around the dinner table, that sort of racist talk, and then they think it's normal and they bring it here and we must deal with it".

Perhaps one of the households she is referring to is that of Attie and Marianne du Toit. Both in their early 40s, Attie works as a fitter and turner and Marianne is a post office worker. They have two bright boys aged 14 and 8 who attend a non-racial school in Bothasig. Attie said, "A couple of their school friends are coloured and that's okay by me, they're a different generation to ours, they didn't grow up under Apartheid. I went to the army, you know, and I got up to some bad things". Sitting in the Legends Pub one early evening, Attie recounted the story of how, on the previous Sunday afternoon, he set up a new water slide for the children in the front garden of his home. Some of the neighbours' children came over to join in, one of whom is Indian: "I have an awful lot of respect for Indians, you know, their kids are so polite and well-disciplined and they say, 'yes mister' and all that", he noted. The neighbours' children came to play, and Attie let them all play, except for the African children. He sent them away without telling them why they could

not join in. The next day their father came across and asked Attie why he would not let the children play together. Attie told him, "Look, I know all the other kids' families, I know their parents, and they've introduced themselves. I don't know you". So, according to Attie, the African father apologised profusely and introduced himself. Attie accepted the apology. But to this day he will not allow the children to play together. The real reason, it turns out, is Attie's inference that the African neighbour's house is a brothel and a harbinger of AIDS:

> I'm petrified of AIDS. Ever since I heard about it, I'm too scared to give blood, I've stopped giving blood. [...] You don't know what these kids have got. Whenever I go past their house I think it's a place for prostitutes, there's just always too many strange characters around. And I see the kids standing outside and, ja, I feel sorry for them, but I'm not changing my mind - they can't play with my kids. What if there's an accident on the slide or while they're playing rough?

At one of the play areas in another part of Summer Greens, two coloured children were playing on the swings. Johan (12) and Peter (11) maintained that they "play with everyone, there's always lots of friends to play with", but they admitted that "there are some *boers* [white Afrikaaners] that we don't play with", a designation they seem likely to have copied from their parents. According to Johan it is because "the *boere* kids tell us we can't play here, they say we don't belong here". Asked how they felt about being told that, they replied, "we don't really care", with Johan adding a territorial claim that "we came before they did, we've been here longer than them". But they usually stay clear of the playground if some of the '*boere* kids' are already there, "then we just go somewhere else", remarked Peter.

Clearly, children absorb the racial and ethnic classifications employed by the adults around them as well as the prejudice attached to the categories. Yet from observations of children playing in the streets, in the crèche playground and rooms, as well as interviews with parents and staff, it appears that they attach less significance to the categories than the adult generation. Many friendships between children cross the racial barriers that may exist, the physical contact often far exceeding what their parents ever had. The children have sleep-overs and bath together. As one of the residents said, "The children teach us [adults] there are no barriers when it comes to race or what colour you are [...] These

kids are teaching us to live a future...to understand each other better. That's why I call Summer Greens 'the new South Africa'".

4.5 SOCIAL LIFE IN A NEW ENVIRONMENT

For two thirds of the residents I spoke to, their social life has changed since moving to Summer Greens. About half feel it has deteriorated, with some blaming the spatial layout directly for restricting dinner parties, and others blaming offensive neighbours. Some say a lack of transport limits their contact with family and friends in their old neighbourhoods and impedes their participation in social activities they previously enjoyed. Public transport to and from Summer Greens is said to be both inadequate and irregular. As several studies note, car ownership crucially affects the opportunities for socialising, especially in new suburban areas where there is often poor public transport (Willmott 1987; Stevenson 1999). Others say their social life is worse off due to longer working hours, necessary to cover the cost of living in Summer Greens (see Chapter Five). Almost 40% of households interviewed have an adult working outside the home six days a week, a global phenomenon suggesting "the decline of the suburban weekend" (Cross 1997:124). Finally - and poignantly - several residents concur with Patricia and Anita in saying that their old neighbours, and sometimes also their family, have regarded the move to Summer Greens as an act of snobbery, thus making it difficult to continue relationships as before.

For the other half, the quality of social life seems to have improved and people have made new friends, a number of them across racial categories. Some churchgoers have changed congregations, mainly due to transport problems, and have thus joined new networks of people through which friendships have been established. Hilton and Shireen Rupert (fleet manager and teacher respectively, both 33, coloured) said that moving to Summer Greens from Brackenfell less than a year earlier has already enriched their social life: "Now we are nearer to family and we have more *braais*". Moreover, a particular feature of their property is deemed to be responsible for their social popularity: "Having a swimming pool means more friends", says Shireen. And more friends mean more people to whom they can show off - and with whom they can share - their material and social

achievements. The proximity to Century City, the retail and entertainment complex, also serves to enhance residents' recreational time, whether they spend it in the movie-theatres, shopping or "window-shopping", as some residents described it.

Although, from their own reports, residents' social lives appear less likely to include interaction with neighbours than in their previous place of residence, this is generally considered desirable. Residents are satisfied to pursue quite independent and private lives, despite the intentions of the designers and developers of the woonerf streetscape. The spatial layout of homes and streets has in some cases been substantially adapted to suit residents' preferences. The examples presented earlier in this chapter thus illustrate the most common ways in which residents interact with both the material and the social space around them. In other words, the residents' choices show how their social relations are constituted, constrained and mediated through space. Particular understandings of physical and social distance and proximity between immediate neighbours or people in the streets have to be negotiated in the ordinary, daily routine of everyday life in Summer Greens. Some residents isolate perceived racial differences to explain evident and latent conflict between neighbours. Or they ascribe certain social characteristics to different forms of housing tenure, identifying tenants as the source of conflict. The majority appear to have accepted and adjusted to difference, some by engaging with neighbours from different backgrounds, others by distancing themselves and avoiding contact where possible. This suggests that as residents create, maintain and shape the space around them in Summer Greens, so are they simultaneously socially conditioned by those same spaces. Wendy Parker thought that,

> If neighbours don't mingle in the street, then we don't say it's because they're white or whatever, we say it's because of their lifestyle. This is a new area where we are all growing together, so there will be differences still between us but we must all get on with our lives the way we want to. If people don't want to mingle, then that's okay.

As Wendy recognises, the suburb and its residents are in the process of 'becoming': neighbourliness and sociality in the new setting of Summer Greens thus entail continuous negotiation between expectations and reality, between past and present experiences. The web of social and kinship networks, the interdependency and reciprocal exchanges, the

aspirations and anxieties discussed here are further articulated in the livelihood strategies of residents, and it is to these that we now turn.

5. LIVELIHOODS, ASPIRATIONS AND USES OF PRIVATE SPACE

The economy of Summer Greens is a hybrid of formal and informal forms of exchange, a complex of regular and irregular, flexible and inflexible economic practices, which operate alongside each other in complementary - and sometimes contradictory - ways. At any one time, individual residents and whole households manage a number of different economic strategies, which are employed in response to different kinds of need, both practical and aspirational, that are accorded different levels of concern and priority. Certain needs may be only temporary, such as repairing an uninsured car after an accident when it is the only car in the household, or an unexpected medical or travel expense, or even offsetting lost income while a household member is temporarily unemployed, but such needs can nonetheless exert strain on resources and relationships within the household. The primary goal of some tactics (cf. de Certeau 1984) is maintenance, in other words to ensure that the household has sufficient means to cover the daily costs of living (including individual unexpected expenses) and the monthly payments on the house, the car, school fees, bills and so on. Other strategies have the added aim of upward mobility, endeavouring to improve the current standards of living. For most households the main economic activity is one of formal employment outside Summer Greens. Others involve small businesses within the suburb, such as house shops and direct sales. Sometimes these practices complement formal (including self-) employment, at other times they are the only available tactics for making money, augmented by state welfare grants. Unexpected circumstances, such as sickness or unemployment, force residents to combine their strategies and use available resources in new ways to sustain their standard of living.

The chapter explores residents' expectations and experiences of Summer Greens through the cultural economy of the suburb. It analyses the main livelihood strategies of residents as they are embedded in (though not confined to) the social, cultural and spatial conditions of the suburb. It looks at the ways in which residents combine their resources - cash, labour, time, property, space, energy, creativity, connections - to generate further resources, especially money, and distribute them among both immediate and extended social networks. These 'distribution channels' are usually confined to the individual

household: a common feature of middle class suburbs is the relative isolation of nuclear families, in terms of kinship and social networks, and the material consequences of that. Summer Greens is no exception (see Chapter Four). Other networks involve kin in other households within Summer Greens and beyond, and they run between non-kin members of a household or extend to neighbours within the suburb. They often cross lines of race, gender, age, and sometimes also class, and reveal the permeability of household boundaries. The chapter shows that residents combine a variety of resources, networks and tactics to sustain their newly achieved class position and nurture their dream of further improvements in standards of living. For the majority of residents, their tangled web of strategies reflects their anxieties over meeting aspirations and helps them cope with uncertainties arising from the challenge of reconciling dreams with reality, negotiating ambiguities and contradictions, achievements and disappointments, and making sense of their new position and surroundings.

Uncertainty and insecurity haunt residents in a number of ways. Chapter Four showed how residents feel unsure about dealing with strangers and unfamiliar neighbours, where to draw the boundary between public and private space, when and how to interfere over behaviour viewed as improper and thus objectionable. The uncertainty taken up in this chapter pertains firstly to the central concern of livelihood and its continuation: without a steady source of income, residents are at risk of losing their property, possessions and position. Money, or the lack of it, permeated many conversations I had with residents. Moreover it was a regular topic of conversation among residents themselves, for example at the pub, over tea, at a *braai*, or in the parking lot after church. When I listened to residents expressing their financial insecurities to each other, they often related them in terms which they believed were shared by everybody (and thus potentially less revealing, less embarrassing): a recent petrol increase, a rise in interest rates and other bank charges, a story of a colleague or friend who was recently retrenched, wondering if "anyone" was "safe" in today's economic and political climate etc. The depersonalised, 'collective' way of conveying their own worry was reversed when they announced with pride a bargain they had obtained at a store or a saving they had made by changing bank or insurance company. Grocery shopping with several residents revealed their general concern with

thrift as well as their belief in treating themselves or others in the household to "something special" for a particular accomplishment. As Miller (1998) argues, shopping to save for the household may be regarded as a form of sacrifice through which family members express love and devotion to each other. The special treats purchased by residents may thus serve to make times of economic difficulty more tolerable. However, residents' enthusiastic expression of pride when saving money, both for the individual and the household, is the flip-side of the shame and camouflage of financial struggle.

A related kind of uncertainty, similar to that discussed in the previous chapter, arises from specific livelihood strategies residents employ; some activities challenge, even circumvent, the ideas and ideals of suburbia that exist both in people's minds and in land use regulations. The legal separation between business and residence - and its reinforcement in zoning rules and procedures - locates clear boundaries between the market and the home, between money and people, between public and private spaces. However, certain home-based economic activities both create and exploit the ambiguity and flexibility of spaces; indeed these practices rely on their very ability to blur the public-private boundary for them to operate successfully. When businesses offer a service which is both needed and convenient for residents, there is rarely an objection to conducting business on private residential properties, but when the enterprise is deemed detrimental to the comfort of particular individuals and to the identity and status of the suburb, disapproving residents object.

Thus, the heterogeneity and combination of livelihood strategies employed by individuals and individual households emerge as a source of tension in the suburb, as the propriety of certain businesses is contested: the contention reveals divergent ideas of what is acceptable commercial activity in a residential area such as Summer Greens, as well as the appropriate social, spatial and temporal contexts in which economic relations are effected. Opposition to certain activities is based on a perceived threat to middle class status in terms of social norms and community identity, and some residents allege that the practices ultimately pose a threat to home owners' investments and thus to their long-term economic security. These residents invoke land use zoning legislation to defend their

position and in so doing seek legal sanction for a particular understanding of boundaries in the suburb, indeed the understanding embodied in the legislation itself.

5.1 COMBINING MULTIPLE LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Case # 1: The Godfrey Household

Anita and Darryl Godfrey (both coloured) moved from Lotus River to Summer Greens in 1994, the day after they got married. They both grew up in Lotus River, Anita in a family of 11 children, Darryl in a family of five children. They have three small children, which Anita said "is enough because everything costs so much money these days". Darryl (33) works as a truck driver for a major oil company, Mondays to Fridays. Anita (40) works part-time as a product demonstrator in supermarkets in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. Her position is casual and some weeks there is no demand, which leaves her time to look after the two youngest children at home. Yet the couple's combined incomes are only just enough to afford the monthly bond repayment, bills, food, clothing and transport that accompany their new life in Summer Greens, as well as the expenses of raising three small children. To bring in extra money, Anita sells Tupperware products and other items, such as bathroom accessories and baby clothes. She does not earn much selling the latter, but they are made by "old friends" of hers who live in less affluent circumstances than Anita, so she sells them "as a favour", taking only a couple of rands in commission per item. Tupperware products can generate more cash, whether she sells them to individual customers or at a sales party. Anita demonstrates at anywhere between two and six parties a month, earning between 100 and 200 rands per party in commission from sales. Officially she is allowed to keep 25% from sales, but by the time she has deducted expenses for arranging the parties (phone calls, stationery, decorations, food samples), her income is closer to 20% of sales. Her sales are mainly in Summer Greens, but occasionally she is asked to demonstrate for friends from her old neighbourhood on the Cape Flats. Anita enjoys the parties, not only because of the sociality and meeting new people, but also because the work is something she is skilled to undertake: "I've been working in supermarkets for a long time, demonstrating new products and getting people to buy, so I knew I could do the same with Tupperware".

However, to go out and seek new consumers in their own homes requires confidence and regular encouragement, for which she attends a weekly rally at the Tupperware Corporation's warehouse in Cape Town. Here the corporation dispenses its entrepreneurial ethos, and while Anita has adopted the vocabulary ("you must take the opportunity to make a better life for yourself...you must work hard if you want to make a lot of money"), she has also struggled to earn anything near what she expected when she joined the corporation. She appreciates that direct selling offers a source of income that is flexible enough to allow her to combine it with looking after her family and their home, but she is also put under psychological and economic pressure; the employment conditions set out by the corporation are such that she is handed a number of Tupperware products every week which, if she does not manage to sell them within a stipulated time, she must buy herself. During weeks of only a few parties, the pressure is substantial and unrelenting. Moreover, certain members of her extended family who live in Mitchell's Plain consider her move to Summer Greens an act of snobbery and they often demand Tupperware products from her for free. As mentioned in Chapter Four, she said that "[My family] think we have lots of money, but we don't [...] But I could never tell them that, so I try and hide it". She says they do not realise that her income from sales is not "pocket money" for her to spend on herself; it enters the domestic budget to pay for food and children's clothes (Broadbridge, forthcoming). Darryl's family, on the other hand, have been more supportive and help the Godfreys out with money now and then, even though Anita finds it "so embarrassing to ask".

Case # 2: The Erasmus Household

Patricia (54) and Jack (75) have been married for 30 years. They both identify themselves as coloured. Patricia grew up in Athlone "in the poorer section of it, not the middle class area where doctors, lawyers and educated people come from". She left school at the age of 14 to work "wherever there was any". Jack grew up in Factreton, his formal education ending after Standard 2, after which he worked, eventually becoming a skilled carpenter in Salt River. When they married, they moved to Factreton and lived there for 28 years. Fourteen years ago they adopted their only child, Danny, when he was seven years old. Jack is retired and draws a state pension of approximately 500 rands a month. He is very

sick and stays at home most days. Patricia has worked as a data capturer for an electrical hardware company for 15 years. As mentioned earlier, this is based in Montague Gardens, the industrial estate adjacent to Summer Greens, so she does not have far to travel to work, something she is grateful for in case of an emergency with Jack. Her gross income is just under 4500 rands a month and she is largely in charge of the household budget. Danny recently finished a course in computer engineering at a local college and at the time of research, he worked full-time as a computer programmer, that is, five days a week from 8am to 5pm. He also works as a baker in a large supermarket on Saturday and Sunday mornings. He hands over some of his income to Patricia, as a contribution to the household, while he spends the rest on himself and is saving for overseas travel. Patricia used to sell saucepans in her spare time, through a company called AMC Cookware from whom she was paid a sales commission. But she stopped selling at a time when she was too busy caring for Jack. Recently she has resumed the activity of direct selling, but this time she uses her own contacts around Cape Town to obtain various goods, such as nightwear and bed linen, which she sells on to colleagues and neighbours and sometimes to her old AMC customers. She works her profit margin into the sales price, and although she may only make 100-150 rands in profit a month, it is a source of income which, for the time being, is worth the effort. She also runs a savings club at work where 12 people hand her 100 rands each a month, and she hands over the 1200 rands cash to the next person in line. "It comes in very handy when maybe you don't have the necessary cash to repair your car or something", she explained. In 1999, when it was her turn to receive the money she bought a wall unit of cupboards and shelves for the living room (see Chapter Six). This year (2000) she might use it to build up her own stock of luxury bed linen for sale, rather than having to rely on her current supplier.

Case # 3: The Thompson Household

Elizabeth is 39 years old and works as a municipal administrator. She is married to Mervyn who is a human resource manager for a major supermarket chain. He is in his mid-forties. They classify themselves as coloured and coloured-Indian, respectively. Their daughter is 10 years old. They moved to Summer Greens from Blue Downs in 1992, primarily to shorten their journey to work. Mervyn usually works 10 hours a day

for the business and is 'on call' for the remaining hours of the day. Most weekends he has to leave Summer Greens to tend to a problem in a store which may be an hour's drive away. At short notice he can also be called to stores as far away as Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape province. In addition to the income from his full-time job (including over-time pay), he also earns money as a private tax consultant, working from home in evenings and over weekends. The couple's combined monthly incomes are in the region of 16 000 rands gross. Putting their daughter through a private school and saving for a family holiday in Europe are two motivating factors behind the hard work. On top of income-generating work, Mervyn and Elizabeth have long been actively involved in the Summer Greens Residents Association, and Mervyn has also invested much energy in sports organisations both in Summer Greens and elsewhere (see Chapter Seven). There are times when Elizabeth worries about his health, but Mervyn is energetic and enjoys his work, so "getting him to slow down is impossible", she said.

Case # 4: The Van der Merwe Household

Evelyn van der Merwe (40, white) works full-time as a service representative for a telecommunications company in Milnerton. She is unmarried and lives with her four-year-old son. She moved to Summer Greens from Thornton in November 1991, as one of the first residents in the suburb. Her income from full-time work is just under 4500 rands before deductions. After work and over weekends she sells Avon cosmetics to neighbours, friends, colleagues and anyone else who responds to the adverts she places on the notice boards at the shopping area or in local community newspapers. Sometimes the customers come to her house, at other times she visits them. She has been selling Avon products for almost four years and tries to save as much as possible from her earnings: "I desperately need a car, so I'm working towards that by selling Avon cosmetics. It'll still be a while before I get there though". In a good month she can generate up to 600 rands in profits, but in other months she makes very few sales. From her main income plus her earnings from Avon sales, Evelyn manages all her and her son's expenses and is regularly able to send a few hundred rands to her retired parents who live in Ruyterwacht "to help them out". Her desire for a car does not override her willingness (or obligation?) to assist her kin with money, but "without Avon, I'd be struggling a lot

more". In fact, she also admitted that she received financial help from another family member the year before when she had a series of emergency expenses.

The case studies presented above suggest not only the variety of domestic economies in different household types, the different income-generating activities, their combinations and earnings, but also some of the expectations, obligations and assistance from broader kinship networks. Anita and Darryl cope with considerable anxiety over maintaining a façade of domestic autonomy yet still having to call on extended family members for help in times of need. The Erasmus and van der Merwe households are slightly better off while the Thompsons are relatively affluent in the suburb. (The range of incomes in the research population is set out in Chapter Three, Table 3.3). The examples illustrate the hybridity of domestic economies and the Summer Greens economy at large. They incorporate two broad types of household economic organisation: forms of householding and reciprocity often associated with more traditional working class livelihood strategies co-exist with market exchange and relatively autonomous household management, which are more typical of middle class settlements (Polanyi 1944; Sahlins 1972; Stack 1974; Halperin 1998; White 2000).

Polanyi's (1944) concept of householding is helpful for understanding some of the combinations of resources referred to above and their distribution within social networks, of which informal exchanges are but one integral part. Householding refers to an economic pattern made up of mainly non-market exchanges and flows of goods and services to ensure provisions for a closed group, be it a domestic group or an entire neighbourhood: "Its pattern is the closed group [...] the self-sufficient unit [formed around the principle] of producing and storing for the satisfaction of the wants of the members of the group" (Polanyi 1944:53). Householding is not motivated by profit or bound by the rules of market institutions and capitalism, but in Summer Greens, as in most other places in today's world, it operates within a broader market economy, indeed, it often links market and non-market processes in the suburb (cf. Gudeman & Rivera 1990; Halperin 1998).

Certain patterns of reciprocity have been discussed in Chapter Four regarding neighbouring and offering help in special circumstances by, for example, lending garden tools or looking after children in an emergency. In these circumstances there is a tacit understanding of a moral, rather than an economic, obligation to reciprocate at some undetermined point in time. Underlying this form of exchange is a personal and trusting relationship between the two parties, based on kinship or friendship or, with some neighbours, at least acquaintance. As suggested in Chapter Four, sometimes social distance overrides physical proximity; in times of need, Wendy Parker would rather turn to her friends who live on the other side of Summer Greens than to her immediate neighbours for help. Relationships within households in Summer Greens seem on the whole to be based around a similar form of reciprocity, whether household members are linked through kinship, as 90% of households interviewed were, or friendship (10%. See Chapter Three, Table 3.2).

Alongside this form of generalised reciprocity is a more instrumental relationship, where goods and services are exchanged between people in a market situation. The market may be formally or informally arranged, but there is a strict expectation of return, if not right away, then within a short and stipulated period. Orders placed at Anita's Tupperware parties must be honoured with payment either immediately before or upon receipt of the products. Credit accounts at the local pharmacy are called up at the end of each month to be settled by the debtors. A local doctor recently discontinued a system of invoicing patients after the consultation; annoyed by unpaid bills, he insists on cash payment immediately after every consultation. This form of exchange is also referred to as balanced reciprocity (Sahlins 1972) and is a primary economic arrangement in Summer Greens.

5.2 CLASS: EMPLOYMENT, POSITION AND MOBILITY

The table below shows the occupational status of 126 adults in 62 households interviewed in November 2000 (reproduced from Table 3.4 in Chapter Three) and compares the figures to those given in the 1996 Population Census. The figures correspond fairly closely.

Table 5.1 Occupational status of adults interviewed in November 2000 compared with figures from 1996 Population Census for Summer Greens[40]

Occupational Status	November 2000*		Population Census 1996**	
Employed full time only	91	72 %	2 127	78 %
Employed part time only	6	5 %		
Employed full time & part time	6	5 %		
Unemployed	9	7 %	181	7 %
Housewife	5	4 %	155	5.5 %
Student	5	4 %	154	5.5 %
Pensioner	4	3 %	82	3 %
Other/Unspecified	-	-	30	1 %
Total	**126**	**100 %**	**2 729**	**100 %**

* Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000

** Source: 1996 Population Census, Statistics South Africa 1996a. The census does not provide an equivalent break down of full time and part time employment.

Table 5.1 shows that in November 2000, 82% (103) of adults interviewed were employed in formal work. Of these, 88% (91) were in full time employment only, 6% (6) held a part time job only, while a final 6% (6) held both a full time and a part time job. Thirteen (12.5%) of the 103 formally employed people classified themselves as self-employed. Nine of the 126 adults interviewed (7%) were unemployed but seeking employment. Five women (4%) were full time housewives or "home executives", as some of them called themselves (this term will be discussed below). The remaining adults were either in full time education (five) or retired (four) without apparently being engaged in any income-earning activities. Of the 62 households interviewed, 68% (42) were dual earner households.

Employment figures for adults interviewed in November 2000 may be further disaggregated by race classification and gender. The results are shown in Table 5.2:

[40] See Appendix 1 for definitions of employment and for Tables A1 and A2 which contain the specific data upon which the following census calculations are based.

Table 5.2 Occupational status of 126 adults interviewed in November 2000 by Apartheid Classification and Gender*

Occupational status	African			Coloured			White			Indian/Asian			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Employed	8	12	**20**	27	24	**51**	14	14	**28**	2	2	**4**	51	52	**103**
Unemployed	-	2	**2**	3	3	**6**	1	-	**1**	-	-	-	4	5	**9**
Housewife	-	1	**1**	-	2	**2**	-	2	**2**	-	-	-	-	5	**5**
Student	-	2	**2**	-	3	**3**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	**5**
Pensioner	-	-	-	1	-	**1**	2	1	**3**	-	-	-	3	1	**4**
Total	8	17	**25**	31	32	**63**	17	17	**34**	2	2	**4**	58	68	**126**

(Source: Summer Greens Survey November 2000)
*M=male, F=female, T=total

Table 5.2 shows that men and women classified as coloured, white or Indian/Asian are distributed quite equally in terms of occupational status (housewife and students being the exceptions), while the largest difference lies in the figures for African men and women: whereas the eight African men interviewed were all employed, the occupational status of African women interviewed was more diverse.

Residents' definitions of themselves and the suburb as "middle class" tend to begin with the employment and income profile of the suburb (see also Chapter Three), and they are quick to relate their occupation to qualities such as "hard-working", "entrepreneurial", "ambitious", and "persevering". This probably reflects the centrality of occupation to social identity in industrialised societies, a point also noted by Ben-Ari (1995) in his study of the new middle class in Japan. Both Lockwood (1958) and Dahrendorf (1959) argued that the middle classes tend to view class in terms of social prestige/status. Lockwood's study of male clerical workers in the 1950s argued that in terms of class, status and power, these employees correctly perceived themselves to be positioned higher on a ladder of class, above manual workers. In Summer Greens, distinctions are frequently made between what are perceived as middle class and working class positions. While the people interviewed generally recognised three classes in South African society (upper, middle and working/lower), their own experience of social mobility and the present position of most residents in the lower end of the middle classes renders the boundary between the middle and working classes most significant.

Attempts to identify more precisely the self-positioning of Summer Greens residents within the broad spectrum of middle classes caused tension during one focus group discussion held with four men, one of whom was a non-resident but who works in the suburb. All in their late 30s or early 40s and all employed (police detective, cleric, plant operator and technician), they struggled to find agreement over whether Summer Greens residents could legitimately be identified as middle class. The three residents all maintained that "we are middle class", but the non-resident disagreed, saying, "No, I think you are edging towards it, trying to become middle class. I'd call Summer Greens lower middle class". One of the residents who is a qualified investigator with a university degree, works for a special crime-fighting unit, earns 13 000 rands a month, owns his home and drives a new BMW, was not impressed with being labelled lower middle class, but he conceded that perhaps other residents in Summer Greens were "less fortunate". Sensing that an argument could arise, one of the residents tried to calm things down by joking that "Well, of course we are workers also, but we are not the working class anymore. Many of our parents were, but we are not". As Hartley (1997:186) observes, few people would identify themselves as lower middle class: it is "the class for whom it seems hardest (certainly it's very rare) to claim pride of membership". In Summer Greens, middle class is the preferred classification.

The identification of Summer Greens as a middle class suburb was openly endorsed by the two churches which worship in Summer Greens (the New Apostolic Church and Assemblies of God). For example, in one sermon a preacher asserted that "here we have good jobs, we have good professions, nice homes, comfortable cars [...] and we make an input into society", distinguishing the congregation from those, presumably in the working classes, who were not perceived to contribute significantly to society. On another occasion a preacher referred to people who were paid weekly and added "but no one here gets weekly wages, do you, you all get monthly salaries", and members of the congregation nodded affirmatively. The sermon text one week spoke on "labourers of the work of God", and the preacher held out his hands and said,

> Look at these hands, they are not the hands of a labourer or, as we must call them in the new South Africa, 'general workers' [*chuckles in the congregation*]. I can't

> do that kind of labour, but I can do the work of the Lord. That's what all of us here can do.

Certain desires and values expressed by the residents were similarly approved in the churches; one sermon centred on the themes of aspiration and self-discipline, and the congregation was reassured that "there is nothing wrong with being ambitious and striving for good [material] things as long as we don't neglect our faith. There's nothing wrong with money as long as it doesn't stand in the way of our faith". Another sermon addressed the importance of guarding their faith from the devil, comparing it with protection of private property:

> We must protect the inheritance God has given us, just like we must protect ourselves, our homes and our things from outsiders. If it takes razor wire, alarms, gates and dogs to do it, then so be it. That's life today. [...] You jeopardise your inheritance when you fail to do that which is prescribed. As we protect our property, so must we protect our hearts and our faith with similar methods.

In a message to the parents of a child being baptised, a preacher reminded them that God's love was not exclusive to those in middle class professions: "it doesn't matter if your child does not become a lawyer, or a doctor, or an engineer, God will still love them".

Bearing in mind the ambiguities of both objective and subjective class criteria (and the limitations of analyses using class as a 'category' (see Chapter Two), the following figures are based on a broad definition of middle class employment[41]. According to figures supplied by the 1996 Population Census, 72% of working adults in Summer Greens were employed in middle class occupations. The figures are shown in Table 5.3 alongside those for South Africa as a whole:

[41] See Chapter Two for a discussion of class as a category and Appendix 1 for the definition of middle class employment used here.

Table 5.3 Middle class occupation out of total employment for Summer Greens and South Africa 1996

	Summer Greens	South Africa
Total employment	2 127	9 113 849
Total middle class occupation	1 523	3 309 502
Middle class occupation as % of total employment	72 %	36 %

(Source: 1996 Population Census, Statistics South Africa)

Compared to the national figures, Summer Greens clearly had a concentration of middle class employment. As mentioned in Chapter Three, the people interviewed in the suburb included civil servants, teachers, nurses, human resource managers, bank officials, office administrators, clerks, law enforcement officers, technicians, artisans, clergy, insurance consultants, sales assistants and business people, as well as lawyers, university lecturers and estate agents. The figures for Summer Greens may be disaggregated by Apartheid classification, as shown in Table 5.4:

Table 5.4 Middle class occupation according to Apartheid classification and as proportion of total employment, Summer Greens 1996

	Summer Greens		
	Middle class Occupation	Total employment	Middle class occupation as % of total employment
African	169	220	77
Coloured	383	585	66
Indian/Asian	26	32	81
White	783	1064	74
Unspecified/ Other	162	226	-
Total	1 523	2 127	-

(Source: 1996 Population Census, Statistics South Africa)

Table 5.4 shows that when taken as proportions of the respective total employment figures, a picture emerges wherein 77% of all working Africans and 74% of all working whites in Summer Greens were employed in middle class occupations. As a category, Indians/Asians had the highest proportion of its members employed in the middle classes (81%), while middle class employment applied to only 66% of all working coloureds (see

Appendix 1 Table A3 for the distribution of total middle class occupation and population group for South Africa in 1996).

The equivalent figures for working class occupation are set out in Table 5.5:

Table 5.5 Working class occupation according to Apartheid classification and as proportion of total employment, Summer Greens 1996

	Summer Greens		
	Working class occupation	**Total Employment**	**Working class occupation as % of total employment**
African	32	220	15
Coloured	158	585	27
Indian/Asian	3	32	10
White	190	1064	18
Unspecified/ Other	43	226	-
Total	426	2 127 [42]	-

(Source: 1996 Population Census, Statistics South Africa)

The proportions of respective total employment figures set out in Table 5.5 show that 27% of all working coloureds were employed in working class occupations. The corresponding figures for Africans and whites are 15% and 18% respectively. As a category, Indians/Asians had the lowest proportion of its members employed in the working classes (10%). The research population in the present study included truck drivers and factory workers.

Embodied in Weber's (1964) notion of class fragmentation is an acknowledgement of the fluidity of class. Weberian analyses emphasise social mobility and fragmentation within broad class collectivities, of which the middle classes have received most attention (Dahrendorf 1959; Turner 1988; Savage *et al* 1992). Social mobility - the movement of individuals within and across different class groupings - suggests a fluidity and openness

[42] When the figures for middle class and working class occupations are added up (1523 +426=1949) there is a shortfall between 1949 and the total employment figure of 2127. This discrepancy is due to the 178 individuals for whom the census did not specify occupation. See Table A2 in the Appendix for these figures.

of class relations despite the persistence of class inequalities. Moreover, the possible and actual mobility in a given society affects people's perceptions and consciousness of class: the more open a class structure, the more likely that class will be perceived as a fair and legitimate pattern of stratification (Bradley 1996). As noted earlier, the majority of residents in Summer Greens are on upwardly mobile trajectories, compared to their parents' generation. Post-Apartheid changes in labour policy and employment (an expansion of service class jobs, increasing privatisation, Affirmative Action etc.) have affected residents differentially, depending on a range of historical factors, but it is possible to discern a perception among residents of the 'new' South African society as being more fluid and dynamic, offering more possibilities for individual mobility, both up- and downward. This, however, does not endorse a functionalist perspective of capitalist society as open, meritocratic and harmonious, due to the fact that inequalities still persist; rather, constraints, competition and conflict continue to characterise class relations and shape consciousness among residents.

Perceptions and realities of class in Summer Greens, the variety and complicated attributes of economic processes, their connections and outcomes are, of course, concealed in the statistics provided above. The remainder of the chapter seeks to illustrate the realities behind the figures and to show how the economic processes both depend on and contribute to the particular configuration of social, cultural and spatial relations in Summer Greens.

5.3 UNEMPLOYMENT: LOCAL FEARS AND EXPLANATIONS

Unemployment in Summer Greens appears to be mainly due to retrenchment, although some residents cited company or family relocation as the reason for their current unemployment status. Many residents currently in full time employment say that the threat of retrenchment is real. Some blame the "economic climate" for company restructuring or 'down-sizing', or they emphasise the politics of race, claiming on the one hand that "nothing's changed" since the introduction of democracy seven years ago or, on the other, that the new regime continues to discriminate against them.

Wendy Parker (37, coloured) recently considered the possible implications of unemployment for herself, as she might be at risk in the next round of retrenchments at work. She has taken six months maternity leave from her job as a bank official to have her third (and she says, final) child. During a visit from her employer to see the new-born baby, she was informed that management were "restructuring" operations and that her position may not be safe. She worries that her maternity leave has raised the stakes against her, speculating that gender rather than race will play a part in the possible termination of her contract: "I don't think the colour of my skin will have anything to do with it". She has worked for the company for eleven years, six days a week, earning in the region of 5000 rands a month before tax. She says that if she does lose her job, she prays that the retrenchment package will be enough for the family to stay in their house. Thankfully, her husband's job seems safe for the time being; he works for the Cape Town municipality, earning close to 7000 rands a month before tax. Yet the possibility of being retrenched from her job as bank official has thrown a cloud of insecurity over her and her husband's achievements in upward social mobility (see also Chapter Six).

The circumstances for Brian de Villiers (48, coloured) are slightly different: A few months ago he was fired from his job as receiving manager of a major retail company, allegedly for stealing 200 rands worth of fish, but he protests his innocence and is fighting his case in the Labour Court: "After working for them for 20 years, would I jeopardise everything for a bit of fish? They want to get rid of me because I can expose their own corruption, and when this is all over, I will". But he shares the fear of other unemployed residents that the long term picture is bleak: Financially, Brian and his wife Liesl can get through the first few months of his unemployment by using savings (that is, what is left of a 70 000 rands win in the National Lottery) or relying on other incomes in the household, but in the long run the consequences could be more serious. Liesl resigned from her last job as salesperson in a clothing store when she gave birth to a son two years ago. At that time they could live on Brian's income and she could look after the baby. She has struggled to find "decent work that pays a decent salary" since Brian's dismissal. They also have a teenage son. On a good day, Brian is confident he will win the court case and the price he is paying in the meantime will be worthwhile:

> This court case could cost me my house. This is my first house [that I own], and I've worked hard to afford it. It's small but it's clean, and it's mine. But I want my name cleared and my job back, even if I have to sell my house to afford the lawyers. And once [the company] pay me damages, I can buy a palace in Edgemead [a more expensive suburb than Summer Greens].

On a bad day, he turns to alcohol for relief from the worry. Brian and Liesl are adamant that their 16-year-old son must concentrate on his college studies rather than find part-time work to help out with money in the household - they consider Brian's unemployment temporary. In the meantime, Brian says,

> I've been doing things here and there to make a bit of money. I'm not ashamed and nothing is too menial for me. I've gone around to houses in Summer Greens and cut people's lawns, I've even washed dishes at my brother's house for money.

Gerhard Louw (early 50s, white) moved to Summer Greens two years ago from Johannesburg. There he was working as a plumber in a local business and making around 5000 rands a month, which he considered "decent". When his wife was offered a job in Cape Town as a legal secretary - "earning much more than I did" - and their daughter who already lived in Summer Greens was pregnant, they decided to relocate from Johannesburg to Summer Greens. The wife and daughter were happy but Gerhard says the move has been a "big mistake" that has "stuffed up" his career. He has managed to find odd jobs in Cape Town but nothing permanent and the salary has been highly unsatisfactory. Gerhard's disappointment over both job and salary conditions appears to reflect a deeper sense of both personal and professional insecurity in a society that no longer appreciates a man with experience in his trade:

> I've been offered work here, as a professional, starting at 20 rands an hour. I mean honestly, it's disgusting. I'm a trained plumber, I've got 30 years' experience. People are churned out from technikons here and they haven't had any practical training. I don't know what's happened to the good old solid apprenticeship. I did the four years, but it's fallen away now. I don't understand what's going on in the world now.

His job-seeking efforts are further frustrated, he says, by the fact that local authorities apparently no longer appoint plumbers to permanent positions, nor do they employ white people, even in casual positions.

Sitting in the pub one day, he recalls his most recent job which only lasted half a day. Two weeks earlier he had finally found a job with a local plumbing company, and on his first day he was sent to Gugulethu, an area with mostly African residents. He explains that the employees are sent out as a group in a van and then they split up to visit houses individually. As he approached one house he became scared, because he overheard people in the house refer to him as "the white man" and curse him in Zulu - "I know enough Zulu to understand that they wanted me to f**k off". He nevertheless fixed the problem and returned to the van. There he took out his cellphone to call his wife because "it was my first day at work and I wanted her to know how I was doing", but his colleagues urged him to put away the phone or it would be stolen. Then Gerhard took out his brand-name lighter to light a cigarette and again his colleagues warned him to hide it and use matches instead. Gerhard said, "Well, this isn't the kind of job I want to do", and he resigned as soon as they returned to the boss that same day. Although he had worked for only half a day, he was paid a week's salary, but he draws money from Unemployment Insurance Fund, which only amounts to 40% of his last salary. He is cynical about his future and urged his fellow patrons in the pub to "smile, it's not that bad, there's worse to come".

Later in that same conversation, several men - all white - join in as Gerhard returns to his earlier comparison of work conditions in Johannesburg and in Cape Town. Gerhard explains the difference in terms of racial groups: "If you look at the workers, in Jo'burg it's black and white. Here the coloureds come in between". Another resident (early 40s, works in "middle management on a building site") agrees with Gerhard that "they [coloured people] are the ones who keep the prices and wages down because they are willing to scrape through and charge less than the other guy. These guys have all these little side jobs and they just keep undercutting". Bill, the publican, says he serves a number of coloured residents in the pub who are "in that kind of business, you know, a one-man plumbing business or electrician or the like". They all agree that "whites have it tough now", especially with Affirmative Action policies in both the public and the private sectors.

On the other hand, a number of coloured residents also blame Affirmative Action policies for the current insecurity in the job market. They feel marginalised and complain that they are "not black enough". Other coloured residents contend that there is continued discrimination in favour of white colleagues in the work place. Either way, they believe that having been classified 'coloured' puts them in a compromising position in which they are not only vulnerable to retrenchment but also deliberately overlooked for promotions or bonuses which would help them further up the career ladder. For example, before resigning from her job as saleslady for a company selling beds, Charmaine Alberts claimed that she had the best sales figures of all the local outlets in the company, yet she was never offered the coveted task of managing a stall at trade fairs - it was always white women who represented the company on such occasions. Patricia Erasmus similarly maintained that her recent application for a job within her company (which would have earned her an extra 1000 rands a month) was turned down because she was "not white". Thus for a number of residents, their fears of unemployment continue to be articulated in racial terms and old prejudices endure as explanations for a reality of job shortages and retrenchments.

5.4 WORKING AT HOME: JUGGLING MULTIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES

While most residents work outside Summer Greens, some residents work within Summer Greens, in the local shops and businesses, and a number of residents work from home. Some use their homes as a work base and drive out to visit clients, while others in fact carry out their employment mainly within their homes, often designating a room or converting the garage for the sole purpose of work. Being engaged in income-generating employment that is based in the home poses a number of questions around the position and tenacity of the public-private boundary, and whether and how the boundary blurs or shifts, as residents manage money-making work alongside domestic work and leisure within the bounded space of the home. Moreover, tensions and resentment may arise between household members: working from or at home requires careful negotiation of space and time, drawing clear lines between work-time and leisure.

5.4.1 Work and Family: Negotiating Times and Spaces

Olivia McVie (30, white) is married with two children aged seven and four. She moved to Summer Greens from Rondebosch East in 1995 after a divorce. Her mother had already been living in Summer Greens for a couple of years, having moved from Goodwood to be closer to her work as a technician at a business in Montague Gardens. After renting a room in another house in Summer Greens for six months, Olivia arranged to move into her mother's house with her two children. A hairdresser by trade, she wanted to open a salon in the shopping centre in Summer Greens but discovered that rent for a small space was more than the cost of renting a whole house in the suburb (the company, Seven-Eleven, which owns most of the retail space in the shopping strip at that time would have charged her around 2500 rands per month). But since her mother's house is right opposite the shopping centre, she and her mother decided to convert the garage into a hairdressing salon. Since then, Olivia has re-married and her mother has moved into an apartment in the Victoria Palms section of Summer Greens, letting Olivia and her family have the house to themselves. Olivia and her husband pay Olivia's mother 1800 rands a month in rent, which is enough to cover bond payments on the house. So good is Olivia's reputation as a hairdresser that some of her old customers from Rondebosch East continue to come to her in Summer Greens. Her competition in Summer Greens comes from one other hair salon (also in a converted garage), but they each seem to have a distinct clientele, Olivia serving mainly white and coloured people and the other hair salon largely African customers. Pictures of hairstyles in the two salons conform to this divide. Olivia is especially busy Saturday mornings but tries to keep the rest of the weekend free of appointments to spend time with her family and do shopping:

> I like my salon here, and the kids know that it's where Mummy works so they don't run around here too much. But juggling everything, work and kids and family, sometimes it's not easy, but we can't afford to do anything else right now. I try and make Saturday afternoons and Sundays family time, I'm usually good at sticking to that.

Kobus du Plessis (36, white) is a computer technician with a university degree behind him. He works from home but often has to travel to attend to clients all over the Cape Peninsula. His wife, Irene (31, white), works as an insurance underwriter in central Cape Town, so their move from Parow to Summer Greens has shortened her distance to work.

For Kobus, it has given him a more central location from which to run his business. Together they earn around 15 000 rands a month. They have two young children aged six and three. Kobus regularly has to visit clients over the weekend, but there are days during the week when he is at home much of the day and has time to spend with the children in the afternoons. He has converted a room in the home into an office, and the arrangement appears to work for the family, although he concedes that "it's sometimes difficult to say no to work when it's right there and it brings in money".

Keith Barry (29, white) graduated with an engineering degree five years ago. After working for a communication systems company for a couple of years, he resigned to start up his own company in the same industry, mainly because he was attracted by the independence and the control that self-employment offers. He works hard, sometimes seven days a week, and earns a salary in the region of 15 000 rands a month. At the time of setting up his own business, he bought a 3-bedroom house in Summer Greens where he lives alone, using one room as an office. His house and car comprise his main monthly outlays, and he regularly sends money to family members in Kimberley in the Northern Cape province. Despite these expenses, he hopes to earn and save enough money to retire at the age of 40!

Living on his own, Keith does not have to negotiate time and space with other household members, although he has nonetheless set up a work place separate from his living space. Olivia and Kobus, however, admitted that 'disconnecting' from work in the evenings or weekends can be tricky, not least because their source of income is within the home. Residents who do not have a physical distance between their work places and their homes, which would serve as a tangible boundary between the two places and their associated activities and states of mind, appear to construct a psychological separation through keeping a separate room designated as their work space, in order to maintain a distinction and reduce possible tension between household members (see Mirchandani 1999 for a study of salaried employees in Canada who, through a formal arrangement, work from their home rather than a central office, and their rituals of 'going to work' which replace the traditional commute to the work place). Olivia and Kobus also attempt

to avoid conflicts over time and space by scheduling work around the demands of domestic, household and family life. Several studies of home workers argue that fundamental ambiguities and potential conflicts arise from the disruption in domestic space and home life in a context "where it is the very ideal of the home which is being sought through home work activities" (Bulos & Chaker 1995:234; Mirchandani 1999).

5.4.2 The Informal Economy: Flexibility and Creativity

All three businesses described above are formally run with the necessary legal and tax registration. Yet aside from those who earn an income from formal employment or self-employment in businesses in Summer Greens as well as the formal exchange of money for goods and services provided by these businesses, how does money change hands in the suburb? A quick scan of notice boards by the shopping centre shows that a number of residents offer their skills and services to other residents in return for a fee, such as gardening, day care, baby-sitting, sewing, electrical and plumbing repairs. Fellow residents are offered lifts to work in return for a payment towards the petrol and the 'cost' of being a convenient alternative to local public transport. Residents also advertise products which they sell, either keeping all the profit or taking a commission on sales. These are examples of the informal, unofficial resource-generating strategies which exist alongside and complement formal employment, effecting intricate and dynamic relationships between the two sectors.

The concepts of 'formal' and 'informal' are complex, even ambiguous, and like 'public' and 'private' cannot easily be mapped onto physical spaces, economic activities or gender identities. People may endow them with different meanings and experience them differently in different settings and over time. The common distinction between formal and informal economies generally rests in the difference in regulation; the formal economy is largely regulated by the state in terms of fiscal obligations (e.g. tax) and labour standards (e.g. operating licenses), whereas the informal economy is the broad term for activities which avoid such regulation (Roberts 1995), hence its alternative name of "the irregular economy" (Halperin 1998:320) and its ability to offer greater flexibility

to individuals and households whose financial circumstances vacillate between secure and insecure. The informal economy is thus characterised by activities connecting people through a cash exchange of which there is no formal or public record. When residents pay Brian de Villers for mowing their lawns, his income is not recorded by any monitoring agency such as the inland revenue service. Gerhard Louw does the odd plumbing job in the suburb without declaring his payments. Alicia Scott's neighbour similarly pays her 'under the table' for looking after the children (see Chapter Four). The unrecorded character of such work gives rise to the common negative association of illegality and black marketeering, but it is helpful to recognise a gradation of illegality, ranging from activities which may be termed "extra-legal" in their ignoring of public regulations to those which are directly criminal (Halperin 1998:145+320). In Summer Greens, money certainly changes hands through activity that is considered criminal - from drug trading and shebeens (illegal bars serving alcohol) to prostitution[43] - but the majority of informally arranged or extra-legal work is not regarded as illegal or morally wrong.

Residents who experience tight financial circumstances due to, for example, unemployment, divorce, a car accident, or growing demands from children, or who wish to make extra money to spend on themselves, their family and their property (over and above what they earn through formal employment), often turn to the informal economy for income. They may do so only temporarily, but in some cases the informal sector provides the main source of income for a household.

For Johannes and Ilse de Wet (in their late 50s, white), the formal economy appears unable to accommodate them and they now rely on the informal sector for income. Johannes suffers from high blood pressure and Ilse has severe diabetes and rheumatism, conditions which forced them both into early retirement in 1995. That same year they

[43] Source: Milnerton Police. While I was unable to confirm some residents' suspicions of several houses in Summer Greens being used to sell sex, an anonymous resident was interviewed in *Table Talk* 4/12/97: "Sex Worker Tells All", explaining how she had turned to prostitution for six months when her family "fell on hard times". With her husband's consent and her doctor's knowledge, she worked from an "office" of several women (i.e. not from home), Mondays to Fridays from 9am to 5pm, earning between 5 000 and 10 000 rands a month. Her previous income as a receptionist had been 2 000 rands a month. Though her husband was "devastated", she said that "our desperate financial status won the day".

moved to Summer Greens, when their tighter financial circumstances compelled them to sell their home in Parow. If the de Wets appear a little grumpy to strangers it is in no small part due to a weariness caused by their ill-health and medication. Or it may be because their two adult children live in Johannesburg and rarely visit. A few years ago the de Wets decided to open a house shop on their property to generate cash to supplement their disability pensions and slow the depletion of their savings. They cleared a room at the front of their 4-bedroom house and started selling basic household products (milk, bread, oil, soap etc.) as well as sweets, cool drinks and cigarettes. The neighbours started buying from the shop rather than the Seven-Eleven supermarket just 250 metres away. Like the supermarket, the de Wet's shop is open seven days a week, from 7am to 8pm, and it has become a solid source of income for them - and promises to remain so as long as their health permits them to manage it.

Maureen (42) and Isaac (36) (both coloured) combine work in the formal and the informal sector for economic security. They moved to Summer Greens in 1994, after living in Bonteheuwel for almost 15 years, having decided that they wanted somewhere quieter and safer where they could start a family. At the time of fieldwork, their son, Toby, was five years old and about to start school. Shortly after he was born, Maureen decided to put to use her childcare experience from previous work to earn an income while looking after her own baby, and she set up a play-care group for toddlers in the home. Soon neighbours and other parents in Summer Greens sent their children to Maureen, as her fees are lower than those of the big crèche, Kidz Buzz, on Summer Greens Drive (she said she charges less than the crèche's 350 rands/month), and the parents apparently prefer their children to be cared for in a smaller group than is possible at Kidz Buzz. Maureen looks after between six and eight babies and toddlers from Mondays to Fridays. It is a long day, when parents drop their children off at 7.15am and only collect them after work at 6pm, but until Toby starts school, the play-care group is both a necessary and convenient combination of childcare and income. She earns around 2500 rands a month, while Isaac brings home around 3000 rands from his job as a trade hand for a manufacturing company. They both feel that the choice of having Maureen at

home with Toby is far superior to sending him away for day-care, which - as Maureen knows - does not come cheap.

When I first met Lucinda in early 1999, she had been running a small business from home for four years, after being retrenched as a secretary. She is in her late forties and divorced. At that time, her adult son, Ricky, lived with her at home, but 18 months later he moved into an apartment in Summer Greens with his girlfriend, Moira, after the birth of their baby girl (see Chapter Four). Lucinda set up the business with the help of her friend Joan (mid-50s, also divorced) who was similarly retrenched from her job in a shoe-making business that closed down. "Where do we find another job at our age?", asked Lucinda. Their business consisted of selling small packets of cold meats to factory workers in the Montague Gardens industrial estate. This entailed buying meat wholesale once a week, cutting, dividing and packing it in Lucinda's kitchen every morning, Mondays to Fridays, before driving around to various factories in the industrial estate and selling it to workers during their lunch break out of the boot of the car. The unsold and the uncut meat was kept in a second fridge in Lucinda's spare room. The two were assisted with the preparation by Gladys, who lives in Khayelitsha. They joked about their business being "the South African rainbow", referring to their multi-racial composition: Lucinda described herself as coloured, Joan as white and Gladys as black, and said they were hoping for a "pot of gold at the end [of the rainbow]!" Certainly, their business was doing well, so well that Lucinda had recently bought an almost-new BMW car. However, a year later, they closed the business, as Lucinda was offered the opportunity of working as a full-time assistant to an estate agent in the northern suburbs. This is a formal, contract position that not only pays more but is also a job Lucinda would far rather do than pack meat at home. The meat-business provided an income for almost five years, helping her through a time when she could see no realistic alternative, but she considers her new employment to be "a proper job". Her assessment of the move from informal to formal employment suggests that her understanding of the two sectors is bound up with notions of propriety, and her transition from the less respectable meat-business to the more respectable personal assistant was suitably consummated with the purchase of a briefcase.

As the case studies at the beginning of this chapter illustrate, direct selling is a livelihood strategy which a number of residents rely on as a source of income. Some, like Anita Godfrey and Evelyn van der Merwe, are formally enlisted with a direct sales company (Tupperware and Avon), others, like Patricia Erasmus, are informally sub-contracted by other sellers or sell independently. These three women are joined by several others in regarding direct sales as the economic activity most immediately available to them as women: Anita, Evelyn and Patricia all have sales experience which has served them well in the direct sales industry. Formal registration with major corporations does not seem to encourage residents to declare their income from sales to the Inland Revenue service. The past decade has seen significant growth of the direct sales industry in South Africa due to expanding consumer markets as well as increasing unemployment and decreasing social security which compel people to rely on a variety of income sources (*Mail & Guardian* 17/9/97 and 14/8/98; Cant & Machado 1999). The unregulated and flexible character of work in the direct sales industry appeals to people such as Anita Godfrey, Patricia Erasmus and Evelyn van der Merwe, although, as shown, that does not mean that it is easy to earn money from this activity.

For other residents, the flexibility and autonomy associated with the informal sector are the overriding reasons for generating an income in this manner; they choose not to work in the formal sector, unlike other residents for whom informal work is a necessity rather than an alternative to formal employment.

Philip Parsons (37, white and blind) works as a massage therapist. He has converted a small room at home into a space for receiving clients, most of whom are regulars from outside Summer Greens. It is the one room in the house where he and his wife - both heavy smokers - do not smoke; the room is dark and peaceful and simple in its furnishings. Philip left school after Standard 8 (aged 16) and did odd jobs before joining the military where he served in the catering division and ended up being trained as a chef. After that he worked for a major restaurant in Cape Town, but two years later the business was running into problems and he decided to resign. He says,

> I decided to be my own boss, I was fed up with working for other people who just order you around all the time. So I decided to take up massage for real - I've always been interested in it, but then I thought, now is the time to see if I can do it for a living.

He enjoys the control he has over his time, saying "if I want to sleep until 10am, then I do so". His wife Susan (49, white) also works from home, as a seamstress. She has converted one of the rooms in their 3-bedroom house into a sewing room and makes items for sale and for the household. Most of her work is by appointment, both by individuals and by businesses. She used to work as a housekeeper in a hotel in Constantia, but she claims that the work conditions made her weary, even sick, and she resigned. She and Philip have been together for 10 years (and have lived in Summer Greens for eight) but have no children of their own, although Philip has a daughter from a previous relationship. They are very happy with their work and relish their independence. Clients pay them in cash and there is no formal record of the transactions.

While the above examples concerned residents who have made use of home space as a resource from which to earn money, other residents work away from home. Charlton le Roux (36, coloured) is one of several residents who supplement their salary with gardening work in Summer Greens. He works full time as a driver for a parastatal transport company. He moved with wife and two children from Lotus River on the Cape Flats to Summer Greens three years ago to shorten his journey to and from work, saying, "I spend enough of the day sitting in traffic with my job... it was a matter of either getting a new job closer to home or getting a new house closer to work". They chose the latter ("It's easier to find a new house than a new job") and with the help of a housing subsidy from his employer, Charlton and his wife bought their house in Summer Greens. To make enough money to cover their expenses, he works part-time as a gardener in the suburb, early evenings or weekends. In some gardens he simply mows the lawn, which he finds "boring", while in others he can show his skill at gardening, roses being his speciality. His charges vary according to the task but he earns approximately 30 rands an hour. Recently, however, his employer has assigned him to regular night shift duty, which means he has had to cut back on his gardening work: "I'm just too tired during the day. Look at these wrinkles around my eyes!" Although the night shifts will only continue for

a further six months, he is concerned that he has lost some of his regular clients who have already found a replacement. While most part-time gardeners working in the suburb also reside in the suburb, some residents employ gardeners from neighbouring suburbs. The hourly payments range from eight to 40 rands though the average is around 20 rands. (A comparison of the earnings of gardeners and domestic workers is provided below).

5.4.3 Domestic Work: Home Executives and Outside Assistance

Work and domestic life have long been regarded as separate activities taking place in separate spaces, work being associated with the public sphere and dominated by men, and domestic life with the private sphere and managed by women (Abbott and Sapsford 1987; Corrigan 1997; Edwards & Ribbens 1998). However, the myth of the privatised home is disproved by the longstanding reality of domestic space as a site of both production and reproduction. Moreover, the public sphere of work and formal regulation is not separate from the private sphere of domestic reproduction and self-provisioning; the two are rather overlapping and interdependent.

Domestic work and childcare, usually undertaken by women, may be considered economic in that both tasks release other household members from doing such work so they can devote their skills and resources to other income-generating activities. Or it may be approached as a cost-benefit calculation in which households weigh up the costs of, for example, childcare provided elsewhere with the benefits for the woman (and the household) of earning money outside the home. These costs and benefits may not simply be financial but also personal, social, emotional etc. Either way, domestic work complements other forms of economic activity. As shown above in Table 5.1, there are households in Summer Greens where women are at home taking care of the family, bringing up children and keeping the house in order. In other words, they specialise in social reproduction and household management, ensuring that the members who labour for money are 'serviced' at home (other women who work in the formal or informal economy for remuneration of course usually face a second shift of work when they return home and have housework and childcare ahead of them).

For employment status, the 1996 Population Census classified 155 adults in Summer Greens as housewives. Assuming only one housewife per household, this amounts to just under 9% of the approximately 1800 households in Summer Greens. Rahdia Kariem (37, coloured) is married to Ali (39), who works full-time as a computer analyst. He earns enough money to cover all the regular household expenses, including running two cars, as well as to afford the extensive modifications they have made to their house since they bought it in 1993. They have four children between the ages of 11 and 2, the three eldest of whom are at school or pre-school, while Rahdia looks after the youngest at home. She calls herself a "home executive". So do Yvonne Samuels and Annabel Clifford, two women in similar positions. Yvonne's husband, Basil, is a sales representative for a major textile company, earning around 16 000 rands a month. They have three school-going children aged 14, 12 and 6. Annabel and Marcus Clifford and their three sons aged between 10 and 15 support themselves on Marcus' income from running his own business in market research. All three families own the houses they live in (Marcus and Annabel also receive an income from renting out their second property in Summer Greens, but it goes straight into paying off the bond on the property). The self-designation of "home executive" suggests that the women consider themselves managers of the house in terms of its day-to-day running: it endows the domestic work with a professional gloss and emphasises the power of the individual woman within a space that continues to lack "public" (male?) recognition.

Sen's (1990) model of 'co-operative conflict' in the household is useful in examining the internal and gendered power dynamics of households. The model draws out two dynamics in intra-household negotiation over resources and their management; firstly, co-operation in terms of how to increase the resources and welfare of the household, and secondly, conflict in terms of the division of these within the household. The model suggests that it is impossible to wholly distil an individual's interests from those of the collective. It emphasises the difference between a perceived and an actual contribution to the household, showing that entitlements are generally based on perceived contributions. Entitlements are therefore gendered in households where domestic work is undertaken by women, is unpaid, repetitive, and valued less than that provided by a man's income. This

model disputes most of the assumptions underlying a neo-classical model of the household (e.g. unity of interest, maximisation of joint utility and other principles which treat the household as a business). Observations and interviews in Summer Greens suggest that, on the whole, day-to-day decisions affecting households are made in an egalitarian and co-operative manner. Yet when it comes to major financial decisions, the partner earning the most appears to retain a higher level of bargaining power. In many households - though not all - men earned more than women and, hence, arguably had more control over money and its distribution. While the majority of dual earner households interviewed stated that they pooled their incomes and shared domestic expenditures (mortgage, food, bills etc.) quite equally, a couple of households divided expenses so that the mortgage or rent payment would be the responsibility of the (higher-earning) male partner while the woman's income was spent on food. This division of duties appears to reflect gendered meanings of home and traditional ideas of men being in charge of shelter while women are in charge of nurturing and nutrition. This point will be taken up again in Chapter Six.

None of the five households with housewives interviewed employ any outside assistance in the home, or indeed any gardening service. The housewife undertakes these tasks. Other households employ people to help with cleaning, cooking and childcare. Approximately 20% of the households interviewed bring in assistance for anything between 10 and 80 hours a month[44]. The domestic workers come from nearby Joe Slovo Park and Du Noon (an informal settlement north of Milnerton) as well as Langa, Philippi, Khayelitsha and Belhar. Elizabeth and Mervyn Thompson employ a woman from Joe Slovo Park for four hours five days a week to clean and be there for when their 10-year-old daughter returns from school, as well as a man from Joe Slovo Park twice a month to work in the garden. They justify the expense by saying that outside assistance enables them to spend their spare time together and with their daughter, as well as be as active as they are in the residents association, the Ladies Group, and other organisations they belong to. Patricia Erasmus employs a young woman from Mitchell's Plain every

[44] I did not encounter any household in Summer Greens with 'live-in servants' in the semi-feudal sense that has been popular among white middle and upper class South Africans (cf. Preston-Whyte 1982).

Saturday morning to clean the house and look after her husband, Jack. A 68-year-old woman from Kraaifontein comes to Charmaine Alberts twice a month to clean the house. Whereas gardeners' hourly payments average at 20 rands, domestic workers are paid on average 10 rands an hour. All the gardeners I heard of are men, while all the domestic workers are women, which may in part explain the earnings differential. It appears that there are gendered implications of an evident distinction between the inside (private) sphere and the outside (public) sphere, and that the associated tasks of maintenance are therefore valued differently, both economically and culturally, with domestic work considered less productive than gardening, even when the garden is essentially decorative (see also Gullestad 1984; Roberts 1991; Edwards & Ribbens 1998). This is not to say that there are no male residents doing housework or female residents working in the garden; there certainly are many doing just that. But in terms of employing outside assistance with the necessary tasks, a sexual division of labour appears to anchor female workers inside the house and male workers in the garden.

5.5 CONTROLLING PRIVATE SPACE THROUGH LEGISLATION

The above-mentioned residents are "key players" in the particular practices in question (Halperin 1998:140) but they must coordinate the activities with other residents, mainly fellow household members but also, for instance in the case of sales parties, with residents beyond their own household. Moreover, in the cases of, for example, Olivia, Maureen and the de Wets, the co-existence of their particular economic and domestic activities requires them to obtain official permission from local authorities to operate their businesses. The purpose of land use legislation is to define and enforce a boundary between these two activities, when authorities deem a separation to be in the 'public interest'. This boundary is both spatial and temporal, as regulations stipulate the physical confines of the commercial activity as well as its hours of operation, in order to control the level of commercialisation of a residential area.

The townscape of Summer Greens (i.e. the combination of streetscapes) is to a large extent a product of land use regulations. Zoning is one of the fundamental procedures

involved in the planning of a suburb, or any land for that matter. Planners allocate certain spaces to certain activities, based on the doctrine that similar activities should be near each other to maximise economic, social and legal-bureaucratic advantages. In other words, a desire to legally separate, for example, residential from industrial activities divides spaces into distinct areas according to their designated activity. Only once the local authorities approve the resulting map and guide can the proposed development be undertaken legally. Any changes to the prescribed activities - whether minor or major, and whether instigated by planners, developers, local authorities or property owners - must go through a process of consultation with all affected parties and again be approved by the local authorities (see, for example, "Non Residential Use in Residential Areas - Draft Policy Document" by Blaauwberg Municipality 1999; see also Perin 1977; Gottdiener 1994).

The criteria underlying the planners' assessment of what is appropriate and inappropriate in the suburb reflect particular functionalist (utopian?) and middle class ideas of society and the relationships between different land uses and land users, relationships based on a perceived need for functional differentiation in uses of space and other resources. Zoning is essentially about mapping social assumptions, values and moral judgements on the landscape. In other words, planners' decisions are guided by fundamental principles about land use and by conventional middle class constructions of social categories, and the relationships between them (Perin 1977).

In response to changing realities, Blaauwberg Municipality, under which Summer Greens falls, has begun a review of existing legislation on so-called non-residential uses in residential areas (Blaauwberg Municipality 1999). Zoning schemes currently in place are based on concerns and visions formulated half a century ago, and the current municipality operates in a different society where companies 'downsize and outsource' and where improved technology offers more flexibility in the location of work. High unemployment levels in the formal economy force residents to seek out alternative employment opportunities, most of which - as we have seen in Summer Greens - make use of space in the home. The municipality is responding with new planning legislation (e.g. the *Western*

Cape Development Planning Act of 1999 which came into effect in January 2000 and replaced the *Land Use Planning Ordinance of 1985*). 'Integrated development' and 'mixed uses' are the key canons of new legislation, promoting the spatial principle of providing residential and employment opportunities in close proximity to, or even integrated with, each other. Thus, while current zoning schemes have a fixed list of land uses, it is possible to apply for a departure from this (although shebeens and motor vehicle repair activities are universally refused in residential areas).

Applications to open, for example, an office, a doctor's surgery, or a house shop in owner-occupied property may be approved if certain conditions are met. These include restrictions on the number of people to be employed (maximum between two and four, depending on the proposed activity), stipulated hours of operation, provision of adequate parking space, and signage control (external business signs must not exceed 0.2 m^2). The latter arises from a further condition that all facades must retain their domestic architectural design, in other words, the property must be painted or decorated in a way which visually conforms to surrounding properties. Apart from the business sign, there must be no visible evidence from the street of the fact that business is conducted inside the property. Other restrictions relate to, for example, noise levels and food preparation. Finally, owners of surrounding properties must be consulted and the majority must endorse the application before it is approved by the municipality.

In Summer Greens, the most uncontested land use departure seems to be house shops, which sell basic household products as well as sweets, cool drinks and cigarettes. At various times during my fieldwork I counted between five and eight of these businesses operating. Neighbours usually support applications for permission to run this kind of business for several reasons, the foremost of which is that house shops are convenient. No house in Summer Greens is more than a short walk away from a house shop. These businesses are aimed at residents rather than people from outside the vicinity, and they do not bring in extra traffic to the street, thereby disturbing the peace and safety of an area. With a hint of nostalgia in her voice, Abby Davis, who immigrated from Britain 20 years ago, compares house shops to "the old village corner shops we used to have there", shops

which today often buckle under competition with larger supermarkets and disappear from the local landscape. In Summer Greens, some residents have told me that they are glad they can help their neighbours through hard times by supporting these shops. In fact, all the house shops I know of in Summer Greens were up and running *before* they actually had permission, in other words, the owners had already established a loyal group of customers by the time they sought community support for their business.

Almost a month had passed before Johannes and Ilse de Wet realised that they were running their shop illegally and they hurriedly applied to the municipality for permission to operate the business. The bureaucratic machinery started rolling: a map was produced which marked the property owners within a certain radius of the shop, who were then consulted together with the Summer Greens Residents Association. All parties gave their consent by letter or signature on a special form, after which the application was put to the council and approved.

Lauren and Freddie Davids' house shop was similarly up and running before they sought legal permission. They are both in their late thirties and coloured. Their application to the municipality related how Freddie had been made redundant, and "as a result we have opened a tuck-shop in our house, which is a vital source of income to pay our bond". They had already petitioned their neighbours, who were supportive, but it nevertheless took more than two months before their application had been processed and approved. In the meantime they continued running the business, which by all accounts is doing reasonably well. However, unlike the de Wets, they do not have a spare room and therefore they are selling the bread, sweets and cigarettes from their living room. As discussed above, the Davids exploit the flexibility of that space, combining its public and private qualities and transforming it into an economic space in which the material process of a business transaction can take place (see also Chapter Six for a discussion of the living room as both a private and a public space). This does not always make for easy living, but under the circumstances of Freddie's unemployment, they feel there is no alternative.

Neither of these applications for land use departure made an appeal in terms of how the community would benefit directly from their business. Applications from Caroline Martin (coloured) and Hester Smit (white), on the other hand, were both motivated in these terms. Caroline motivated her application to run a house shop on the following grounds:

> The purpose of the house shop is for the benefit of the community and myself. The "non-working" mothers in the community will benefit from the house shop because it is within walking distance. Seven-Eleven is quite a distance in comparison to our location.

Anticipating the approval, Caroline also presented her plans for expanding the shop:

> For the meantime the front room is being used for the purpose of the house shop. Later the carport area will be utilised and then the garage.

In 1998 Hester opened a house shop with two arcade games. Her application to the municipality read:

> There is no entertainment for children in this area. [...] It is difficult for children to get transport in the evening and during weekends. It is close by and parents are happy with that fact. [...] Vandalism is also one of our biggest problems in Summer Greens. My main priority is to fulfil our youth in the community with amusement after school duties and keep them from vandalising the area. These amusements stimulate their minds, practices there [*sic*] hand and eye co-ordination and conveniently assists with their schooling. We sell no liquor and tobacco, just sweets and cool drinks. The community supports me fully.

Both applications were indeed approved without any objections from either surrounding neighbours or the residents' association.

However, another resident wanting permission to run a "games arcade" in another section of Summer Greens has been less fortunate. In October 1999, Tom Park (white) converted an extension on his house into a room with pool tables and arcade games, called it "Wonder Amusements" and invited residents to use the facilities. The place irked the neighbours who complained about the noise and that children and teenagers were drinking outside and engaging in "promiscuous behaviour" as well as urinating in the streets. They said the place attracted "undesirable elements" to the area and devalued their properties. Moreover, Tom was operating without a license. Rather than resort to the law immediately, the neighbours approached Tom personally and asked him to close the

arcade, but he refused saying only family members played there. According to reports given at meetings of the residents' association and in the media, he allegedly threatened several residents with trouble if they complained to the municipality (*Table Talk* 4/11/99 and 25/5/00). Tom, however, quickly applied for a license, claiming that the games arcade will "keep kids in the area together, and keep them occupied. [...] I see kids doing drugs and things and I want them to come together. [...] It's about bringing the kids together" (quoted in *Table Talk* 4/11/99). He said he was not in the business for the money.

But when he applied for the operating license the municipality failed to notify the neighbours of the deadline for objections, as is standard procedure. Only at the very last minute did the neighbours discover the mistake; they demanded an extension of the deadline and submitted an objection. Having tried the conciliatory route of dealing with the offending neighbour, the residents, led by the Residents' Association, chose to channel their grievances through the land use zoning legislation. Given the objections from neighbours, the municipality turned down Tom's application for a license. Instead they fined him 300 rands for operating an illegal business. He refused to pay and the municipality prepared to institute legal proceedings. Meanwhile, Tom continued to run the arcade and residents continued to be angered, now turning their frustration on the municipality, who appeared to be taking no practical steps to close the place down. Fearing reprisals if they were named, a couple of residents spoke anonymously to the local newspaper, saying, "we are law-abiding citizens who expect the municipality to uphold their rights. [...] We won't be able to profit on our home investment with a games arcade in the area" (*Table Talk* 25/5/00).

Tom then suggested a deal whereby he would provide proper toilet facilities if he were granted the license. The municipality replied that they would only reconsider his application once the facilities were provided. Taking into account the earlier objections, Tom did not consider his chances to be worth the investment in a toilet. The situation appeared to be in deadlock for almost another year, until in late May 2001, Tom closed

the business. The municipality then withdrew its charges and the neighbouring residents breathed a sigh of relief.

The reason why residents objected to Tom Park opening a games arcade and not to Hester Smit appears to rest on two differences: Tom was operating a larger business, with seven games machines, compared to Hester's two. The impact on the surrounding area in terms of attracting children and youth and raising noise levels was noticeably different. Moreover, neighbouring residents considered Tom Park's business specifically to be lowering the 'tone' of Summer Greens, both due to its scale and its reputation, while Hester Smit's smaller enterprise did not appear to affront her neighbours.

Other objections to applications for land use departure have been more concerned with the level of commercialisation which certain businesses raise when they are established in private homes. The application to convert a house into a dental surgery caused an outcry among neighbouring residents. Dr Becker and his wife (both white) did not intend to live in the house but rather to work there from Mondays to Saturdays. Fifteen neighbouring owners objected to the municipality, using arguments such as:

- "We purchased our house due to the fact that it is in a quiet residential area, therefore we do not wish to have any kind of business that will depreciate our house as a residential investment".
- "Our street is a quiet and calm street and we do not want cars and people in and out all day for appointments".
- "Many people (including children, dogs and cats [*sic*]) are often walking on the street and we don't want to put their lives in danger or disturb this peace because of the cars of the dentist's clients".
- "It is a very well known fact that a business of this nature is targeted after hours and will also attract bad elements to the immediate vicinity".

Since another dental surgery has been up and running on Summer Greens Drive since 1995 (it was approved and established at a time when that particular section of Summer Greens was still being developed and occupied), the Beckers were confident that neighbours would not object. They began to move furniture and dental equipment into the house before the application was approved. However, so strong was the neighbours'

protest that the municipality in fact rejected the application and the Beckers have subsequently sold the property.

There are several other active businesses to which no residents have formally objected, yet in conversation some state their disapproval because they consider the businesses to jar with the prevailing character of the suburb in terms of middle class respectability and to challenge their attempts at maintaining such standards. The cash loans business on Summer Greens Drive is a reminder to some residents that not all their neighbours have access to cash in their bank accounts or have the credit record necessary to obtain a bank loan. For a number of months in 1999 until she moved out of Summer Greens, Mrs Narayan sold new and second-hand clothing from her garage, being well-placed opposite the shopping strip (and next door to the cash loans business). A discussion at a residents' association meeting centred on the problem of reconciling admiration for the entrepreneurship of some of these residents and disapproval of the way in which the businesses lower the tone of the suburb. As one committee member said, "Some of these places make Summer Greens look like a flea market", insinuating that such economic spaces belong to working class rather than middle class neighbourhoods and therefore that their presence is perpetuating the lower class status of his previous place of residence.

When private properties open for public business, the effects - whether positive or negative - spill over into neighbouring properties. They impact on the surrounding area through, for example, parking congestion, advertising, customer traffic, as well as affecting the overall image of the suburb. In these ways, many of the small businesses modify the spatial layout as well as the social texture of the streetscape. They not only blur the public-private boundaries but also challenge the social assumptions and normative (reified) regulations laid down in the zoning lines which seek to divide activities into neat spaces marked 'residential' or 'business'. While some residents reluctantly acknowledge the entrepreneurship of the small business people, their objections are often grounded in different understandings of what is appropriate commercial activity in a residential suburb, where extensive zoning legislation is

supposed to reduce such business to a minimum. Moreover, particular ideas of class and culture are revealed in several objections, which appear to associate certain economic activities with less affluent (township) neighbourhoods, activities which are thus rendered unfitting for Summer Greens.

5.6 AN AMALGAM OF STRATEGIES

As shown above, multiple and diverse livelihood strategies may be combined at any one time in a household, as different members at different times exploit varied and changing resources and opportunities to meet their needs. These may also vary over time, as children grow up and new ones are born, as household members leave or return, as employment circumstances change, as costs of living and mortgage payments increase while real wages decline. Whether residents are all but coping financially and emotionally at their chosen standard of living, or whether they are relatively more secure in terms of their employment, investments, savings, and disposable income, or whether they find themselves somewhere in between, the relatively unregulated informal economy and the flexibility of private domestic space are two central and interdependent means at the disposal of most households, despite the tension over time and space which may arise between household members.

This chapter has shown that there are many activities in the Summer Greens economy which defy the conventional dichotomies and simple associations between paid work in the public sphere and non-work or unpaid work in the private sphere. Olivia, Keith and Kobus, for example, work full-time in formal self-employment in the private sphere of the home. Lucinda, Maureen and the de Wets each run small businesses within their kitchens or living rooms or front rooms. While Lucinda's meat-packing operation is unregistered and unmonitored by any external agency, Maureen and the de Wets are registered with the local municipality as required by land use legislation, which nonetheless classifies the businesses as informal. Alicia's and Mervyn's offers of help are made good in the space of their homes in return for a fee. Charlton, Evelyn and Anita enter other residents' private space to carry out their work. Each of their activities relies

on a fluidity of boundaries and even - in some cases more than others - exploits it. For example, as Anita enters the private living room of a Tupperware party hostess and launches into her sales routine, distinctions between public and private, business and domesticity, production and consumption, work and leisure, salesperson and friend, are deliberately blurred. Her and Evelyn's sales successes rely on a fundamental connection being made, one in which the physical space of the consumer's living room is transformed into an economic centre, that is, a place where a material process is undertaken (Appadurai 1986). The transformation is smoothed by corporate rhetoric that is built around domestic and personal metaphors, which make the discourse and practice of, for example, Tupperware or Avon easily transportable into the physical and private space of the house and the domestic economy (Gudeman & Rivera 1990; Broadbridge, forthcoming). In other words, for direct sales as well as other economic activities in the home to succeed, they must appropriate the domestic and suburban space for both business and consumption.

The cultural economy of Summer Greens is thus an amalgam of livelihood strategies which are practised within the social, cultural and spatial settings of the suburb, yet which also respond to and modify these conditions, as residents seek to maintain as well as improve their present economic security and standards of living. While several economic activities are considered legitimate, convenient and even beneficial to "the community", other examples described above show how potential and actual deviation from the legally prescribed - as well as socially preferred - use of residential space for economic practices has caused tension in the suburb. Objections from other residents are generally expressed in terms of protecting the interests of "the community", which appears to be used as a code for middle class.

Not only do both applications and objections often appear to rest on fickle definitions of "the community" and what best serves "its" interests, they are also ultimately about protecting the interests - in terms of livelihood, investment and status - of the individual property owner. Sometimes individual interests are in fact the only interests declared, but generally residents are adept at presenting them in community terms, knowing the appeal

this generates with the local authorities. The broader process of defining and negotiating the community in the face of challenges from the developers, local authorities and certain groups of residents is the focus of Chapter Seven. The following chapter continues to explore notions of private space in the home and insecurity around protecting that space, this time approaching the topic from the perspective of ownership, consumption and space in the home, to better understand how residents consume private domestic spaces, and how they organise and decorate them in ways which increase home consumption and bear out a self-assigned middle class status.

6. MAKING HOMES: OWNERSHIP, PROPRIETY AND CONSUMPTION

Domestic architecture in Summer Greens conveys a range of individual and collective social meanings. As described in Chapter Three, some houses are relatively 'quiet' on the outside, while others use a range of objects and styles as "social tools" (Lay & Reis 1994:95) to communicate class status, values of propriety, personal tastes, fears and fantasies. Inside, the houses also "talk" (Gullestad 1993:128). Some are crowded with furniture, others have the furniture arranged alongside the walls, leaving open space in the centre of the rooms. A few living rooms have big mirrors on one side, creating a further illusion of spaciousness. Some interiors have toys, newspapers and clothes lying around, but residents usually apologise to visitors for this. Most homes are tidy and very clean. Knick-knacks are displayed on special shelves, and ornaments - in brass, copper, and porcelain - are presented in sets, as an ensemble. Some walls are busy with framed pictures, photographs and certificates, others are empty. Some rooms are brightly coloured, others are decorated in subdued shades. Matching colours suggest their aesthetic function, marking different rooms in the house (Miller 1997).

Certain styles, certain objects and their positioning around the home reflect a desire of residents to consume and display in ways which they believe convey their social status and achievements. Within the private boundaries of the home some spaces are considered more public than others, and access to certain rooms is reserved for intimate family and friends only. This chapter examines some of the ways in which residents organise and experience the home, how they appropriate and organise private space in their pursuit of propriety. It reviews the meanings of home and illustrates how residents express these meanings in their organisation and decoration of home spaces. Home ownership generally increases the degree to which residents can control and realise the meanings of home, and the chapter expands on the point made in earlier chapters about middle class status being in part constructed around the idea of home ownership. It considers the home maintenance and improvement activities undertaken in Summer Greens, examining these practices as rituals of ordering which are part of a performance of ontological security

(Hinchcliffe 1997). Home improvements in particular play an important role in connecting those residents engaged in these activities and distinguishing them from others, including neighbours with different housing tenure. The chapter argues that this distinction, and its continuous upkeep, both necessitates and is used to justify the time and money invested. Moreover, for the home-owning residents, the distinction between tenants and themselves serves as a meaningful index of class position.

6.1 MEANINGS OF HOME[45]

Homes do not "pre-exist, [...] homes are made" (Hinchcliffe 1997:215). They are the outcome of a whole set of ordinary everyday practices which give them meaning. They are also in part an ideological and symbolic construct (Somerville 1997) where meaning transcends boundaries of time and space. The Heideggerian notion of 'dwelling' (*Dasein*) reminds us that dwelling is both existential and relational - it refers to the ability to establish a relationship between people, space and the material world which extends beyond the physical realm and into the spiritual/metaphysical (Urry 2000; Shurmer-Smith & Hannam 1994).

The home is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Literature on the home suggests a range of ideas which can generally be grouped around three central meanings of home: privacy, identity, and familiarity (see for instance Gullestad 1993; Corrigan 1997; Hinchcliffe 1997; Somerville 1997). Findings in Summer Greens confirm evidence from these studies that, besides denoting a physical/material dwelling with utility value, the home has considerable symbolic value. It is associated with notions of personal identity and self-expression; of family life, affinity, intimacy, belonging and social reproduction; of shelter, protection, control, and territory; of ownership, investment, and financial asset; of social status, social reference groups, and leisure; of stability, continuity, and what has been termed 'ontological security'.[46] Studies have further shown that women and men

[45] The discussion here is concerned with 'home' in terms of dwelling as distinct from its analysis in migration studies (see, for example, Frankental 1998).
[46] This term probably owes its meaning to Heidegger's idea of the home as the root of authentic being (Urry 2000:132), but it is generally attributed to P. Saunders and his book *A Nation of Home Owners* (1990, London: Unwin Hyman). I quote it here from Crow & Allan (1994:121), Hinchcliffe (1997:200) and Somerville (1997:228).

may experience these meanings differently, not just in degree but also in kind (Crow & Allen 1994; Chambers 1997; Stevenson 1999; Strong-Boag *et al* 1999; Corrigan 1997).

To Summer Greens residents, the home symbolises a complex set of values and relations. They spoke of the home as "where I can relax" (Patricia, 54, data capturer, coloured, lives with husband and adult son); "where I don't really have to worry about what other people think of me" (Tania, 24, insurance claims consultant, white, lives with partner); "my place where I can do what I want" (Keith, 29, computer consultant, white, lives alone); "where we're a family" (Gregory, 37, police detective, coloured, lives with wife and three children); and as "my investment" (Mervyn, early 40s, human resource manager, coloured-Indian, lives with wife and daughter). Jean Miller, a white pensioner, suggested that her home is a retreat from social disorder:

> I feel safe enough here, well at least safer than outside [the house]. I suppose Summer Greens is alright, there's not too much crime here, but you can still get pushed off the pavement. We don't get out much. I'm worried about all the car hijackings [in Cape Town] these days.

In 1996, Wendy Parker (37, bank official, coloured) moved from Factreton with her husband and three children. Describing Factreton as "a ghetto" characterised by "high crime and gangsterism", where "you could never feel safe in your home", she explained why her home in Summer Greens is so important to her and her family:

> I didn't want to live in a semi-house [semi-detached]. I wanted to get out of the council housing, as we called it then, I mean, to have my own grounds [where] I can *walk right around the house*, and I wanted something different. I didn't want to live that type of life or let my children grow up in that environment. Because for me it wasn't healthy, I wanted to change it for myself. Now I'm more comfortable in my surroundings. [emphasis added].

For Wendy, moving into Summer Greens and into her own home has allowed her to make a break from an environment where she felt she had little control, not just of her private space and her family's safety in public, but also of her children's future. The move was an opportunity to reinvent herself and set her children up for a better life, as she sees it, and the new, safe, proper home in Summer Greens symbolises her achievements so far. Her term for semi-detached houses - "a semi-house" - and her subsequent emphasis on having "my own grounds" where "I can walk right around the house" suggest that in her

view, a house is not a proper house unless it is free-standing on its own plot, as is her house in Summer Greens.

However, there are also residents who at certain times during the period of study held less positive associations with their new homes. In each of these cases, their feelings at the time were directly related to tension between household members. As mentioned in Chapter Four, Alicia's husband only told her of his dismissal as security guard a month after it happened, at which point she also discovered the substantial debts he owed. She was shocked and angry and spent quite some time away from home, visiting her friends elsewhere in Summer Greens or Grassy Park (her previous place of residence) for consolation and window-shopping at Century City, until the two had worked things out between them. Jenny Cobbett (24) had a string of arguments with her partner over his sister moving in, as Jenny and the sister did not get along, clashing over tidiness and noise in the house. The rows lasted for a period of several weeks, causing Jenny and her partner to sleep in different rooms and generally creating stress in the home to the point where Jenny did not look forward to going home after work. Moira's pregnancy and her initial reluctance to identify the father similarly provoked tension and disquiet in Charmaine's (her mother's) home. When Brian was initially dismissed from his work, he spent two weeks drinking heavily at home - Liesl, his wife, reluctantly let him do so, knowing it was temporary behaviour, but nonetheless those two weeks were particularly difficult for her to be in the home. Although I have not come upon residents who admit to being, or to have been, physically abused by their partners, several residents say that they can identify houses in which abuse takes place, and doctors working in the suburb attest to the reality of domestic violence, as they sometimes treat its victims. From the - albeit limited - information presented here, it appears that negative associations with the home arise both from tension *within* the home, that is, between household members, as well as from conflicts of interest outside, for example with neighbours or employers. The latter may of course be brought into the home and cause the tension between members, which give rise to the negative associations, for example at times when the support and trust which people like Alicia, Jenny and Moira expect from the home is unexpectedly withheld.

Notwithstanding, residents generally define the home in opposition to the world outside, to the turmoil and pollution in society 'out there', to the impersonality of the market, to the indifference of bureaucratic institutions, to the anonymity and facelessness of crime. An unsafe and unpredictable world is contrasted with the personal, the private, the intimate, the routine, the clean, the aesthetic, the proprietous, the familiar, the "unconditional acceptance" (Frankental 1998:161) and sense of belonging arising from the familiarity and existential comfort often associated with 'home', at least as an idea, if not always as a reality.

Privacy, identity and familiarity each arise from the way in which spatial relations, psychological relations, and social relations respectively are constructed and combined for the individuals concerned. These relations are predicated on the marking of boundaries, such as those between inside-outside, self-other, familiar-strange, private-public etc. The demarcation processes which create these central meanings of home are essentially "dialectics of boundary control" (Somerville 1997:234). The boundary may be spatially or physically defined by, for instance, walls, gates or doors, but control of that boundary is continually negotiated between insiders and outsiders, between self and other etc. (Gullestad 1993; Somerville 1997).

Thus, the three main meanings of home (privacy, identity and familiarity) embody powerful notions of security and boundary control. Somerville explains the simultaneous and interrelated construction of these three meanings as follows: "Subjects...are at home if they can control their own boundaries, if they can *be themselves* within those boundaries, and if the world within those boundaries is one which they have made or are making for themselves" (1997:235, emphasis added). Based on the data collected in Summer Greens, this chapter argues that residents are in fact still in the process of remaking themselves, still striving for an identity predicated on more firmly marked boundaries. Hence they are not entirely secure in their position and not yet quite *their new selves within those boundaries*, something which might partly - in turn - explain their concern with the marking and maintaining of such boundaries. The remainder of the

chapter will address this argument through a discussion of different aspects of home ownership, maintenance and improvement.

6.2 MEANINGS OF HOME OWNERSHIP

The degree to which residents can realise the central meanings of home discussed above (privacy, identity and familiarity) depends to some extent, but not entirely, on the form of housing tenure. The general argument in the literature suggests that owner-occupation is most capable of offering the full range of meanings (Baum & Hassan 1999). Tenants can certainly appropriate their lived space (Miller 1997) and make it 'homely', but they cannot guarantee privacy, independence and freedom from the control and intrusion of outsiders, such as landlords. They are thus less able to associate their dwelling with 'settling down' (the commonly assumed desirability of this is discussed below). They cannot regard it as a financial asset. Nor can they derive any socio-economic or other benefits from the social status associated with home ownership. Most Summer Greens tenants spoke of their intention to buy property as soon as they could afford to because home ownership is "more respectable" (Charmaine Alberts, 51, living with two adult daughters); "It gives more security than renting" (Alicia Scott, 28, married with three children); and because of an annoying recognition that "I'm paying off someone else's bond. It's money down the drain really" (Jenny Cobbett, 24, shares with boyfriend). Renting is seen as a stage they are passing through before becoming owners. Some have only recently moved to Cape Town so they have rented for a few months until they are satisfied with their choice of house and area. Others have already been renting for over a decade. Since rent levels are currently (2001) on a par with mortgage bond repayment rates, it makes financial sense to buy instead of rent. However, certain residents in Summer Greens are unable to buy, even though they wish to. Some defaulted on bond repayments in their previous dwelling because they were retrenched, so their house was repossessed and now, although again employed, they are unable to get another bond for a new house. Others, like Alicia, also have a credit history which dissuades banks from helping them to ownership. She has been renting in Summer Greens for four years, having rented a room with her husband and three children in Grassy Park before that. She tells me that her "big dream" is to own her own house, but because her husband defaulted on car payments ten years ago, the

banks are still unwilling to provide a mortgage bond. However, she is adamant that it is "just a matter of time" before they buy a house.

Of the current home owners interviewed, 63% were first time home owners, that is, until the time of research their housing tenure had been renting or, for a few, staying with their parents in return for a monetary contribution. In the eyes of most owners, renting (at least in Summer Greens) appears to carry a social stigma, as if tenants are somehow less legitimate members of the community because they cannot guarantee stability of tenure or quality of maintenance. The latter is the most common reproach. Owners argue that tenants are less committed to maintaining property standards, particularly externally, as indeed are many absentee landlords, it is claimed. Moreover, tenants are less likely to become involved in matters concerning the neighbourhood at large. Certainly only home owners participated actively in local organisations such as residents associations or neighbourhood crime watch schemes (see Chapter Seven)[47].

On the other hand, residents maintain that home ownership confers respectability and status. It means owning an asset whose value will usually appreciate (if the area or property do not deteriorate) and which can also be used as security for a bank loan. It is a long-term investment, both financially and emotionally, which is associated with stability of tenure in a particular neighbourhood. It brings independence as well as responsibility. Wendy Parker echoed a number of residents interviewed in her statements of the personal importance of ownership because of the control she secured:

> I wanted to get out of it [her previous home] because I was fed up. It was a family home, but that is not a big thing although that is also part of what I wanted to give up. I didn't want anything that is part of my husband's family, I wanted something of my own. I want to come home to my own house and I can tell the next person, 'Please don't put your foot on my chair', or 'Don't put your feet on my furniture', because his family did that as well; they'd come into the house and they'd think it's still their house and it was your own furniture in the house, but they put their feet on the furniture and they take offence if you say, 'Please these are now my things

[47] In fact, while the official name is the "Summer Greens Residents Association", people commonly refer to it as "the ratepayers association" or (less frequently) "the home owners association". The official name may thus be inclusive of all residents irrespective of tenure - and the constitution defines membership as all property owners and legal tenants in the suburb - but in practice it is considered more exclusively for property owners who pay their rates. This issue is discussed in Chapter Seven.

> and I would appreciate it if you don't...', they take offence, they don't like you to be honest. They actually want you rather to be quiet and just accept things. But I am an honest person and I have my integrity.

Ownership clearly has many positive meanings for her, including independence from her husband's family, more control over other people behaviour, and power to speak her mind. It has brought her respectability and strengthened her sense of her own integrity, although it has shifted the relationship with her in-laws in the process. Liza Mondeo (36, sales assistant, coloured) had a similar experience: "I stayed with my in-laws when we got married, but it didn't work. Nothing belongs to you, and you must always be so considerate. Now it's their turn". However, both women admit to the anxiety that accompanies home ownership, of having to meet monthly mortgage payments (see also Chapter Five), although the worry appears to be a price worth paying for the independence the two women have gained.

Much of the literature on home ownership concurs with the interpretations described above. Where one might question the naturalisation or hegemony of these values is in the case of *suburban* home ownership. Crow and Allan's (1994) overview of literature on the subject suggests that, while numerous studies on this issue assume that home ownership in suburbia is the pinnacle of nuclear family life to which everyone aspires (probably reflecting the personally held values of the authors), there are studies which suggest that some people in fact have different housing aspirations, such as single-person or single-parent households who may prefer renting in gentrified, inner-city areas (see, for example, Bondi 1999 and Engels 1999 who argue that middle and upper class tenants have in fact been instrumental to gentrification processes). Alternatively, with increased technology and with the financial means, people can live and work from homes located beyond the suburbs, in more rural areas. Thus, certain claims about suburban home ownership being a universally held ideal should be examined against people's actual views, their household situation, their housing needs with regard to, for example, job mobility and job access, and their own dreams vis-à-vis what they believe is realistically possible (Bondi 1999). Based on the extensive discussions I have had with Summer Greens residents on these issues, there is no doubt that suburban home ownership is

regarded by them as the ideal form of housing tenure. They do not dispute that other forms may suit other people better, but having achieved this status themselves, they seek to protect their accomplishment from being devalued by people whose circumstances may engender such decline.

Despite the effects of technological developments and increased mobility on aspirations and patterns of housing tenure, capitalist societies generally consider home ownership to be socially, economically and not least politically desirable. The promotion of home ownership is often part of a broader political strategy assumed to bring social stability and economic growth. The present South African government is no exception in this regard. Its housing policy focuses on delivery of housing for ownership through a range of subsidy schemes, from individual to institutional, aimed at enabling beneficiaries from the poorer sectors of society to acquire ownership of their dwelling for the first time (see, for example, *Housing Act No. 107 of 1997*). Some subsidies are for ownership of newly constructed houses, others are to enable people who rent state-financed housing from municipalities to buy the house (for long-term tenants, this is in fact often a low-cost transfer of ownership). However limited its success so far, the state's housing policy is some acknowledgement from the government of its responsibility in housing provision and security for the poor. Housing for the rest of society is on the whole left to market forces in the belief that this is the appropriate medium through which ownership of houses is achieved. The government's responsibility is to create a climate that is favourable to investment in the housing industry.

Creating such a climate has required substantial new legislation from the post-1994 government. Under Apartheid, a variety of political, legal, and economic mechanisms ensured that the housing market was thoroughly distorted in favour of white people, for example, through the *Group Areas Act*, the prohibition of African home ownership in urban areas, government subsidisation of white home ownership, and in the Western Cape the Coloured Labour Preference policy (Lipton & Simkins 1993; Christopher 1994; Bond 2000). But the abolition of the *Group Areas Act* in 1991, and related racially discriminatory legislation soon thereafter, removed the race-based restrictions on where

people could buy property. In 1994, the government established the Mortgage Indemnity Fund to encourage banks to lend to potential home owners. However, the fund was wound up in 1998 (*Cape Argus* 21/9/00). Other legislation has since been introduced to support home owners, such as the *Housing Consumers Protection Act of 2000* and the *Home Loan and Mortgage Disclosure Bill of 2000*. The latter bill finally outlawed the long-standing bank practice of "red-lining", whereby banks mark residential areas as being high-risk (i.e. where they consider lenders more likely to default on mortgage payments), making it difficult for prospective buyers in certain areas to access housing loans. Some argue the process continues despite the new legislation (*Financial Mail* 27/10/00).

Changes in South African society over the past decade have thus brought new opportunities for home ownership. As the middle class continues to expand, so does demand for home loans. At present, banks are eagerly lending money to qualifying home buyers, along with other consumer credit. Their recent campaigns to attract first-time home buyers in particular, reflects the growing demand for this type of loan and the competition among banks to supply it. Posters and brochures in banks as well as adverts in the press and on TV, extol the virtues of home ownership. They draw upon a particular stock of images and rhetoric to promote this form of tenure and attract new people into the world of home ownership. While the style of advertising may be very contemporary in style, the ideas are the same as those used in British campaigns to promote suburban home ownership for the first time after World War I (see, for example, Gold & Gold 1994). The images speak of secure and comfortable family living, of the home as a symbol of success, as the embodiment of well-deserved fulfilment, of a lifestyle which reflects the admirable status of home owner and therefore by extension, a privileged consumer. Developers and estate agents have employed similar methods in the selling of Summer Greens, both parties declaring that in Summer Greens one buys so much more than a house, one buys a new lifestyle, "a new way of life" which is "unequalled", where the living is "secure" and the location is "superb" (Ilco Homes 1991; *Die Burger* 22/5/93; Monex advertising in and around Summer Greens 1997-2000). They engage prospective buyers with the idea that the suburban home is an extension of oneself, a locus for one's

identity - especially class identity - and a place where one's values can be safely embodied and objectified. Suburbs are residential areas where "the appearance of one's self is grounded in the presentation of home" (Chaney 1994:160), so the suburban home is marketed and sold as a "privileged site" (*ibid.*) for the display of one's status and the consumption required for this. Indeed, the lifestyle on offer creates new desires which must be satisfied by increased and increasing consumerism. Table 3.10 in Chapter Three showed that the need for more space topped the list of residents' primary reasons for moving from their previous place of residence. In their new homes in Summer Greens, the majority of residents enjoy relatively more space than before, but as Corrigan (1997:110) notes, larger homes mean more space on display, "and so more money, care and attention needs to be lavished on more parts of the home than before, which of course opens up more areas to be consumerized".

6.3 DESIGN FOR LIVING: PROPRIETY AND CONSUMPTION IN THE HOME

The vast majority of house designs in Summer Greens have the front door opening straight into the living room. The rest open so that as you enter, the kitchen is immediately on your left and another step forward takes you right into the living room without having passed through another door or archway. A central design principle underlying the interior of most houses in Summer Greens is that of an open-plan layout, where kitchen and living room are divided only by a kitchen counter, and there is no distinct entrance hall. While fewer walls lower construction costs, the developers also claim that the design is both modern and effective, although they do not explain *how* (Ilco Homes 1992). It is, however, commonly argued that the open-plan kitchen and living room alleviates pressure on an already smallish space by keeping an open flow of light, an improved circulation of air, and promoting continuous contact and interaction between people that is unobstructed by walls. In short, the design provides a successful illusion of space. The open appearance aims to convey an affable, contemporary feeling to domestic space, where the emphasis is more on the efficiency of domestic tasks such as cooking and running the washing machine than on hiding them away. The modern-ness of this is in comparison with both Western middle class homes pre-World War One where designs incorporated the domestic servants who undertook those tasks but in clearly separated

and controlled spaces (Roberts 1991), and with some middle class homes in South Africa where this is still the case. The theme of openness thus relies on boundaries between the kitchen and other areas being collapsed: "Instead of being a unit compartmentalized into sub-units each with a specific function, [the design] turns living, dining and cooking areas into a continuous semi-differentiated space" (Corrigan 1997:109), and it is therefore associated with more communication and interaction between family members and when visitors are present as well as enabling supervision of children while working in the kitchen.

In the Victoria Palms section - where Monex built smaller and more compact houses than in the part developed by Ilco Homes - most kitchens have so-called flyover shelves above the kitchen counter separating the kitchen from the living room. The smaller kitchens need all the storage space possible. A few houses do have separate kitchens altogether, where cooking smells and activities can be hidden behind a closed door, but these are often the result of an intervention in the building process by the buyers.

Abdul and Soraya Noordien (both 36) moved from Bonteheuwel to Summer Greens in 1992. Abdul works as a car salesman in Salt River, while Soraya teaches at the local crèche in Summer Greens. Their two sons are aged 10 and 13. Abdul and Soraya both grew up in Bonteheuwel and after their marriage in 1986 rented a room in a council house occupied by Abdul's maternal grandparents who had looked after him since birth because his mother was ill. She died of asthma when Abdul was 10 years old. After the birth of their second child, Abdul and Soraya decided to buy their own house:

> It was cheap to rent there, we paid about 150 rands a month. So if we had stayed there we could have saved and bought this house [in Summer Greens] cash by now, but you can't stay there forever. It was time to move on and get our own place. We didn't want to live in one room with a whole family.

The original design of the house they bought had the open-plan layout, but Soraya insisted on a re-design in which the kitchen was a totally separate space from the living room. Abdul joked that "it's so none of our guests can see her make mistakes with the food", but Soraya just wanted to be able to close off the kitchen as a workspace: "I don't like visitors sitting there while I'm busy in the kitchen". In the gendered landscape of the

household, the kitchen is her domain, as it had been in their previous home in Bonteheuwel.

On the other hand, Frank and Julia Rodgers, who bought their home in 1991 with a separate kitchen, have recently knocked down the dividing wall and converted the layout to open-plan, wanting openness and communication between the kitchen and the living room. They are both in their early 40s, coloured, hold full time jobs, and have two teenage children. They moved from Muizenberg, primarily to lessen the journey to work for Frank who works in the city council's disaster management committee, but also because Julia had always wanted to live in the northern suburbs of Cape Town: "they are much cleaner than the southern suburbs". Standing in their carefully cultivated garden, Frank said that although the renovations were disruptive and time-consuming, they made a "real difference" to the light and to the impression of the house.

The kitchen area in most houses is quite small and narrow. John and Heidi Petersen have moved their fridge to a corner of the living room to give themselves a little more space. In Patricia's home, her kettle and cooking utensils stand on a chest of drawers within reach only if she stretches into the living room across the kitchen counter. Although the kitchen area functions as a space for cooking and cleaning, it also frequently serves as an office space where a small pile of domestic bills and important letters are kept to one side. This is also where keys and handbags are put, and often where the telephone is placed. The developers installed a single telephone connection point at the kitchen counter, but many residents have defied this directive as to the appropriate (central) space for telephones and attached an extension cord that allows them to carry the telephone through to bedrooms for more private conversations. The open-plan kitchens are hardly private spaces for either telephone conversations or receiving visitors; they are generally too small even to have a separate table to sit at - the one side of the counter has bar stools for seating, but with cupboards underneath there is little leg room and I rarely saw people sit there for long periods. To some extent the open-plan layout compensates for these problems in its encouragement of continuous interaction between people in the kitchen and living room. Yet, as Soraya suggested, openness to the kitchen may create feelings of

embarrassment, if any mess in the kitchen belies the proper "presentation of self" (Goffman 1959).

Visitors are received in the living room (quite literally, given the position of the front door). The living room area is thus the most public room; it is the cultural main stage of house (Goffman 1959; Gullestad 1984) and is decorated according to rules derived from the fact that this is where residents try to show themselves as they wish their visitors to see them. This is where they place what they consider to be their best (and probably most expensive) furniture and display many of their ornaments, and they often put more effort into keeping it clean and tidy than other, more private, rooms, failing which they apologise profusely to the visitor. A respectable status is seen as resting in no small part on housekeeping (Roberts 1991; Meintjes 2000). But the living room is also the most 'public' or shared room for household members; this is where they relax together and only a limited amount of privacy can be expected there. A sketch of several living rooms in the suburb will show the importance of this particular room as a stage for display of both family and class identities.

Charleen (36) and Gregory (37) October and their three small children moved from Ruyterwacht in 1994. Gregory's position in the police force at the time provided them with accommodation there, but Charleen found that Ruyterwacht, a historically white, working class area, was "too racist if you're coloured like us", and they decided to move. Moreover, uncertainty in the police force at the time meant that they could not be sure of continued housing: "The police didn't want to sell the house to us, so we thought, well, we can't stay here forever, we've got to make a move now and buy our own place". Within a month of taking the decision to move, they were settling into their new home in Summer Greens. "We just fell in love with it", said Gregory. The children say that their favourite room in the house is the living room; they call it the "family room".

Like most residents, Gregory and Charleen October have divided their living room area into "zones" (Gullestad 1993:137). The lounge suite arranged around a low coffee table is one such zone. The suite consists of a big two seater sofa and two matching armchairs, all

in artificial black leather and all symmetrically arranged. Completing the square zone is a tall wall unit of cupboards and shelves, at the centre of which is the TV set and a hi-fi above with CDs stacked alongside it. Several shelves hold photographs of the family on holiday or during proud moments of educational achievement, such as the three young children with class awards or Gregory with his degree and training certificates. There is also a shelf with small trophies won by the children. Like most members of the New Apostolic Church, they also have two A4 size photographs of church leaders, one of the District Apostle and one of the Chief Apostle, standing on a shelf. Another shelf has a small collection of books on law and personnel management, religious issues and neatly stacked past copies of the church magazine. One of the cupboards holds some of the china crockery which is used only on special occasions. On top of the wall unit and on a small table in a corner are green plants with doilies underneath. The remaining walls are painted a cream colour and the long curtains are a light peach colour. Another zone contains a wooden dining table with six chairs and a side cabinet with a tall thin palm tree on it. The table is normally covered in a white table cloth with a doily and a vase on top. Sometimes there are flowers in the vase but not always. Charleen likes the flowers to match the peach-coloured curtains. For meals, the white table cloth is covered by another table cloth with floral prints. Several times a month, Charleen and Gregory's family come from Elsie's River for Sunday lunch, and the dining table is extended to accommodate the visitors. The only picture on the wall of the entire living/dining room area hangs above the side cabinet; it is a reprint of a painting of a horse and cart moving carefully through a rugged rural landscape - a stark contrast to neat suburban domesticity.

The whole living room area is carpeted in a dark grey colour, which barely disguises dirt marks such as those left by children running in with wet boots. Gregory and Charleen are hoping to replace the carpet in the near future, possibly with tiles that are easier to maintain. Charleen is very conscientious about domestic hygiene, washing her curtains once a month and her carpets every other month. Her efforts suggest that her (and her husband's) ideas of propriety embody hard work around the house to keep it clean and tidy - and unlike other households in Summer Greens, the Octobers do not employ any outside domestic help (see Chapter Five). The emphasis on personal effort and

satisfaction echoes Meintjes' (2000) findings in her study of propriety through domestic hygiene in Soweto, Johannesburg.

Mervyn and Elizabeth Thompson recently replaced the carpet in their living room area with light grey tiles which, they said, are easier to clean. The area is similarly divided into zones, with a long glass-topped dining table that seats eight comprising one zone. The table normally stands against the wall but is pulled out for dinner parties. On the wall over the dining table is a large framed painting of a mountainous landscape with a stream trickling into the distance. The line between 'the dining zone' and 'the lounging zone' is marked on the one side with a special cabinet for the hi-fi and on the other by a 1-metre high ceramic pillar, decorated with a fruit design, glazed in dark red colours and holding a big green plant on top. The lounge suite is placed at an angle to the walls, around a coffee table. It is covered in light blue and grey cotton, sections of which have been torn a little by the cat. The coffee table is usually empty except for a small green plant on a table mat with quilted geese on it. Their wall unit has glass cupboards on most of the top half, behind which stands some glassware, a copper-cut of praying hands, a white ceramic statue of a Greek goddess, and a set of Encyclopedia Britannica. One shelf has a backdrop of old black and white photographs of family and friends, in front of which lie a multitude of knick-knacks gathered over the years. As in Charleen and Gregory's home, green plants hang over the top of the wall unit.

A final zone in the Thompson's living room area is to the side of the front door. Here stands a large wooden side cabinet - the same wood as used for the wall unit and the coffee table - covered in a long doily runner with a set of three small figurines in the middle and two green plants on one side. Next to the cabinet is a wooden prayer stand with a big bible laid out and opened (the Thompsons are Catholic). Light blue curtains match the walls which are an even lighter shade of blue, and the one picture hanging in the living room area is a reprint of an Impressionist-style painting, also in shades of blue.

The two cases so far suggest that wall units appear particularly important for the expression of family and class identity, but their significance lies not only in what people

choose to display in them; the presence of the wall units themselves indicates to all that people have the *space* to display. This is not the case for many of the smaller homes in Summer Greens, particularly in the Victoria Palms section, where living room areas are too confined to contain the mandatory lounge suite, coffee table and dining table as well as a wall unit. Some residents facing these constraints have chosen to decorate their walls with some of the items which they would normally have displayed in the wall unit, so that some walls are covered in photos and award certificates, mostly framed but some simply stuck directly onto the wall. Others keep their walls clear.

Patricia's living room comprises two small sofas and two arm chairs, a small dining table which also functions as a study desk for her adult son, a side cabinet, a chest of drawers, and a wall unit. As mentioned above, the chest of drawers holds kitchen equipment, both inside and on top. The side cabinet keeps her special crockery. The top is covered by a table runner and several doilies on which stands a large brass tray with an assortment of shiny brassware that Patricia has collected over the years. The items are used for display only. In 1999, money from the savings club to which she belongs (see Chapter Five) was spent on a wall unit for the living room. In the unit there is a shelf with a couple of so-called coffee table books stacked on one side and three other books with their front covers displayed rather than shelved, they are Nelson Mandela's autobiography, a book called Know Your Rights, and a dictionary. To begin with, Patricia had tumblers in the glass cupboards but since hosting a Tupperware party (see Chapter Four) she has replaced the tumblers with wine glasses. The floor is tiled except for a rug under the coffee table. She recently mounted a new collection of over 100 teaspoons on the wall above the chest of drawers. Otherwise her walls are empty. "It takes time to make a home the way I want it. I won't do things unless I've got the money to spend, so I haven't got round to putting much on the walls yet but I'll get there one day".

Her lounge suite is in wood with seats in plush dark red material - several homes in Summer Greens have this type of lounge suite, indeed it is fairly common in South Africa and sold in all major lower-priced furniture stores. In less affluent homes nationwide, a plastic cover on the material is retained to guard against dirt and stains (see, for example,

Yose 1999 and Meintjes 2000), but in Summer Greens it was always removed upon delivery, an action which served to distinguish Summer Greens in class terms. At the same time, the extensive use of doilies and other covers on furniture suggests a pursuit of transcendence, of making things last longer which in turn arguably reflect aspirations of family permanence and continuity (see Miller's 1994 study of consumption in Trinidad).

These examples suggest the role and importance of consumption as a constitutive aspect of class and identity in Summer Greens. Bourdieu (1986) offers a valuable approach to this issue: he has developed several of Veblen's (1925) ideas around consumption, and Weber's (1964) ideas on status, in his work on status distinctions, and his particular application of the concept of *habitus* - the life-world of a distinctive set of practices, attitudes and tastes (dispositions) which individuals use to shape their perception of social space - is useful in identifying what Turner (1988:66) calls a "cultural dimension" to social stratification. While the concept of *habitus* itself is not unproblematic (see Shields 1991; Longhurst & Savage 1996; Mackay 1997), as a bridging device between structure and agency and as an idea of socialised subjectivity, it draws our attention to the importance of consumption and lifestyle, the ensemble of cultural practices including home furnishing, dress, speaking, bodily dispositions, and dining protocol, in understanding class in contemporary society[48].

As well as an important stage for display, the living room is also an important stage for a specific form of consumption; household members and visitors can usually assess the significance of a drink or a meal by where and how it is consumed. It was certainly a good way for me to gauge the level of closeness I had achieved with the residents and to understand their changing perception of me, from stranger to friend. The first time I shared a meal with residents, they usually served it at the dining table but later, as our relationship became less formal and more social, they would serve the food on the

[48] In this respect, the idea is very similar to what Williams (1973) termed "structure of feeling", which refers to a self-conscious sense of place interwoven with shared meanings of the built environment and the practices identified above. However, while Williams' structure of feeling extends to conscious attitudes and feelings, the life-world discussed by Bourdieu operates at a subconscious level, its power generally resting in the unselfconscious, taken-for-granted patterns and contexts for everyday life (Jackson 1992; Knox 1995).

kitchen counter and we would all bring our plates to the soft chairs in the living room area. This, of course, requires a certain mastery of balancing plates in laps and cutting food without making a mess. The residents clearly enjoyed being able to place the empty plate on the coffee table and sit back after the meal to digest it. Comfort is the overall aim of dining in this space, although sometimes it was also in order to watch television while eating. As described in Chapter Two, some residents initially insisted on serving me tea in a cup and saucer while they themselves drank from a mug, but after a while we all drank from mugs. Allowing me and their close friends to see them drop the formality and protocol, which they believe constitutes appropriate middle class treatment of visitors (especially strangers), was an important indication of trust; they trusted that they would not be judged as 'being without class' even if they sidestepped formal middle class etiquette for a while. In these homes, we would all be back at the formal dining table and with cups and saucers, as soon as there were other visitors or on special occasions, although if there were more people than could be seated around the dining table, a new hierarchy was quickly devised - and firmly expressed - whereby guests were served at the dining table and household members (or old, close friends) were seated in the lounge suite, on bar stools or rickety garden chairs.

In a number of homes, the television set is not in the living room but in a bedroom, and in some houses there are TV sets in several bedrooms. In a few homes where spatial needs are less constrained by family size, there is a so-called "TV-room" where comfortable chairs are placed around the TV set as the main items of furniture in the room. Mervyn, Elizabeth and their 10-year-old daughter have three TV sets all linked up to satellite and cable TV. One sits behind the closed cupboard of the wall unit of the living room and is only used if visitors are there to watch. Another is in Mervyn and Elizabeth's bedroom together with a video recorder. The third set, also with a video recorder, is in a corner of a room which they refer to as both "the office" and "the TV room", depending on the activity taking place. The room has a desk in another corner with a computer on it and papers stacked in piles all around. There are files and folders on the floor under and around the desk and some are precariously balancing on a bookshelf mounted high on the wall. As described in Chapter Five, Mervyn works part-time from home in evenings as a

tax consultant alongside his day job as human resource manager for a large retail chain, and both he and Elizabeth work hard at running the Summer Greens Residents Association, dealing with its correspondence in the office (see also Chapter Seven). Amid the busy workspace, then, is a TV set and a big armchair set up, either for immediate relief from work or for the company of another household member. TV-watching in their household is fairly strictly controlled. In other homes, however, a TV set seems to be on all the time somewhere in the house, whether people are watching, listening or ignoring. By all accounts and observations, movies, soaps, sit-coms, dramas and nature documentaries are among the favourite programmes of residents in the households interviewed.

From 'reading' the layout and contents of residents' living rooms, especially, it is possible to get an idea of the family and class identities which particular households wish to nurture among themselves as well as present to the public. Besides the open-plan layout being valued as modern, the hard and polished surfaces signal tidiness and cleanliness, the plushy coverings and soft colours suggest comfortable living, the symmetrically arranged ensembles of furniture and ornaments express a desire for orderliness, the green plants infer a domestication of nature and give the impression of 'green fingers', and religious piety is conveyed in books, pictures and ornaments on display. Intellectualism is not a quality that is manifest in many living rooms where books, and even newspapers, are generally conspicuous by their absence. Some residents do, however, have bookshelves in their bedrooms or in rooms that function as offices. There are of course exceptions to this such as homes with several small children, where toys and children's books and clothes are sometimes scattered around. But this does not depreciate the general conviction that a clean and tidy home is a sign of decent, virtuous and respectable people.

The presence of particular furniture, or consumer durables generally, does not in itself reveal whether the items have been purchased outright or obtained through hire-purchase arrangements. I asked 46 residents whether they had bought any furniture through hire-purchase. Of these, 48% said yes. Around half of them are still paying the required

monthly instalments. The other 52% said, like Patricia, that they will only buy things when they have the available cash. For some this is a real source of pride and status: they made a point of telling me that everything in their house "is paid for in cash", adding further support to the argument in Chapter Five that saving, providence and thrift are values which residents associate with propriety (see Miller 1994 for a similar finding). One resident went a step further and said that when paying by cash many stores "throw in something extra in the deal", for example a small electrical appliance or a cellphone. Such incentives are unlikely to provide the central motivation for a purchase but they may influence a decision to head for one store rather than another to make a purchase.

While much of the furniture in living room areas appears to be fairly new (it is after all the main room that visitors will see), furniture in bedrooms is a mix of old and new. Bedrooms in a number of homes contain big old dark wardrobes, beds and dressing tables, some inherited, some brought from their previous home; they stand in stark contrast to the new furniture in their living room, light in weight and light in wood. Houses have between two and four bedrooms. In most houses, people use the bedrooms as the architects have designed them (cf. Gullestad 1984), namely, one that is slightly larger, referred to by developers and estate agents as the 'master bedroom', used by the parent(s) or adult(s) in the home. The rest are used as bedrooms for children where necessary. These rooms are smaller than the 'master bedroom', some by a little, some by a lot - some rooms can barely house a double bed. But individual bedrooms allow for privacy for as many household members as there are bedrooms. Comparing it to their previous place of residence, several residents stated that they, as adults, had had their own bedroom, yet their children had often shared bedrooms (in one case, also beds). In Summer Greens, therefore, being able to offer a separate bedroom to each child is seen as important, particularly as children grow older. Wendy Parker's 11-year-old son had been sharing a room with his younger brother but he really "needed his own space" so they cleared out the spare bedroom for him. Other parents have also separated their children into different rooms once they reached the age of ten or so, especially if the siblings are of both sexes. This suggests the existence of a moral geography in the homes based on powerful ideas of privacy and propriety: as Crang (1998:29) writes, "judgements about

morality and sexuality are written into the fabric of [such houses] through the creation of private spaces".

The privacy that is sought in the home is clearly not only that of the individual house in relation to the street, but also the privacy of the individual members within the house (Roberts 1991). For general privacy, household members can usually withdraw to private bedrooms, even locking the door to stop snooping parents or bothersome siblings. In one case parents locked their bedroom in which the telephone was placed to stop a young daughter from calling her friends and running up a large phone bill. In terms of activity, however, the most private of rooms remains the bathroom. In some homes it is the only door which can be locked. In terms of access, the bathroom may be considered semi-private in that strangers may use the facility but only with permission. Household members daily negotiate access to this private space, especially in the morning and around bedtime, when demand is greatest. Sometimes people share the space, but they only do so with close intimates. Because of the extent to which this particular boundary of privacy is respected in most households, the bathroom (or the separate toilet) can also serve as a temporary refuge from demands; one resident admitted that sometimes she locks herself in the bathroom and simply pretends to be on the toilet "just to get a moment to myself".

While the attempt at orderliness through colour-coordination is a common feature throughout the interiors of most houses in Summer Greens, it is particularly prominent in bathrooms. In balance with the white enamel and tiles (suggesting hygiene and cleanliness) is a collection of bathroom articles in matching colours and materials. Aside from towels, these include floor mats, a toilet seat cover, a toilet cistern cover, a toilet roll holder cover, a cover for spare toilet rolls, a cover for the window sill, a cover for a box of tissues, and a matching cover for the waste basket. Some of these "coordinates" are commercially manufactured, but Anita sells sets of hand-quilted covers for a friend in Mitchell's Plain to some of the residents she comes into contact with through her sales of Tupperware products. Anita and her customers' desire to keep surfaces clean and dust-free (making items last longer - as discussed above) are reflected in their emphasis on

items which *cover*, but the covers are also applied to neutralise the clinical feel of the white surfaces. Moreover, the covers may also suggest that the bathroom and its customary, private activities are associated with a sense of embarrassment, and the pretty covers attempt to disguise the real purpose of the bathroom fixtures.

The décor in bathrooms might be considered to have had a "feminine" influence in terms of colours and patterns - pastels and florals are most common. The influence is similarly detectable in bedroom décor as well as certain features in the kitchen and living room, such as curtains that are tied back with a band. Men seem to respect these, at least to the extent that they do not object to tying them up as they are designed. The kitchen is chiefly a female domain; although a number of male residents both shop and cook, this appears to occur mainly when the women are unable to do so (e.g. if they are still at work - see also Chapter Five). The garage - where there is one - is generally a male domain. In the absence of a garage, the car remains a male realm in the driveway, and sometimes male residents potter with it or even simply sit inside listening to the radio to be on their own[49].

Investing personal (and gendered) meaning in the home through both maintenance and improvement activities enables residents to speak possessively about their home and its contents. Interestingly, women appear most expressive in ownership terms of the contents. On several occasions when I joined groups of women in their homes, they would speak of "my cupboards", "my tiles", "my curtains", "my kitchen", "my couch" etc.[50] When discussing the contents of the home, men more often than not referred to them with the definitive article 'the' or in other cases 'our'. In contrast, when speaking of the house itself, the positions were usually reversed whereby men spoke of 'my house' and women of 'our house'. This suggests that experiences of the home, of home ownership and different domestic spaces are indeed gendered (Corrigan 1997; Miller 1997), which may be explained by the fact that women often carry the main responsibility for housework and therefore "tend the important boundaries" *within* the home (Gullestad

[49] Several residents, both single and married, cannot drive and must therefore rely on their partners or public transport.
[50] Gullestad (1984, 1993) describes a similar case in her study of Norwegian women and their experiences of home although she does not compare them with men's experiences.

1993:152). Reviewing several studies, Corrigan (1997:112) found that, for women, the house is "the embodiment of the work they put into it through decoration and housework and the jobs they [take on] to pay the mortgage", whereas men regard the house more as a symbol of success and ownership. The gendered meanings of the home, and indeed home ownership, thus appear to be reflected in the different phrasing of remarks about the home and its contents.

6.4 HOME MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

When Ilco Homes (the first developer) initially sold properties in Summer Greens, each new owner was handed a Home Owners Manual which emphasised the status, importance and not least the responsibilities of home owners. The manual begins with the following declaration:

> Welcome to your new home. Apart from having just bought a new house built by Ilco Homes, you have also bought a *new way of life*. Whilst you may have to *adapt* to it we are sure you will be very happy in your new community. *Remember though*, that you are *now* a home owner. You have made an investment and it is up to you to *maintain* your investment (Ilco Homes 1991:3, emphasis added).

The manual ends 18 pages later with the following message under the heading "Life Investment":

> Your home is designed and built to bring you and your family *security* and happiness. Your *dedicated maintenance* will secure this and increase your and the whole neighbourhood's investment (*ibid.*:18, emphasis added).

Throughout the manual, Ilco Homes exhorts new owners to live up to their "new" responsibilities - implying not only that people are first-time home owners who need reminding about "maintaining your regular bond payment" (*ibid.*), but presumably also that they need re-socialisation into becoming respectable, suburban home owners.

The manual devotes page after page to instructions on cleanliness, hygiene and health, with not a little patronising and moralising thrown in for good measure. For example, having been reminded to clean their walls carefully, residents are instructed that "you can also reduce the need to clean frequently *if you can teach your children to keep their hands clean* and also not to dirty walls, doors etc." (*ibid.*:6, emphasis added). Or, "try to

vacuum [carpets] four to five times weekly e.g. daily in entrances and three times per week in bedrooms. Use an upright vacuum cleaner with good suction and agitation to retain appearance" (*ibid.*:7). Residents are also advised to rotate furniture periodically to avoid carpets looking more worn in some places than others. The "many suggestions and tips" (*ibid.*:3) from Ilco Homes thus indicate that, with a little help from the manual, propriety can be yours if you act appropriately.

The gendered domains discussed above are directly represented in the manual's drawings accompanying the advice on home maintenance and improvement. Several pictures portray a man (the husband) dressed in shorts and t-shirt with a clearly defined muscular upper body, a narrow waist and muscular thighs. In the pictures he is variously paving the garden, pushing the lawn-mower, or painting the exterior of the house. Outdoor work is his domain. Another drawing shows him wiping his brow and looking at a tray with a glass and a jug on it - a refreshing drink presumably served by his wife. She appears in only one of the outdoor drawings, where she is standing next to her husband who is mowing the lawn. She is dressed in a very short skirt and holds a garden hose. Her main duties are clearly inside the home. One picture shows her reprimanding the naughty child who comes into the house and puts his dirty hands on the wall. She looms large over the child, leaning forward in a reproachful manner with her hands on her hips. In another one she is on her knees in a very short, tight and low-cut dress, removing a stain from the carpet with a bucket next to her. She has big eyelashes around her sad eyes - she is obviously unhappy at having to clean up dirt marks left by irresponsible people.

The manual also reminds residents of their *collective* responsibility as home owners:

> Every house in your street contributes to an attractive street scene. Your house is as important as the next one in maintaining an attractive street. As home-owners, it is your and your neighbours' responsibility to maintain the standard of your neighbourhood. [It is] up to you to ensure that the new trees are not damaged and broken (*ibid.*:17).

Many residents have invested a substantial amount of time and money in maintaining and, especially, improving their home. While these activities have the immediate objective of increasing home comfort and consumption, they are - it seems - almost

equally motivated by several important corollaries from this, not least the belief that value is added to the property and thus to future security. This of course assumes that the area of Summer Greens does not deteriorate - and, as both the developer's manual and a number of residents suggested, one of the ways to avoid deterioration is for everyone to maintain and improve their property, in addition to engaging in "decent behaviour in public", as one resident put it, and respecting neighbours' privacy (see Chapter Four). Indeed, another considerable advantage of home improvement and renovations is that by engaging in these activities, people are able to draw out distinction (Bourdieu 1986; Gullestad 1993), and in so doing, define themselves as part of a particular social class which they believe is more reflective of their achievements in 'moving up' and bettering themselves.

The continued realisation of this requires maintenance work on the part of home owners. As the developer has reminded them: "You have made an investment and it is up to you to *maintain* your investment [...] family security and happiness [will be secured by] your dedicated *maintenance*" (Ilco Homes 1991:3+18, emphasis added). An entire industry is at the ready to assist home makers to engage in this practice, not just do-it-yourself stores, but a proliferation of home improvement programmes on television, for inspiration and instruction (Baum & Hassan 1999). Living next door to Montague Gardens, an industrial estate, and Century City, the adjacent shopping mall, residents have fairly easy access to shops and ware houses full of the necessary materials and tools.

Residents' motivation to improve and decorate their home has several dimensions: one relates to the desire to increase and personalise their current housing consumption, the other to increasing the future returns on their investment[51]. Residents appear greatly satisfied that both objectives can be achieved through a single activity. The anticipation of a higher property value, and thus, in theory, a higher re-sale value, is believed to

[51] In my research I discerned women placing slightly more emphasis on the increased comfort within the home, while men would stress the financial investment alongside, if not above, current comfort. However, the difference was too insignificant to draw any correlation between that and gender differences in the meaning of home ownership, as suggested by studies cited in Corrigan (1997).

justify the present expense. Mervyn Thompson (early 40s, human resource manager, married and a resident for eight years) explains:

> I keep my property nice, because I believe this is my investment, and I've got to...look, if I want to get out of here I can get a buyer quickly because I look after my house. Well actually, I don't just look after my house, I improve it, because it is my investment, and believe me, I'll get it all back - with profit. [note the use of the possessive "my" rather than "our".]

He (and his wife) are probably right to expect a return on their money: estate agents in the suburb confirm that residents who undertake home improvements and renovations see a higher annual increase in property values than those who do not.

Data on home improvement and renovation activity was collected from 31 houses, all of which were owner-occupied. The most common home improvement activity is putting in new cupboards. This is followed by changing the kitchen, which varies from complete renovation to repainting, to re-organising cupboard space, to putting up new lighting and curtains and adding domestic appliances (as shown in Chapter Three, Table 3.13, a high proportion of households had access to a washing machine (89%) and an oven (98%) but only 27% had a tumble dryer and 4% a dish washer). Replacing carpeting with ceramic tiles is very popular, although some lay down wooden floors instead of tiles. The following are also very common: adding a room, usually a bedroom, though some residents have added a small bathroom (and as mentioned in Chapter Four, most people choose to extend outwards rather than upwards); or merging two existing rooms by knocking down walls, usually between the kitchen and the living room (see example below); adding or extending a garage; painting walls (which often follows the fixing of exposed and unsightly cracks); redecorating the bathroom, which includes changing the colour scheme and replacing a plastic bath with a ceramic one; and paving sections of the garden. Some activities are directly aimed at improving the security of property and people, for example, building perimeter walls and installing a gate at the front of a property or a gate on the front door as well as burglar bars and, in some cases, razor wire lining the top of the walls (see also Chapter Four). These activities are of course in addition to the general upkeep of home and garden; the latter is concerned with

immediate maintenance, both of property, propriety and class status, while home improvement activities are a strategy of upward mobility.

The households undertaking the most improvement and renovation activities are generally the nuclear family households, which are still expanding as babies are born, or whose children are needing more space as they grow up, including their own rooms, more cupboard space, extra bathroom facilities etc. However, it is clear that all household types are engaged in these activities.

John and Heidi Petersen, both in their mid-30s and coloured, moved from Mowbray to Summer Greens three years ago. He is a purchasing manager for a large business, she an office worker, and they have a combined gross monthly income of approximately 10 000 rands. They have one young daughter. Since moving in, they have re-tiled the house and extended the living room into what they call a "conservatory" with French windows, which lead into the back garden. Here John has laid out bricks in a pattern on the ground of half the area leading to a brick wall with a *braai* inset, all built by John himself. They live in one of the smaller houses in Victoria Palms described above, whose living rooms are quite small: by incorporating part of the back yard into the conservatory, they have ensured that they can enjoy more indoor space and entertain visitors all year round, irrespective of the weather. They have also installed burglar bars and a front gate.

As mentioned earlier, Frank and Julia Rodgers have undertaken a range of home improvements since moving in in 1991. Theirs was one of a few houses in Summer Greens not built with the open-plan kitchen and living room area discussed above, and in 1999 they decided to knock down the wall between the two areas to "open it up" and allow more light in. In the process, they also redecorated both the kitchen and the bathroom. Earlier, they extended the garage to provide more storage space.

The Parker family have also installed French windows: Wendy describes her husband, Jeremy, as a real "handy-man" around the house, and he has put in glass-paned doors to lead from the living room into the back garden. Before that he put up cupboards, and

before that carpets were replaced by tiles. Their garden is larger than most in Summer Greens because their plot is on a bend. In November 2000, they were planning to install a small swimming pool for their three children before the following summer as well as set up a "proper entertainment area" outside with a tiled patio, a *braai* built into a side wall, and garden lights. They moved from Factreton four years ago. Wendy is a bank official, while Jeremy works for the municipality. Both classify themselves as coloured. They earn approximately 12 000 rands a month gross combined. Since buying their 3-bedroom house, they believe it has already increased in value by 45%, not least because of the improvements they have made.

Susan and Philip Parsons, together with their four dogs and three cats, moved to Summer Greens in 1992 and have spent a lot of time and money on their home, not least because they both work from home, he as a massage therapist, she as a seamstress. They moved from a flat in Kenilworth to gain more space as well as a garden. They have no children together, but Philip has a daughter from a previous relationship who lives with her mother elsewhere. They have built cupboards in their bedroom and the kitchen, they have changed the bathroom and installed a shower, they have added a small extra room between the house and the garage for Philip's therapy work, they have changed carpets and tiles twice, and they have put in new wooden doors which are heavier and darker than the original ones. Outside they have built a 2-meter high wall right round the front of their property, laid down a "proper lawn" and built a water feature. They have done it all themselves in their spare time, always "finishing off something over the weekend", even if it is just giving the letterbox a new coat of paint. This is in fact quite remarkable as Philip is blind, but with co-operation and patience they have managed to make these substantial improvements.

While the home improvements and renovations are partly aimed at increasing housing consumption as well as increasing the value of the investment, there appears to be an added motivation, more complex and sometimes less obvious. Home maintenance, improvement and renovation are also ways of investing both personal and collective meaning in the home. They address a combined need for personalised possession, family

unity, collective display and public solidarity. Corrigan (1997:110-111) argues that residents putting effort into these activities "see links among themselves" and they develop a "shared identity", not just as home owners but as important stakeholders in their local neighbourhood and, by extension, in broader society. The data from Summer Greens supports this argument: for example, when I joined residents visiting their neighbours, the opening topic of conversation would almost always be on aspects of the home: The visitor would notice something new and the two would exchange comments on the functional and aesthetic quality of the changes. It seemed to be expected that the visitor would compliment the owner, who in turn would have the opportunity to talk about what "we've done" and how "we've done it the way we want it".

However, the "links" were not always smooth: two neighbours almost engaged in a competition with each other over who had fixed up their house the most. John was showing off his conservatory and the patterned brick yard to Elizabeth, and for every effect that he pointed out, she would interject with an activity she and her husband had undertaken. But as John had the home advantage, she could only encourage him to visit her house as soon as possible and see for himself. The example suggests that central to the maintenance of solidarity among home owners is a subtle but significant rule. It arises from a combination of dynamics commonly associated with a suburban setting and can create a paradoxical situation: if you leave your home as you found it (or worse, allow it to deteriorate) you may be accused of un-neighbourliness and lowering the standards of the suburb. If on the other hand you renovate and decorate *too* much, you may be accused of competing for status and individualising *too* much. Thus, residents rely on a certain unspoken discipline. Unusual activities are often regarded as violating the suburban social code and residents have to negotiate the delicate boundary with care. The 'Joneses' may be a source of inspiration, but their activities can also be seen as passing judgement on what you have failed to do. In his study of consumption in Trinidad, Miller (1994:267) found that "a sense of class and status conflict" was driving a number of social practices and relationships:

> The homogeneity of the settlement means that most of its inhabitants come to feel that their own status and identity is bound up with that of the area itself. As such,

> neighbours are both competitors in differential house renovations, but also to be blamed if they fail to keep up the standards of the whole.

As argued above, home maintenance and improvement are fundamentally about constructing privacy, personal and public identity and familiarity. These central meanings of home revolve around the marking and safeguarding of boundaries. This activity might be usefully examined as a ritual exercise, as ongoing, repeated behaviour which arises from the dialectical interaction between the two sides of the boundary between, for example, the private and the public or the familiar and the strange. It appears to be a process which enables people to make themselves both *a* home and *at* home, as well as to defend themselves against the insecurity which they maintain characterises the world outside their home.

The findings suggest that home improvement and decoration activities are so much more than routine behaviour, performed for practical or instrumental purposes only. Rather, they communicate meaning, link people together and regulate social relations. By approaching these practices as rituals we may be able to grasp their symbolism and their capacity for restoring certainty, order, continuity and predictability (however temporary these might be). Whether articulated or not, abstract ideas of identity and belonging, or social status, or ontological security are made concrete in the physical changes to the home.

The ritual character is suggested in both the temporal and spatial dimensions of the activities. They usually begin on Saturday mornings for those who do not work a six day week[52], and they often take most of the weekend to complete. There can be major breaks, for example, going out Saturday evening or to church Sunday morning, which are often marked by a change in clothing. Some residents in fact have special clothes which they wear for home improvement activities: Susan has a sweatshirt with smudges of paint from previous work, John an old torn pair jeans, and Jeremy wears his worn shorts. Changing into them marks a transition from one state to another, from formality to

[52] As mentioned in Chapter Four, almost 40% of households interviewed have an adult working outside the home six days a week.

informality, from public to private. Wearing such clothes signals that residents are engaged in activities which often involve elements that they would not normally wish to be closely associated with, such as dirt, grease and paint marks - indeed, the clothes *excuse them* from being dressed more respectably, just as visitors pass less judgement on a messy room if the owners are in the process of improving it. The temporary withdrawal from everyday demands on the presentation of self into a special (ritual) time is thus marked by, and publicly accepted through, changing clothes and behaviour. The end of the ritual time is marked not only by a return to "normal clothing", but often also with a particular food activity, namely the *braai*, a barbecue meal which has its own highly gendered and ritualised elements (see Chapter Four). This is a time to celebrate the achievements of the weekend and plan for the next activity.

Rituals of home improvement embody, dramatise and express the symbolic meanings of home and home ownership. When these meanings are called into question, for example by fellow residents whose behaviour is perceived as deviant, ritual activity is likely to intensify in an effort to subdue the anxiety. Douglas' (1966) study of impurity explained how ideas of cleanliness and pollution come to the fore as ways of dividing and ordering when social boundaries are under threat. This is an intrinsically moral process, encouraged and sustained through rituals. Goffman (1959, 1963) similarly emphasises the role of ritual in structuring everyday life, from public 'front stages' to private 'back stages' (see Chapter Two). These studies remind us of the actual as well as the potential - if not central - role of ritual in defining and managing social relations and coping with uncertainty in everyday life.

As discussed above, the ways in which residents make their homes and make themselves at home in them - how they arrange, maintain, improve and, perhaps most importantly, personalise domestic space - suggest that the home serves as both a physical and a symbolic boundary between the personal life-world (private) and the danger and disorder of the outside world (public). To be 'at home' is to be at your ease. The home is a space in which residents can settle and nestle, express themselves physically and emotionally, show and enjoy affinity and intimacy, and nurture a sense of belonging. The boundary

between the private and the public space comes to signify social distance, and the "special ritual maintenance" (Appadurai 1995:205) required for this boundary is a way of defining and constructing social groups (cf. Gullestad 1993), especially when the lines of such relationships are threatened. As examples in this chapter have shown, investing precious time and money into altering the lived space of the home, into 'doing it up', is part of a broader process of defining and defending boundaries perceived to be under threat.

6.5 HOME OWNERSHIP AND THE MIDDLE CLASSES

In capitalist societies, home ownership is a potent symbol which has historically been the prerogative, indeed a key marker, of the middle (and upper) classes. And, as argued above, it is a status generally associated with higher levels of consumerism than other forms of housing tenure. However, the recent diffusion of home ownership to poorer classes in South African society suggests that it can no longer be regarded as a distinctive attribute of the middle class. Nonetheless, as Hamnett (1995) argues, while home ownership *per se* is no longer class specific, *what is owned* remains particularly important to the middle classes. While home ownership continues to be a positional good, an index of class position which demarcates the middle from the lower classes, the difference between the two lies in the fact that middle class home owners still dominate when it comes to plot sizes and property value. This means they are able to derive higher use value and financial gain from ownership than the lower classes (Hamnett 1995:272).

Moreover, it is argued (e.g. Bourdieu 1986; Hamnett 1995) that the home-owning middle classes can command a greater degree of social status and cultural distinction. The recognised status of home ownership and indeed the related activities of home making, home improvement and consumption enable owners to position themselves in the social hierarchy on a level where they are closer to those with similar economic and cultural capital and distance themselves from the materially less endowed sectors of society (Bourdieu 1986).

It may therefore be argued that, for the middle classes, home ownership remains an important part of class formation and reproduction, not least through the transmission of wealth across generations and through engendering powerful ideas of ownership (Perin 1977). Remarks by residents in Summer Greens testify to this: "We didn't just buy this house for ourselves, we bought it for our children too" (Charlton le Roux, 36, two small children); "Even if we move from here before we retire, or when we retire, it's an investment that will benefit our children when that time comes" (Attie du Toit, early 40s, two children). In other words, even though their children are still young, the parents speak of their property as an asset that will one day be handed over to their children. Moreover, on several occasions the issue of inheritance was discussed in relation to race and Apartheid. John Petersen recalls his parents' and his own frustration over how Apartheid curtailed the family estate:

> [The Apartheid government] created jobs and reserved them for whites, even unschooled whites. My father [coloured] who worked on the railways couldn't progress beyond a fitter and turner. He could never be a train conductor and couldn't earn anything near what whites were earning. [...] My father couldn't own property, he couldn't live here or there, and he worked himself to death. The whites had generations of privilege and wealth. It was hard on my parents because my father couldn't leave me 50 000 rands or whatever for the day I got married. White fathers could.

He believes the recent changes in South Africa have rendered his generation much better off, and he is sure that his daughter will benefit even more than he and his wife, because she is not only receiving "a good education at a private school" but she has a promise of financial security behind her in terms of the hard-earned savings and investments John and his wife Heidi intend to pass on to her one day.

Patricia's situation is somewhat more complex. Her adopted son, Danny, is 21 years old and works as a computer programmer. Patricia (54) is in the process of encouraging him to be a responsible home owner:

> I am training him bit by bit about the mortgage and appliances and so on. He must learn now because I won't be around forever. But I want him to have this house when I die. I've told him that because he's going to inherit the house he should help with alterations. And he should make them how he wants them because one day this will be his.

Her ailing husband is 75 years old. They are both coloured. They adopted Danny when he was 7. His biological mother is coloured and his biological father is African. "We brought him up coloured", says Patricia, but Danny has recently embarked on what Patricia calls an "africanisation process" which includes applying to change his surname from his present one, common among coloureds, to his biological father's name which is African. His other acts of "africanisation" include using Xhosa rather than Afrikaans or English greetings and drinking a milk that is popular among Africans. While Patricia's husband is very much against Danny's search for his African roots, declaring that "his roots are here with us", Patricia is more sympathetic but nonetheless perplexed. She has calmed down after her initial shock at opening the fridge and seeing "those milk cartons" but she is still wondering if the name change is such a good idea, not least because of the likelihood of a backlash from her extended (coloured) family; they have expressed outrage at the thought of family property being transferred to someone with an African name.

Thus, while the transfer of financial advantage to the next generation is a clear intention of the present generation of home owners, the spectre of Apartheid continues to haunt the process.

7. NEGOTIATING COMMUNITY: THE MARGINALISATION OF DIFFERENCE

'Community' is one of those elastic concepts, like 'culture' and 'development', commonly used in everyday conversation, yet lacking a comprehensive and analytically precise definition (Cohen 1985). It is also a "hurrah" term, always embodying "positive evaluation and evocation", whether it refers to "a togetherness of the past, contemporary behavioural commonality, political solidarity (ethnic, local, religious) or a utopian future (a rural idyll, a world order)" (Rapport & Irving 2000:65). Community, it seems, can mean almost anything to anybody, with the result that people, organisations and institutions with potentially very different agendas can feel safe under its banner, co-opting the term for their own ends. While academics debate the value of a concept with such murky meanings, there is no doubt that community is a potent force in the popular imagination, where it exists as "an obtainable expectation [...] almost as a right of citizenship" (Stevenson 1999:216). The appeal is to its dynamic, the danger is in its vagueness - and in this elasticity lie the seeds of tension around its meaning.

As argued in Chapter Two, communities are derived from the relational nature of social boundaries. They thus exist in relation, or opposition to, each other. People endow boundaries with meaning, but there is no guarantee that the meaning is consistent among people within or on either side of the boundary; it may vary significantly. In fact, what some perceive as a boundary "may be utterly imperceptible to others" (Cohen 1985:13). Consequently, "communities and their boundaries exist essentially not as social-structural systems and institutions but as worlds of meaning in the minds of their members" (Rapport & Irving 2000:62), and given the possible divergence in meanings, "the consciousness of community has to be kept alive through manipulation of its symbols" (Cohen 1985:15). This chapter will address several of the symbols of community in Summer Greens. The symbolic construction of community in the suburb is the process whereby a shared body of symbols is believed to be able to define and give meaning to its boundaries, to the identities embodied in those boundaries, and to a sense of belonging; "the reality of community lies in its members' perception of the vitality of its culture.

People construct community symbolically, making it a resource and repository of meaning, and a referent of their identity" (Cohen 1985:118).

Earlier chapters have suggested how Summer Greens residents use the term 'community' to convey several different ideas. The most common is as a loose reference to the larger body of residents within the suburb's perimeter wall, that is, to a bounded group, but closely related to that - in fact, the two usages are difficult to separate - are expectations and experiences of everyday acts of neighbouring and fellowship. In other words, community in these usages has both a spatial/territorial and a social meaning, which grow out of, and are expressed in, residents' experiences of Summer Greens as a place. The two meanings are frequently conflated; when residents speak about "building a community in Summer Greens", they generally mean increasing the level and frequency of social interaction among residents, particularly in public spaces within the physical boundaries of the suburb[53]. A major problem for residents has been the very lack of public spaces in which residents of all ages can come together. From such public interaction, it is believed that a range of practical benefits will flow to all residents, including improved physical security (more "eyes on the street"), better returns on property investments and happier, healthier residents. These benefits are closely related to more ideological qualities, such as a sense of belonging and an attachment to place that is bound up in a group identity around which residents can organise their daily lives as well as collectively defend themselves against threats to their position. Indeed, these are the underlying but only half-fulfilled promises of the streetscape in Summer Greens, as public open spaces have given way to private housing and as lifestyles have become increasingly privatised and disengaged from public matters (cf. Chapter Four).

Championing the cause of community in its broad sense is the Summer Greens Residents Association. As the largest representative body in the suburb, it identifies itself both in

[53] Communities may of course exist and develop without being territorially 'fixed', as in the case of electronically based 'virtual communities' on the Internet (Sassen 1997). Yet, realising the practical, ideological and symbolic meanings of community in a neighbourhood is considered to be easier when there is a physical space around which activities and relationships can be organised (Crow & Allan 1994; Massey & Jess 1995).

speech and correspondence as "we, the community" and considers that is advocates and protects the interests of all 5500 residents. However, in its role of defining "the community", the association also usurps the ability to exclude, or at least control, people whose behaviour the majority see as detrimental to the general well-being of "the community", whether the perceived offenders are outsiders or in fact members of the body of residents. An active commitment to the betterment of the residential environment can thus become an act of homogenising residents and of alienating and excluding those who are considered less qualified to belong to "the community", as the majority defines it (Knox 1995).

Besides the widespread definition of community as a generally homogenous entity, residents also use the term to refer to a "special-interest group" (Suttles 1972) within the broader body of residents. A group of Muslim residents, for example, have officially organised themselves with the aim of securing and managing resources, particularly space, for the local practice of their faith; at the time of research, the Summer Greens Islamic Association had approximately 250 members (less than 5% of the 5500 residents in the suburb. The interests of this constituency do not extend beyond those clearly identifiable as serving their religious purpose. The association defines itself, in both verbal and written communication, as "we, the Muslim community of Summer Greens".

Both identifications of community - the broad 'Summer Greens community' and the more narrowly defined "Muslim community" - rely not only on self-ascription but also on the boundaries being drawn by others. The first process, identification with a named group, takes place inside the boundary, while the second is rather a social categorisation, one that occurs from outside the purported community and across its boundary. This analytical distinction is significant in that it may expose "the relative power relations upon which the categorisation especially depends" (Donnan & Wilson 1999:25). As this chapter will show, external structures such as local government and the developers have played an important role in shaping boundaries of community in Summer Greens, as they have negotiated the demands of the two associations. Among the residents, tension and ambivalence have characterised those very same boundaries.

Two stories follow which detail the competing claims. The first analyses a temporary victory by the Residents Association in 1995 to keep houses off a vacant piece of land by arguing that the land was sorely needed for community facilities, as indeed the developer, Ilco Homes, had originally stated in its application to develop the suburb. This is a relatively simple, yet illustrative, case of local protest over land use zoning and development that primarily serve a corporate profit motive at the expense of clearly identified community needs. The second case, which began in 1997, is more complex: different and competing community needs were asserted by residents themselves, and the religious nature of one set of demands soon cast the controversy in terms of religious prejudice. These residents too had to contend with the developer wanting the same land for houses. The dispute thus became not simply a matter of prioritising different demands but of thwarting competing claims. Manipulation, deception, bribery and back-stabbing were employed to this end. Intricate deals were struck between parties only to be broken as new information and scenarios emerged. After four years of controversy, the current situation is a compromise which favours the Residents Association, with the Islamic Association's requirements being accommodated outside the suburb.

The controversy highlights the divergent and changing definitions of community as well as prejudice that have emerged during the disputes. The chapter discusses the organisational dynamics of the community bodies involved in the dispute, raising questions of power and resistance as well as representation and participation. Who legitimately constitutes and represents the community? Who determines its needs and what these needs are at a given time? Who determines how divergent community needs should be prioritised and/or reconciled with the developer's need for profit and the municipality's obligations to each party as well as to the broader public interest? And who defines the 'broader public interest'? While the demands of both associations have been partially met, a sense of betrayal lingers in the minds of many residents. The analysis elaborates the different ways that residents have responded to the feeling of having been let down by all parties: the municipality, the developers, and - most importantly - their fellow residents.

The two cases are presented in some detail to convey the complex and earnest struggle of residents to claim group identities and their associated perceived entitlements: to manage the bureaucratic and time-consuming yet crucially important minute-keeping and correspondence activities, the countless and tiring meetings at the end of a working day, the excitement as a favourable solution appears within reach, and the disappointment when once again the matter has twisted and turned in unexpected ways. These are core ingredients in the process of practising community (Halperin 1998) and of negotiating community boundaries and the identities embodied therein.

7.1 COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION

Since the early days of Summer Greens, two residents' organisations have emerged to serve the interests of their members. The following section introduces the two bodies, broaching some of the particular circumstances and group dynamics which have shaped the negotiations over land and facilities.

7.1.1 The Summer Greens Residents Association

Minutes from a Council Meeting of Milnerton Municipality in February 1992 read that the developer, Ilco Homes, should initiate the formation of a "Home Owners Association" in Summer Greens to enable residents "to have control over the harmony and colour scheme of buildings erected, and over amenities, and for the promotion, advancement and protection of the communal interests of its members generally"[54].

An acting committee of the Summer Greens Residents Association was indeed formed in November 1992, approximately a year after the first residents moved into the suburb. The formation was primarily prompted by dissatisfaction with the quality of housing and workmanship of Ilco Homes and by demands for building defects to be rectified, rather than by a desire to control colours of buildings, yet the focus soon broadened to the provision of public recreational facilities and adequate public transport, both of which were promised by the developer but not delivered, as well as the establishment of a

[54] Minutes of Council Meeting, 6 February 1992, File 16/3/2/4 Part 8.

neighbourhood watch scheme. Over the years, the association's goals have also included aims such as "get area tidy and green" as well as more nebulous objectives such as "invoke community pride"[55].

In March 1993, the association was officially constituted at a public meeting of 55 residents, who adopted a constitution which specified its main objective as being "to promote and safeguard the interests of the Ratepayers, Occupiers and Residents of Summer Greens, but shall exclude matters of Politics or Religion". It defined its membership as "all property owners and legal tenants residing in Summer Greens"[56], in other words, not exclusively home owners nor indeed merely residents who pay the annual membership fee. While the official name is the "Summer Greens Residents Association", people commonly refer to it in everyday conversation as "the ratepayers association", or less frequently, "the home owners association". Correspondence from the municipality and the developers switches between all three names. The official name may thus be inclusive of all residents irrespective of tenure (approximately 80% of homes are owner-occupied and 20% are privately rented), but in practice it seems to focus more exclusively on property owners who pay their rates. Indeed, home owners have always served on the committees, and much of the association's business is phrased in terms of what "we, as ratepayers" and "we, as owners" are entitled to from the municipality and the developer respectively. A perusal of attendance registers at public meetings shows that almost everyone is an owner. Nonetheless, the body claims to, and is constituted to, represent every single legal resident in the suburb. Elections take place at the Annual General Meeting.

Although the association does not have an official stamp or logo, its correspondence frequently carries two of four different drawings (computer clipart); two of them depict - in two different designs - what looks like a family, comprising a father, mother, son and daughter, standing in front of a detached house with a sun shining in the sky behind them.

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[55] Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee, Summer Greens Residents Association, 21 March 1995.
[56] "The Constitution of the Summer Greens Residents Association", 1993; Minutes of the SGRA Biennial General Meeting, 3 March 1993.

The third shows a landscape of mountain, sea, flowers and sunshine, while the fourth is a picture of a river running towards a setting sun, palm trees along the riverbed. Ideals of the nuclear family, the single-family, free-standing home, sunshine and tranquillity appear to inform the choice of symbolic depiction, reminders of what is assumed to be a collectively shared dream of a family-oriented, safe and happy residential environment.

Almost ten years after its foundation, the association's membership fee remains ten rands, for which residents can expect an elected committee to provide information and consult on important matters affecting residents in the suburb. Unfortunately, each year has seen fewer than 70 families paying their dues, which means that newsletters, for example, have been discontinued due to lack of funds. Committee members have generally - and willingly - covered expenses for communication and transport out of their own pockets.

While the association's records show that the size of the committee has varied between six and ten members, they also reveal that in the early years, more women served on the committee than in recent years; until late 1996 women comprised three out of eight committee members and indeed for several years both positions of chairperson and secretary were held by women. Inasmuch as the decrease was due to changing personal circumstances, minutes of committee meetings in the early years reveal tension between several committee members over how the organisation should be run and how power should be distributed among committee members. The records suggest that the tension caused several of the women to decline invitations to stand for re-election. Since then only one woman has served on the committee. The treasurer's position has always been held by a man. The majority of committee members over the years have been coloured, with two Africans and two whites serving at various times. During 1999 and 2000, the committee consisted of a compositor, an artisan, a policeman, a lawyer, and seven people who work in managerial positions (one in human resources, one in council administration, one in computing, one in correctional services, three in retail). When appropriate, certain members offer their skills and access to information for the work of the committee, and by extension for the good of the public it serves; for example, the policeman has had useful contacts in connection with criminal incidents involving local

youths, the council administrator has brought copies of legislation on, for example, informal trading from work, and the lawyer has checked on several legal matters for the committee.

The longest serving member is a man who has worked his way "up the ranks", as he calls it, starting out in 1995 as vice-chairperson, becoming secretary in 1996, and by 1999 he was Chairperson of the association, a position he still holds. Over the years, Mervyn Thompson (a human resource manager in his 40s, coloured-Indian) has put an enormous amount of work into the association, "making friends and enemies in the process": he has been punched by an angry barman at the local pub for allegedly checking on the ages of young patrons; he has threatened to sue a former committee member whom he suspects received money from Monex to support her 1996 local election campaign in return for backing Monex in land negotiations; and he himself has been threatened with a restraining order from Monex for causing a fracas in their offices. As will be described below, his relationship with the Chairperson of the Islamic Association has been strained, to say the least. His efforts as a committee member have included setting up a local football team, the "Summer Greens United Football Club", but, due to a lack of facilities in Summer Greens, the team had to rent football fields in the neighbouring suburbs which eventually became too expensive; the club folded in 1998. Mervyn hopes to resurrect the club once facilities become available in Summer Greens. However, according to Lungile, a 20-year-old African resident and former player, Mervyn apparently "broke the club" by increasingly selecting coloured rather than African players and by bringing in coloured players from outside Summer Greens, from as far away as Mitchell's Plain. "The team spirit just faded", lamented Lungile, continuing that "if the club is going to start again, it must be for all of us here in Summer Greens, but just us, not anyone from outside. We've got enough good players here". Mervyn Thompson's activities for the association have earned him the respect of many residents but have also caused him to lose the sympathies of those irked by what they regard as an authoritarian style of leadership (see below).

Since its inception in 1992, the Summer Greens Residents Association has fought for "community facilities", such as a hall or some form of indoor and outdoor recreation and

sports areas. Despite the developers' repeated promises of these, none materialised until construction of a hall finally began early in 2001. For almost ten years, residents have had no proper place to meet for communal purposes, be they social, political, religious or cultural. There has been no local public venue which has lent itself to convenient public or citizen participation in decisions affecting residents. Community groups, including the Residents Association and the Islamic Association, have led a nomadic existence, moving meetings from one private home to another. There has been no permanent facility in which to keep community records and communications, which have generally moved with each new secretary being elected to the committees, and files have got lost in the process.

Studies of other residents associations note how a public meeting room is likely to provide a more neutral and formal space for community business than a resident's living room, where private space temporarily becomes the site of public gathering and debate (e.g. Rodman 1993; Halperin 1998). Not only can a meeting be an imposition on the host, who then feels the need to clean and prepare the living room and to request other household members not to disturb the meeting, the private venue may also create a reluctance on the part of committee members to challenge the actions and opinions of the host. A public meeting room is considered a more egalitarian space in which committee members can raise contentious issues.

Since Mervyn Thompson became Chairperson in 1999, the practice of rotating meetings among members appears to have ceased; almost all committee meetings have been held at his house. Reading between the lines of committee minutes, his assertive personality had always dominated meetings, even before he became Chairperson, but my own observations from attendance during 1999 and 2000 suggest that his powerful personality is reinforced by his acting as host. Moreover, his wife, Elizabeth, joined the committee in 1999 (as the only woman), making the two of them a formidable team for the remaining committee members to engage with. Both have ample experience of "committee work", as they call it, from trade union activity in the 1970s and 1980s, to residents associations in various areas in the 1980s and 1990s. She is perceptive and pragmatic; often it is she

who defuses tension between members and who keeps the meeting focused. When the elected secretary resigned mid-term due to work pressures, Mervyn took over the portfolio but asked Elizabeth to "do the minutes", to which she replied, "That's so typical". Reluctantly, she agreed to take minutes. Mervyn is a commanding speaker and often launches into long (and repetitive) lectures about dedication and motivation to "build the Summer Greens community" and "bring Summer Greens back to the people" (i.e. take control of its affairs away from the municipality or the developer). Sometimes Elizabeth politely reminds him of the agenda, sometimes one or two members fall asleep. He cleverly uses humour to deflect ideas which he considers irrelevant, but usually he is sharp in his replies to suggestions from other members which counter his own. At one meeting, a member walked out, distressed by Mervyn's unilateral decision to rearrange the agenda. A community hall with a public meeting room might help to shift the power dynamics of the committee, although Mervyn's tireless work for the association will no doubt continue to abet his authority as well as the respect which he deservedly holds among the committee members.

Public meetings have so far been held mainly in halls in neighbouring suburbs, none of which are within walking distance, certainly not at night. Organisers usually blame low attendance on this, because residents are required to travel by private transport - there is no public transport out of Summer Greens in the evening. Use of these halls must of course be negotiated with other local community groups also needing facilities. A similar situation applies to sports facilities, a result of which was the above-mentioned fate of the Summer Greens United Football Club. Mervyn Thompson calls Summer Greens an "individual community", which both prefers and deserves to have facilities to use within its own area[57].

7.1.2 The Summer Greens Islamic Association

As we shall see below, a similar case has been put forward by Muslim residents in the suburb. Back in 1993, seven Muslim families established the Summer Greens Islamic

[57] Minutes of Meeting between the Residents Association, Monex and Blaauwberg Municipality, 3 November 1997.

Association for religious, educational and social purposes. By late 2000, there were between 80 and 100 Muslim families in the suburb, most of them linked to the association, which in turn is affiliated to the Muslim Judicial Council, a national body. A small executive committee is elected annually and meets every month, although at the height of negotiations over land in the suburb, meetings were as frequent as once a week. A founding member of the association, Abdul Noordien served as Chairperson for the first five years and then as secretary. He is a used-car salesman, often working long hours, and juggles his time between these two commitments and his positions as local National Party branch chairperson and as secretary of the governing body at the school in Bonteheuwel which his two children attend.

High on the Islamic Association's agenda has been the establishment of local facilities for worship and religious education. Parents run lift schemes for children who attend *madressah* in other suburbs, such as Goodwood, Bonteheuwel or Athlone, but they have also established a temporary *madressah* for 25-30 children within Summer Greens until another facility becomes available (see below). The school is run from a converted garage of one of the members. Although already a small and crowded space, the garage is partitioned in two to cater for different classes. Carpets have been laid down, and two teachers are paid by the association from funds that (as mentioned in Chapter Three) were until recently raised at a food stall outside the Seven-Eleven supermarket, until Seven-Eleven management (who own the shopping area) ordered them to stop because of the competition. The association obliged because, as Abdul Noordien said, it "did not want to make any trouble". Since then members have been thinking up other fundraising activities to cover expenses. Adults also use the garage for prayers, especially during Ramadan. At several times during the Muslim calendar year, the association joins Muslim gatherings outside the suburb for worship and fellowship.

Virtually all Summer Greens residents are aware of the association's existence; its food stall was centrally placed and popular, and the land disputes have generated public debate, either through the Summer Greens Residents Association or through the local "community newspaper", *Table Talk*, distributed free in the northern suburbs of Cape

Town (see also Chapter Three). The debate has further raised the profile of the Islamic Association.

Official letters from the association are framed by small drawings of a mosque with a minaret encapsulated by a crescent moon as a symbol of the Muslim faith, with the founding date of 1993 written under each drawing. They are headed with the words "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful" in Arabic and Roman script and stamped with the association's name and founding date. Whereas the symbols of the Summer Greens Residents Association suggest its general concern for the interests of families and homes, the symbols of the Islamic Association reiterate its particular religious constituency and purpose.

7.2 DEFINING THE COMMUNITY AND ITS NEEDS

As with all complete townscape designs, Ilco Homes had a specific target population in mind and a particular conceptualisation of its coherence *as a community* when it planned the development of Summer Greens. Based on the expected population size as well as presumed demographic and socio-economic characteristics, Ilco Homes decided on the activity needs (residential, educational, recreational, business, worship, etc.), using ratios such as 1 primary school per 800 dwelling units, 1 church per 600 dwelling units, or 1 small shopping area per 600 dwelling units. It then calculated the exact areas of land to be allocated to each activity and decided where to locate them, taking into consideration the conditions and constraints of particular pieces of land[58]. Sometimes, as Ilco Homes has itself admitted, the planning went wrong. For example, the planners knew that Summer Greens was prone to flooding due to insufficient storm-water drainage, yet they located a recreational/play area in one of the lowest-lying sections of Summer Greens on the western side. The municipality insisted that Ilco Homes take adequate measures to avoid flooding, but Ilco Homes failed to correct the problem, and at the time of research, the area was regularly waterlogged and unusable, much to the anger of residents. Complaints about the inadequate provision of adequate public recreational and sports facilities have been the most persistent item on the agenda of the Residents Association.

[58] "Summer Greens: Proposed Concept", Ilco Homes/Holdem, April 1987, File 16/3/2/4 Part 1.

The two cases presented below serve to illustrate the complex and controversial process of negotiating community in Summer Greens. They relate the practices of differentiation undertaken by residents in relation to local authorities and to the private developers, but also among residents themselves, as their claims to resources are based on distinctly different definitions of community.

7.2.1 Community Facilities or Housing Profits

The first major zoning dispute to arise in Summer Greens concerned a piece of undeveloped land (then known as Erf 2973, later as Erf 4925 - see Aerial Photo, page 21), which in the original, approved Township Layout was zoned in part for 'worship', 'a pre-primary school' and 'shops'. It is situated in what is now Victoria Palms, in the southern part of Summer Greens. When Ilco Homes came to develop the land in early 1994, it applied to Milnerton Municipality for the area to be rezoned as 'residential', arguing that sufficient land had already been allocated in other parts of the suburb to meet non-residential needs. At the same time, Ilco Homes asked for permission to build smaller houses at a higher density than in the rest of the suburb. The plan was to build 42 small single-storey one-bedroom houses situated around a central courtyard, the entire block enclosed by a high security wall to make the area more definable and controlled. Ilco Homes proposed plot sizes of around 76 m^2, plot widths of 3.8 metres, and an overall density of 85 units per hectare. It further intended to stipulate in title deeds that the houses may only be sold to "one-person families", couples with no children or elderly people[59]. The first three proposals flew in the face of building standards already agreed upon by Ilco Homes and Milnerton Municipality, while the last stipulation was questionable in terms of its constitutionality. Nonetheless, Ilco Homes argued that market demand for smaller and more affordable houses was "overwhelming", which justified the overturning of previous building codes[60]. There is little doubt, though, that the rezoning application was driven by the financial problems burdening the developer at the time (see Chapter One). Although Milnerton Municipality was open to such an innovative and

[59] "Motivation Report for Amendment of Portion of General Plan Block 8", Ilco Homes, April 1994; Letter to Milnerton Municipality from Ilco Homes, 9 June 1994. File 16/3/2/4 Part 14.
[60] "Motivation Report" *op.cit.*

"experimental integrated housing development", it was reluctant to approve of the proposal outright and deferred its decision until the public had been called on for comment; councillors were reminded that their function was "to ensure the good planning of a town and the well-being of its residents and to protect against factors which it [believed] could be harmful to them"[61].

The Summer Greens Residents Association called a General Meeting of residents in August 1994 to discuss the proposed development, after which it lodged an objection, claiming that facilities prescribed in the original plan were "sorely lacking in the community and to develop this land with housing units will only aggravate this situation", especially once the remaining areas of Summer Greens had been developed and sold. The association also conveyed that "there are residents who feel that the value of their properties will decline" if the proposal was approved. A petition of 111 signatures accompanied the objection (there were approximately 700 households in Summer Greens at the time)[62].

Ilco Homes' response was dismissive: "There is no point in providing land for facilities which the community feels it may or may not need"[63]. It pointed out that the existing shops in Summer Greens - situated in the shopping area with the Seven-Eleven supermarket - were struggling to survive, and that one of two other sites zoned for worship was still unsold. Moreover, Ilco Homes rejected residents' concerns over a possible decline in property values arguing firstly that the proposal represented less than 3% of the entire development to date in Summer Greens, and secondly, a decline was "an impossibility as the prices of the units are established by ourselves". Ilco Homes nonetheless admitted to "bad planning" in their original township layout, when they had allocated the land in question for the purposes of worship, education and shops[64].

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[61] Briefing Document for Council Meeting, 23 June 1994, C.216/6/94 File 16/3/2/4 Part 14.
[62] Letter from Summer Greens Residents Association to Milnerton Municipality, 25 August 1994, File 16/3/2/4 Part 15.
[63] Letter to Milnerton Municipality from Ilco Homes, 13 September 1994, File 16/3/2/4 Part 15.
[64] *Ibid.*

A further two months passed before a meeting was held between Ilco Homes and the Residents Association to discuss the proposal and objections. The association reported back to a public meeting in November at which it was agreed to uphold the objection. Annoyed at the costly delays arising from this, Ilco Homes implored Milnerton Municipality to overrule the residents' objection[65]. Four months later, however, the council rejected Ilco Homes' application on the grounds of public protest rather than town planning[66]. Ilco Homes immediately appealed the council's resolution to the Western Cape Provincial Administration, playing what it hoped to be its trump-card. It challenged the residents' petition, calculating that over 80% of the 111 signatories lived more than 700 metres away from the proposed development and could therefore not claim to be significantly disadvantaged. Moreover, Ilco Homes checked on the housing tenure of all the signatories and contended that three of them were tenants and should thus be disregarded, arguing that tenants had no personal property investment in the suburb. Finally, because several petitioners were from the same household, Ilco Homes maintained that only one signature per household should be accepted[67].

Although Ilco Homes repeated its earlier justification that it "clearly has a vested interest in not introducing housing types that will not be accepted by the market or will lead to the devaluation of other stock"[68], the Provincial Administration upheld the council's resolution, although not until a further eight months had passed. Ilco Homes had lost the right to replace community facilities with houses on the piece of land in question, and the residents had won the first major zoning dispute after almost two years of contention. But the victory was temporary as a little over a year later Erf 2973 again became embroiled in another zoning dispute.

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[65] Letter to Milnerton Municipality from Ilco Homes, 18 November 1994, File 16/3/2/4 Part 15.
[66] Minutes of Council Meeting, 14 March 1995, File 16/3/2/4 Part 16.
[67] Letter of Appeal to Western Cape Provincial Administration from Ilco Homes, 25 April 1995, File 16/3/2/4 Part 16.
[68] *Ibid.*

7.2.2 Public, Sectional and Corporate Interests

The second major controversy was sparked in March 1997 when the Summer Greens Islamic Association, which at the time represented approximately 50 Muslim families in the suburb, approached the developer to obtain the portion of Erf 2973 zoned for 'worship'. The intention was to build a mosque and a *madressah*, on the land. In a carefully worded reply, Monex - who had taken over Ilco Homes in 1996 (see Chapter One) - gave the impression that the land in question had in fact already been rezoned for residential purposes and was therefore not available[69]. The Islamic Association objected to the municipality (now called Blaauwberg Municipality) over the rezoning, claiming that "the Muslim community of the area was not consulted"[70]. Only then did the association discover that the land had in fact *not yet* been rezoned; Monex had applied for the rezoning in August 1996, but the council's decision was still pending[71]. It also transpired that parts of Erf 2973 and surrounding land had already been subdivided, so that the land sought by the Islamic Association was now known as Erf 4925. The Islamic Association charged Monex with deliberate misinformation and the municipality with failing to advertise the application[72]. The association further suspected certain members of the Summer Greens Residents Association of having known about the rezoning application yet omitting to notify the Islamic Association, despite being aware of the latter's interest in land for purposes of worship.

Suddenly several battle lines were drawn between the two residents associations, the developer, and the municipality. By the middle of June 1997, the story had reached the local press, much to the embarrassment of Monex and the municipality[73]. The Chairperson of the Islamic Association, Abdul Noordien, is quoted as saying that:

> We feel rejected. We came here to buy homes believing there would be an opportunity to conduct our daily lives as our faith dictates, and that we would be

[69] Letter to Summer Greens Islamic Association from Monex Homes, 4 April 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 16.
[70] Letter to Blaauwberg Municipality from Summer Greens Islamic Association, 12 May 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 19.
[71] Application for Rezoning Block 8, 6 August 1996, File 16/3/2/4 Part 18; Executive Committee Meeting of Town Planning, Blaauwberg Municipality, 21 January 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 19.
[72] Letter to Summer Greens Residents Association from Summer Greens Islamic Association, 18 June 1997.
[73] *Table Talk* 18 June 1997; Letter to Blaauwberg Municipality from Monex, 19 June 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 19.

> able to do it in the suburb we live in. It is important for Muslims to congregate in fellowship. It is part of our daily life. It is the essence of our faith (*Table Talk* 18/6/97).

He continued to emphasise the importance of local facilities for daily religious practice, suggesting that their absence was making Summer Greens a "sleep in" suburb, as Muslim families were forced to worship elsewhere in Cape Town. In fact, he implied that family life for Muslims was under threat as "our children are farmed out to family members where Islamic facilities are available", a situation apparently prompting some Muslim families to reconsider their residence in Summer Greens. The sense of difference, even separateness, of Muslim residents within the broader body of residents was revealed when the chairperson offered to share the facilities with other residents where possible; he argued that the local presence of such facilities would encourage more integration of Muslim and non-Muslim residents "so that we [Muslims] can really become part of the Summer Greens community" (*Table Talk* 18/6/97). As will be shown below, the Summer Greens Residents Association did not see this offer in a positive light.

At that time there was very little vacant or undeveloped land left in the suburb. The only other site zoned for worship - and as yet undeveloped (August 2001) - lies on Summer Greens Drive, at the entrance to Victoria Palms. Since August 1996, the Church of the Province of South Africa has held right of first refusal to purchase the site (Erf 4226), a right which both Monex and the church continue to consider non-negotiable[74]. Yet Monex had for some years been facing demands from the Summer Greens Residents Association, in theory representing all residents, for facilities such as a community hall and sports fields. Aside from Erf 4226 and Erf 4925, the area in which the Islamic Association expressed interest, there was a single large piece of land zoned for educational purposes (Erf 3299), situated on the eastern side of Summer Greens (see Aerial Photo, page 21). Following a study of schools in surrounding suburbs, the Provincial Department of Education offered to forfeit its right to develop Erf 3299, as it had found sufficient capacity in existing schools to meet the needs of children in Summer

[74] Letter to Church of the Province of South Africa from Monex, 27 August 1996, and internal memorandum of Monex, 20 March 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 19.

Greens[75]. Now Monex saw a chance to fill the land with houses and make an unexpected profit, but that would - again - require rezoning, which Monex knew would be opposed by both Muslim and non-Muslim residents, especially in the light of the ongoing struggle over Erf 4925. Monex needed to engage in some clever dealings to pacify the two residents associations. Buying support was its initial strategy.

The first deal proposed by Monex was an arrangement whereby they would pay the Islamic Association between 20 000 and 25 000 rands in return for support for Monex's application for rezoning of Erf 4925 from worship to residential (or at least not object to it) *as well as* support for an application for rezoning of Erf 3299 from educational to residential purpose *as well as* promise not to object to any other rezoning applications Monex might make in future. Monex suggested that the Islamic Association spent the money on obtaining a site for a mosque and *madressah* elsewhere in the vicinity of Summer Greens, and Monex promised to help the Islamic Association "free of charge" with basic design plans for the site[76].

Anticipating that the Islamic Association would accept the deal, Monex submitted its rezoning applications to the municipality and duly notified the Summer Greens Residents Association[77]. But the Islamic Association was determined to seek land in Summer Greens itself and consequently lodged its objection with the municipality. So did the Summer Greens Residents Association, asking for the rezoning to "be suspended pending the outcome of negotiations" between the Islamic Association and Monex[78]. To approach a solution, the municipality decided to address the issues of a mosque and a *madressah* separately from each other.

During several meetings with the Islamic Association the municipality stressed the probability that an application for a mosque within Summer Greens would be rejected

[75] "Investigation of the Provision of School Sites", Planning Partnership, July 1996, File 16/3/2/4 Part 18.
[76] Memorandum from Monex to Blaauwberg Municipality, 25 August 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.
[77] Letter and Notice to the Summer Greens Residents Association from Land Surveyors acting for Monex, 29 August 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.
[78] Letters to Blaauwberg Municipality from the Summer Greens Islamic Association, 23 September 1997, and from the Summer Greens Residents Association, 25 September 1997. File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.

because of its likely impact on local traffic, not least because of the suburb's single egress. The Islamic Association conceded that a Friday afternoon call to prayer (*athaan*) could bring up to 250 cars into Summer Greens. Public protest over raised noise levels associated with the worship was similarly of great concern to the municipality. As soon as the possibility of a mosque was raised in the local press, the municipality received 37 letters of objection, mainly from local residents and businesses but also from other suburbs in the north of Cape Town, even as far away as Sea Point on the other side of the city. Hence the municipality proposed that the parties rather identify an appropriate piece of land in Montague Gardens, the industrial estate across from Summer Greens, where "traffic congestion and noise pollution" would be less contentious. The chairperson of the Islamic Association, Abdul Noordien, later told me that he was almost relieved when the focus moved to land in Montague Gardens:

> The thing is, I can't guarantee the municipality that the worshippers won't park in the people's driveways, you know? So for me, there won't be the problem of parking or of standing outside to see that no one has parked in front of somebody's driveway, and we won't have the embarrassment of somebody coming in while we're busy praying and saying, 'Excuse me, somebody's parked in the driveway' and that type of thing. That would just cause a lot of resentment, and people in Summer Greens will just start saying we [Muslims] are causing trouble, and I don't want that.

From then on, negotiations around the mosque continued independently of the arguments over erven 4925 and 3299[79]. Monex breathed a sigh of relief that it was free of at least one obstacle. So did the Residents Association - and indeed many non-Muslim residents - who objected strongly to the idea of a mosque in the immediate vicinity of their homes, generally citing the same reasons as the municipality but often in less sympathetic terms. This issue will be revisited below.

Nonetheless, another long and costly battle over land within Summer Greens lay ahead. To address the issue of a *madressah*, Monex proposed a new deal whereby the Islamic Association could buy a small portion of Erf 3299 for the symbolic sum of one rand and construct a *madressah* thereon, the land already being zoned for educational purposes.

[79] Minutes of Meeting between Summer Greens Islamic Association, Monex and Blaauwberg Municipality, 13 October 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.

The Islamic Association was to return the favour by supporting Monex's rezoning applications for Erf 4925 and for the remainder of Erf 3299. Again anticipating the closure of the deal, Monex wrote to the municipality, urging them to move swiftly and approve the applications before any further trouble arose and, as always, reiterating the market demand for its houses and the costs it was incurring due to the delays[80].

When the Summer Greens Residents Association heard about the exclusive deals being proposed between the Islamic Association and Monex, a bitter argument broke out. In October 1997, the Islamic Association attended a committee meeting of the Residents Association to obtain support for the new deal, but a cordial atmosphere quickly deteriorated into a heated, hostile and personal argument between the chairperson of the Islamic Association, Abdul Noordien, and the then secretary of the Residents Association (later chairperson), Mervyn Thompson. The quarrel essentially revolved around who was more righteous in his demands and who had the stronger mandate from residents in the suburb. Personal differences were used to champion one view and discredit the other. As mentioned earlier, Abdul Noordien is the local National Party branch chairperson and a Muslim. Mervyn Thompson, on the other hand, is a strong Catholic and swings between supporting the African National Congress and dismissing all party politics as vain and ineffectual. In a by-election a few months earlier Mervyn had stood as an independent candidate but received only 31 out of 997 votes. Abdul and Mervyn classify themselves as coloured and coloured-Indian, respectively.

The row began when Mervyn implored the Residents Association not to support the deal, saying that for over four years he had been negotiating with Monex - and Ilco Homes before that - to obtain the site for public open space, sports and recreation facilities, if and when the Department of Education waived its right to the land. His mandate to pursue the negotiations came from "the Community" [*sic*]. He argued that Monex had "a responsibility to the Community to make land available [for facilities] and the

[80] *Ibid.*; Letter to Blaauwberg Municipality from Land Surveyors acting for Monex, 20 October 1997; Letter to Blaauwberg Municipality from Monex, 14 November 1997, File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.

municipality must enforce this"[81]. The future well-being of residents depended on this. He thought the deals between Monex and the Islamic Association were immoral and selfish, because the two parties did not care about the needs of the community, only about feathering their own nests.

Abdul reminded Mervyn that since Monex owned the land, it could technically dispose of the site as it wished. He regarded the main difference between the demands of the two associations as being, on the one hand, that the Islamic Association was asking for less land which meant that Monex could still generate profit from the remaining land, and, on the other, that until then the association had been forced to run its *madressah* from a member's garage, which was unacceptable; the space was inadequate for the worship and education activities required by members for the practice of their faith. (It may be added here that a small congregation of about 25 people of the Christian Pentecostal church, Assemblies of God, also met in a member's garage until they negotiated the use of a room in the Kidz Buzz crèche in early 2000). When Abdul said that he had the support of a National Party provincial minister, Mervyn replied that Abdul could intimidate and scare Monex, the municipality and "everyone else" but that he did not scare Mervyn, for he was only scared of "the MAN above, the Almighty God" [*sic*]. Abdul then boasted of his close relationship with Monex and the municipality, saying that he could arrange a meeting with them "in five minutes", and he added that if Mervyn was not aware of how Monex worked, he should ask the company to clarify its position. Mervyn retorted that he could handle his own business and did not need Abdul's advice.

By this stage, other committee members tried to mediate between the two, expressing their discomfort at how the meeting was developing and reminding the two antagonists that this was not a personal battle and that they were each working for a committee and not on their own. They understood that Mervyn had been struggling for the past four years and not obtained "anything from Monex", and that Abdul in a short period of time had managed to organise land for a *madressah*. While this reality might seem unfair, they suggested that Abdul should use his favourable relations with Monex to "get things for

[81] Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee, Summer Greens Residents Association, 28 October 1997.

the Community [*sic*]". Abdul restated his earlier offer of sharing the Islamic facilities where possible but could not otherwise promise anything[82].

The tension, even animosity, between Abdul and Mervyn displayed at the meeting reveals the fervour and conviction with which they throw themselves into work for their respective constituencies. However, it also reflects both the collective and the personal identity politics being played out, the sense that something more than just a building was at stake; that in fact a core identity and its survival locally, as well as a personal history of time and energy devoted to their respective associations, were being tried and judged. Each man insisted that he had more proof and witnesses to support his claims than the other. In later interviews each was equally derogatory about the other, and local gossip included a variety of allegations concerning Mervyn's close contacts with the management of the Seven-Eleven supermarket, suggesting that he "probably had something to do with" the order in 2000 for the Islamic Association to stop selling food outside the supermarket to raise funds for the *madressah* (see also Chapter Four).

After Abdul left the now quite agitated meeting, other tensions surfaced within the ranks of the Residents Association, as Mervyn and other non-Muslim committee members expressed doubt over the honesty and loyalty of the Muslim members of the Residents Association. At that time four of the nine committee members were Muslim and simultaneously members of the Islamic Association (by early 1998 all four Muslims had left the committee due to the conflict. During the period of research, the committee had no Muslim members). When it came to voting on whether or not to support the Islamic Association in its deal with Monex, five out of the six members present at the meeting voted in support of the bid for a *madressah* on Erf 3299 but objected to the remainder of the site being rezoned for housing. The sixth member, Mervyn, was appalled and contended that the Residents Association could not vote for only half the deal; he vowed to continue to fight for the entire site to be zoned for community recreation[83].

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[82] *Ibid.*

[83] Minutes of Meeting of Executive Committee, Summer Greens Residents Association, 28 October 1997.

Fearing that the Residents Association's partial support for the deal between Monex and the Islamic Association would be insufficient for the municipal council to approve it, Monex now sought a pact with the Residents Association in which a soccer field would be offered on the buffer land along the eastern boundary of the suburb between the built up area and the N7 highway as well as a second-hand microbus, courtesy of Monex, to transport local children to other sports facilities outside the suburb. In return, the Residents Association must give immediate support to the rezoning of Erf 4925 for housing and Erf 3299 for a *madressah* in one corner of the land *as well as* housing on the rest of Erf 3299. After a fiery speech at a subsequent committee meeting, Mervyn Thompson convinced the committee to reject the offer as inadequate. Letters to both Monex and the municipality reiterated that Summer Greens is a distinctive and respectable community which deserves similar facilities within its boundaries to those long in place in more affluent neighbouring suburbs. The association also expressed concern over potential safety hazards arising from the proposed soccer field's location right beneath major power lines, although the municipality questioned the validity of this argument[84].

At a public meeting called a few weeks later under the heading "Urgent General Meeting", attended by approximately 60 residents, the Residents Association confirmed that it would not accept anything less than a community hall, sports and recreational facilities on Erf 3299. Abdul Noordien stood up at the meeting and described some of the facilities that would accompany the construction of a *madressah*; a day care centre, which he promised would be cheaper than anywhere else in the suburb, and a library with three multi-media computers, to be donated to the Islamic Association by Monex. He again offered the use of these facilities to non-Muslim residents, but the majority of residents present at the meeting declined the offer[85].

While the minutes of the meeting note that the objections were an expression of

[84] Minutes of Meeting between the Residents Association, Monex and Blaauwberg Municipality, 3 November 1997.
[85] Minutes of Meeting of Summer Greens Residents Association, 26 November 1997.

residents' anger at the negotiation tactics used by Monex, non-Muslim residents have subsequently told me that they would never want to make use of the facilities. Mervyn Thompson asked, "They claimed it would be a crèche for all, but what Christian parent will send their child to a Muslim crèche?" Another woman commented, "You would never see any Christians or whites there", expressing not simply religious but also racial prejudice.

The same meeting heard a further proposal by one of the Muslim committee members of the Residents Association to accommodate both a *madressah* and sports facilities on the land, but again other residents dismissed this. There did not seem to be any way in which non-Muslim residents would support the construction of a building in the suburb for what they saw as serving exclusively Muslim interests. Moreover, as one committee member pointed out, the present debate was in fact "unconstitutional" in terms of the Residents Association's own constitution which prohibited the promotion of any interests that were explicitly religious or political (see earlier discussion of the association's foundation)[86].

Still hoping that its deal with Monex for a *madressah* would be implemented, the Islamic Association dutifully withdrew its objection to the rezoning of Erf 4925. A week later the Municipal Council resolved to overrule the remaining objection from the Summer Greens Residents Association and approve of Monex's plan to build houses on Erf 4925[87]. Finally Monex could go ahead and build the small, single-storey free-standing houses it had first proposed four years earlier. It went ahead and hired the necessary service and construction workers to commence work on the site in early February 1998.

Yet it did not anticipate that the Residents Association would appeal the Council ruling to the Provincial Administration. By middle of January 1998, the association had lodged an appeal, arguing that the area surrounding Erf 4925 was becoming overcrowded and that the community needed the site for recreation. The association claimed to be acting on

[86] *ibid.*; Letter to Monex from Summer Greens Residents Association 8 December 1997.
[87] Letter to Blaauwberg Municipality from Summer Greens Islamic Association, 3 December 1997; Minutes of Council Meeting 9 December 1997 File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.

behalf of all the residents (presumably now including Muslim residents), and it called Monex "a greedy developer" and the municipality untrustworthy because it had reneged on its promises to "the community"[88].

The argument of overcrowding and community needs was of course not new; it had in fact been the argument, which had won residents the temporary victory in December 1996. However, lawyers acting for Monex shrewdly noted that the appeal was technically invalid because it introduced new grounds - which was indeed the case, since the Residents Association's objection to the present application for rezoning, lodged in September 1997, had merely asked for the rezoning to "be suspended pending the outcome of negotiations" between the Islamic Association and Monex. As these negotiations had now been finalised, the lawyers declared that the appeal was "*ultra vires*, spurious and lacking in merit"[89]. The Residents Association's bid for community facilities on Erf 4925 now stood to be lost on a technicality. Even Mervyn Thompson later admitted that it had partly been an oversight on the association's part, but the committee stood without the full legal or technical knowledge to guide it through the legislation governing public consultation over land use:

> We don't have lawyers like Monex does and the municipality is not helping us. Our local ward councillor is useless, we never see her so we don't even bother with her. [...] We have to do this ourselves, but it's been a learning curve for us, I can tell you that.

The Residents Association withdrew its objection to Erf 4925, but not until a further few months had passed[90]. During this time, negotiations over land took a new turn which marked the beginning of a solution to at least some of the conflict between the parties. The new strategy was the idea of a land swop, whereby Monex and the municipality would exchange ownership of land in Summer Greens in return for land elsewhere within the municipal boundaries. In time the strategy could potentially satisfy demands; once Monex eased control over Erf 3299 in return for prime vacant land in Tygerhof, another

[88] Letter of Appeal to Provincial Administration, Western Cape from Summer Greens Residents Association 15 January 1998.
[89] Memorandum re Subdivision of Erf 4925, Monex, 26 January 1998 File 16/3/2/4 Part 20.
[90] Letter to Blaauwberg Municipality from Summer Greens Residents Association, 16 April 1998.

suburb in which Monex had already been eyeing land for development of a retirement village, the contenders for land in Summer Greens would effectively be reduced to the municipality and the two residents associations. Residents' demands could then more readily be accommodated together on Erf 3299[91]. The Summer Greens Residents Association became very excited and began planning fundraising activities and even sports events for later in the year. The Islamic Association, however, was more cautious in its optimism and less sure of whether all the hard work for a *madressah* was worth the growing resentment between the two residents associations. Accusations of exclusive back-hand agreements with Monex and the municipality continued, and frustrations rose as deals were proposed by different parties only later to be dismissed or withdrawn, due to vexing legal, administrative and financial obstacles.

After another six months of meetings, the Islamic Association finally decided to withdraw its request for a *madressah* on Erf 3299; it would concentrate its efforts on the continued negotiations over land in Montague Gardens for a mosque and try to incorporate a *madressah* into that project. By the end of 1998, the municipality and the association had more or less reached agreement about the land in Montague Gardens, and the process of rezoning was finally set in motion (*Table Talk* 3/12/98), although two years on, the application had yet to reach the Provincial Premier for final approval. Abdul later reflected on the circumstances that precipitated the withdrawal from land negotiations in Summer Greens in 1998:

> It wasn't easy, but we had to make a decision about the whole thing, it was just getting too much. It all got so tangled up. So we decided to withdraw from the deal with Monex about getting a corner of Erf 3299 for a *madressah*. We said to Monex, 'thanks for your offer but we're not interested'. Then we concentrated on the piece of land in Montague Gardens.

Also behind the withdrawal, however, lay considerable concern at possible future tension between Muslim and non-Muslim residents:

> Monex played us up against each other, our association and the Residents Association. We felt things could really get nasty and we didn't want that. Look, the Residents Association, the people wanting sports facilities, they are part of

[91] Correspondence between Summer Greens Residents Association and Blaauwberg Municipality February to June 1998 File 16/3/2/4 Part 20; *Table Talk* 4 June 1998.

> our...community. And I don't want my son go to a Muslim school on the land and then the Christian people will say to my son, 'Because of you, we can't play sports here'. Do you know what I mean? So I think in that way, Monex has played the two associations up against each other, the Muslims and the Christians.

Negotiations around the land swop continued to drag on. By August 2001, almost three years, later the complex matter has yet to be fully resolved. Proposals have been stalled time and again by Blaauwberg's councillors, who have continued to express concern at the financial loss to the municipality caused by land swops rather than the sale of public land at a public auction (*Table Talk* 4/6/98, 28/1/99, 24/8/00).

The immediate results of the land negotiations described above are therefore as follows: Erf 4925 has been fully developed with houses according to the plans submitted by Monex in 1997; the Islamic Association (having recalled its bids for land in Summer Greens) has withdrawn its activities to a nearby industrial estate to avoid further tension among residents; and the Summer Greens Residents Association has celebrated a partial victory as Monex has finally agreed to a community hall being built, not by Monex but by the municipality, on a part of Erf 3299 at a cost of 1.2 million rands (*Table Talk* 24/8/00). The building of the hall is under way and expected to be complete before the end of 2001. The Residents Association is optimistic that sports fields will follow and that, in the end, the entire piece of land will be developed for "community facilities" rather than private properties. Those negotiations are still in progress.

Yet, while the long-awaited arrival of a community hall has been officially greeted by the Summer Greens Residents Association as a triumph for all residents over both the municipal authorities and Monex, personal conversation with certain Residents Association committee members has revealed that the achievement is considered extra sweet because "the Muslims lost". It is seen as a moral victory because it was "the proper thing to happen". The implication to be drawn from these statements appears to be that Muslims (at least those who openly practice their faith) should be excluded from the community, not least because neither their presence nor their demands are regarded by non-Muslim residents or indeed local authorities as ordinary in the suburb: when the

municipality's chief town planner is quoted as saying that the Islamic Association's demands do not fall under "the *normal* requirements of a community" (emphasis added) for which a developer and local authority are responsible for providing (*Table Talk* 19/6/97), it might be argued that he is not only asserting Christianity as the norm of religious practice. By identifying a *madressah* as an extra-ordinary educational facility in the suburb, he appears to suggest that religious education is a private activity which a (secular) state should not engage with. In other words, community facilities may be supplied and supported by the local state as long as they are not aimed specifically at religious needs.

The Islamic Association's situation in this regard is, of course, not unique. In a study of obstacles faced by Muslims in Britain when seeking help from local authorities in meeting their needs for religious education, Ball and Beckford (1997) found that local authorities were reluctant to recognise a diversity of religious needs, effectively ignoring appeals from Muslim parents that such needs could not be accommodated within mainstream British education. They give an example in which a local authority would let community halls to a variety of community groups free of charge, but would charge a fee for religious groups using the premises. Since the needs of most Christian religious groups were catered for within their own church buildings, or indeed within local schools, the Muslim community group was effectively the only religious organisation having to rent premises to run a *madressah*. Having its own premises will allow the Summer Greens Islamic Association full control over its space and its members religious education, rather than being accountable to either the municipality or the Summer Greens Residents Association (who are likely be put in charge of the daily management of a community hall) and the Islamic Association possibly even become, as Abdul Noordien feared, the object of derision by other Summer Greens residents.

7.3 A SENSE OF COMMUNITY?

As illustrated in the cases above, both the Summer Greens Residents Association and the Islamic Association frame its needs in terms of community, although the former speaks

of the rights of a broader collectivity of residents, while the latter represents a factional interest.

These divergent criteria of community operating in Summer Greens suggest that a simple appeal to residents' "sense of community", asking them to exercise personal restraint for the common good, will not always resolve the disputes, however powerful and desirable the idea of community may be in their imagination. In a society increasingly characterised by individualism, privatisation and competition, it cannot always, if ever, be assumed that there is a sense - or even an ideal - of community shared by all the residents. As previous chapters have shown, residents may face similar uncertainties and experience similar fears, especially in a new suburb like Summer Greens, but their responses, like their personal histories, experiences and beliefs, are likely to differ.

The negative reactions I encountered to the possibility of a mosque in the suburb appeared to be rooted in a particular idea of who and what activities belong in a suburban middle class neighbourhood; the expressed displeasure at the anticipated "noise pollution" arising from the *athaan* five times a day as well as associated traffic congestion suggests that any visible and audible practice of Islam is not acceptable. The prejudice - and contradiction - emerges when it becomes clear that the same residents do not apply the same criterion about traffic congestion to the increased traffic on Sunday mornings due to worship in the New Apostolic Church and in the adjacent Kidz Buzz crèche where the Assemblies of God congregation gathers.

Similar disapproval and resentment appears shared among the majority of residents in terms of other kinds of behaviour that are deemed unbefitting of the social position of the area and lowering the standards of the suburb. As in some of the examples discussed in earlier chapters, alcohol and drug consumption in public, high noise levels, disrespect for privacy, and petty crime frustrate residents' expectations of life in the suburb and are perceived to threaten property values (despite a real increase of between 5% and 10% per annum[92]). Generally, four parties are blamed for these problems: tenants for not caring

[92] Interview with Du Saart Properties, Summer Greens, February 2001.

about maintenance, foreigners for dealing in drugs, the municipality for not upholding the rights of law-abiding rate payers, and finally Ilco Homes and Monex for not providing any recreation or entertainment facilities within Summer Greens. Most residents believe that young people in particular have become involved in drug activities and petty crime as a consequence of boredom. Poor public transport means that without private transport it is difficult to reach entertainment areas in central Cape Town or elsewhere. The original development plans for the suburb included a school, a community hall, sports fields and cafés, but as shown above, only the community hall and a water-logged play area have materialised, and the hall only after almost ten years of hard work by a small group of residents.

Compounding the insecurities, described in previous chapters, over social status, livelihood, sustainability of achievements and lifestyle, then, is a sense of betrayal. The developers' promises of facilities and a safe environment have hardly been delivered, and residents generally feel their needs and indeed their rights have been sacrificed for business profits.

Many also feel betrayed by the municipality which is either regarded as stubbornly asserting its power with scant regard for residents' interests, or is seen as a weak body which has allowed itself to be manipulated by the financial power of a big developer. Residents dismissed as pure rhetoric the discourse of the local government: the term 'community' appears throughout the new development frameworks and policy documents that have accompanied the recent changes in local government structures in South Africa. It is usually closely followed by the term 'participation', or at the very least 'consultation' (see, for example, the Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework, Cape Metropolitan Council 1996, and the Municipal Spatial Development Framework, City of Cape Town 1999). Correspondence from either local authorities or the developers to residents in Summer Greens often ends with a pledge to ensure a good working relationship with "the community". But these appear to be mere investment of the term. In reality, as shown here, the relationship between the parties has rarely been without of tension.

And finally, they feel betrayed by those residents (a minority, of course) whose behaviour is thought to bring the suburb into disrepute and promote social disintegration. When buying property in Summer Greens, most residents also bought into particular ideas of community, privacy and responsibility. They expected their neighbours to share the same understanding of these ideas and of their implicit prescriptions for how to behave, yet they feel they have been let down by certain residents.

Faced with a sense of betrayal, residents have responded differently. Some residents have actively lobbied the municipality and developer for help in restoring a level of trust and a sense of belonging in the broader community, in the belief that a community hall and public recreational activities will foster this. They have also tried to instil a measure of social discipline in their fellow residents. For example, in July 1998, a series of complaints to the Summer Greens Residents Association over noise, rowdiness and "disturbance of the public peace" prompted a public notice requesting residents to obtain consent from their neighbours if any parties continued after 11pm; if such "a sign of courteousness and good neighbourliness" was not respected, "stronger action will be taken" with the help of "law enforcement officers"[93].

Others have set out to define their particularistic interests more strongly in the neighbourhood. The conflict between the Summer Greens Residents Association, as elected representatives of all the residents, and the Summer Greens Islamic Association, representing "the Muslim community in Summer Greens", clearly illustrates the problem of who defines "the community" and who draws the lines for inclusion and exclusion. The time, money and effort expended on reaching consensus in the examples given above reflect the importance attached to land use in Summer Greens as either a source of money or a source of identity, or both. In the process of negotiations the two residents associations made significant claims to legitimate identities and therefore rights to resources based on their respective notions of "the community".

[93] Notice to all residents from the Summer Greens Residents Association, 1 July 1998.

Conflicts arising over space in the suburb (cf. Chapter Four) were regular topics of conversations with residents and among residents themselves, as well as being on the agenda of all the Residents Association committee meetings I attended. People spoke from personal experience or from hearsay. At the Residents Association meetings, complaints received orally or in writing from residents were conveyed. The committee itself is not exempt from indulging in a good gossip too, and in these ways personal and public grievances are aired and considered. How to resolve the disputes proved a lot more difficult than discussing them. Aside from certain radical solutions offered by a minority of angered residents, many residents appear to genuinely grapple with how to negotiate and draw the line between public and private space, how to decide which bodies and which noises are out of place and when, and how to deal with the problems "in an orderly manner", a phrase that cropped up repeatedly in discussions of the Association.

The majority of residents interviewed appear to have chosen an inward-looking way of dealing with their grievances and disappointments, by drawing their own concrete boundaries around their property, laying claim to increased privacy and disengaging from the broader public sphere of interest. In a sense their response has surpassed that of tolerance or settlement and could now be termed avoidance. The aggrieved residents will still complain to friends, sometimes even anonymously call the police if necessary, but they rarely seek personal confrontation.

As discussed in Chapter Four, certain common features of the suburban social environment cultivate a kind of moral minimalism in which residents exercise social control in a restrained and minimalistic manner (cf. Baumgartner 1988). Residents cope with everyday conflict in their neighbourhood through a variety of responses, almost all of which "manifest an aversion to confrontation and conflict and a preference for spare, even weak strategies of social control" (*ibid.*:10). Baumgartner argues that a low-density residential environment with its spatial separation, privacy and isolation from strangers is more conducive to developing a "moral order" (*op.cit.*) characterised by avoidance and withdrawal, than in neighbourhoods where social interaction is less diffuse and where neighbours are more familiar with each other.

Tensions around community and management of local conflict have been noted in a number of classic studies on new middle class suburbs (Seeley *et al* 1956; Whyte 1956; Gans 1967). The newness and timing of the development of Summer Greens may to some extent explain the tensions. A mere decade old, the suburb has only just laid some of the foundations for a locally based social system, let alone developed one; Knox (1995:206) suggests that the minimum period required for that "is between 50 and 80 years, assuming the majority of the population to have been born and bred in the area". Moreover, among the socially mobile residents (whether up- or downward) there is evidence of an uncertainty of status as they arrive in a new and socially unfamiliar setting. Combined with reduced contact with family and friends in the previous area of residence, they begin to focus on the home and property and away from participating in local community business, unless they experience a crisis in common with fellow residents; community in Summer Greens is to some extent characterised by a crisis communality (Knox 1995) which emerges at a time of status panic (Turner 1988), for example when there is a sudden and particular threat (real or perceived) to property values or amenities. Moreover, the newness and timing of the development of the suburb in the particular South African context of post-Apartheid residential desegregation and social integration also account for some of the tensions, as discussed in Chapter Four especially (see also Chapter Eight). Negotiating conditions of profound social flux and adapting to ongoing changes in South Africa, which at once appear intangible and perplexing yet also have real and immediate meaning in, and effect on, everyday life, presents a challenge to individual and collective identities across the South African spectrum. While the Apartheid experiment of social engineering has been officially discarded, the social contours of post-Apartheid living are still being drawn on the South African landscape. Various sub-national identities (such as a visible and focused Muslim minority) are emerging more strongly in public than previously. Dealing with ascribed and real differences and 'community-building' in Summer Greens under these conditions is bound to be a complex process. Yet there are ample signs (as this dissertation shows) that a main cause of divisiveness among residents is no longer primarily race, but that class (and in certain instances religion) is assuming a more powerful role in identifying differences and responding to conflict.

The theory of moral minimalism may in part help explain the relatively restrained reactions to minor grievances and conflict in Summer Greens, but it might also hint at why the larger conflicts over land described above were fought by relatively few residents. The general public might share opinions on the matter yet attendance at public meetings called on these larger issues is rarely high, although written petitions are usually well-supported. For example, when residents unsuccessfully tried to prevent a liquor store from opening, just under 700 residents signed the petition. Moreover, petitions are also an efficient way of showing public support for a particular issue, be it the "Greening of Summer Greens" or paving over of traffic islands as grass is poorly maintained by the municipality[94]. Giving a signature is, of course, less demanding than attending meetings and engaging in public debate. Many residents are already stretched in terms of time and energy, working long hours to maintain the standards of living they have aspired to. They have enough personal and family issues to worry about without becoming actively involved in community struggles. Moral minimalism as a strategy of conflict management seems to affirm what numerous voluntary, including neighbourhood, organisations experience: most people are not activists. The findings concerning the majority of residents in Summer Greens echo those of Gans (1967:144) in his study of the new lower middle class suburb of Levittown:

> Since most Levittowners did not participate actively in the so-called community organisations, the community that had been originated in their names was of minor importance in their lives. What involved them deeply was their house and the lot on which it stood, the adjacent neighbours [...] and friends elsewhere in Levittown, and the particular church or organisation in which they were active. If one could measure "sense of community", it embraced only these, but hardly the community or even the neighbourhood in which they had bought.

Moreover, it is often difficult to mobilise residents to united and sustained action when conflicts come and go, resolving themselves through independent negotiation between the aggrieved parties or through shifting levels of tolerance or incidents simply losing their urgency (Baumgartner 1988). Residents also come and go; the Residents Association blames apathy and transiency for the downfall of several failed Neighbourhood Watch schemes as well as other formal attempts at building community.

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[94] Petitions to Blaauwberg Municipality from the Summer Greens Residents Association, March 1996 and February 1997.

Attempts at 'building a community' in Summer Greens therefore face a challenge in reconciling not only different ideas of what and who constitute 'the community' but also in balancing residents' desire for public safety and neighbourliness with that for privacy and individualistic lifestyles. As other studies have shown, establishing a shared meaning of community identity and belonging is not easy in a new residential suburb where the combination of being new neighbours and of coming from diverse backgrounds, at least initially, appears to hinder the development of common ties between residents. There are few "strong bonds of enduring and great attachment" (Baumgartner 1988:9) and social networks are often fragmented, stretching beyond the immediate neighbourhood (Gans 1967; Rodman 1993; Crow and Allan 1994; Stevenson 1999). As argued in earlier chapters, Summer Greens is a new space in and of itself, as well as a new experience for the majority of residents, who have moved there from quite different residential environments. The residents interviewed had varying expectations of community, ideas of identity and belonging, and beliefs in such a 'thing' as 'community spirit' (and that it can somehow be measured so that residents compare Summer Greens with their previous residence and decide that there was 'less community spirit' in Summer Greens), but under the pressures and insecurities that for many residents have accompanied their move to a new and more expensive place, there appears to be little energy or impetus to realise their idea of community, beyond certain everyday acts of neighbourliness.

Young and Willmott's (1957) study of the relocation of working class residents to a new housing estate found that in their old neighbourhood of Bethnal Green, residents had belonged to a close and vigorous network of personal, mainly kinship-based, relationships which had developed over many years. The networks had formed a community-building and community-maintaining force, though for some residents the closeness was almost oppressive, as gossip and shared space tended to preclude privacy. Once the residents were moved away from Bethnal Green and "socially upward", however, the friendliness and familiarity of the old community was replaced by mistrust, individual and house-centred lifestyles, privacy, anonymity and materialism. Some did not resent the change, but 'community' in the sense that had been taken for granted in

Bethnal Green (i.e. familiar and close-knit) appeared to lose its meaning, as residents increasingly spoke of their new neighbours as "keeping themselves to themselves".

Many Summer Greens residents would understand the feelings and reactions of ex-Bethnal Greeners. In the new setting of Summer Greens, residents have had expectations of the sociality of the new community, not least because of what the *woonerf* streetscape promised (see Chapter Four), and many would admit to being disappointed in that regard. But at the same time most value the higher level of privacy which they enjoy in Summer Greens compared with their former neighbourhoods and homes. Reconciling the myths and expectations of community with a reality which embodies ambiguities, tensions and contradictions is an on-going process for residents.

As the examples discussed in this chapter show, the process involves negotiating multiple visions of community and incorporating different social values and moral judgements. One vision was in many ways already mapped out for residents upon arrival in Summer Greens: a particular vision (stereotype?) of the middle class suburban community was embedded in the spatial zoning and planning of Summer Greens and, as this study has shown, the majority of residents subscribe to that very same vision. Contestation among residents, or between residents and strangers, over that vision is therefore articulated in value terms. Conflict between residents and the developer - as suggested earlier - is in terms of residents' sense of betrayal of that very vision, accusing the developer of an abrogation of their legal-moral contract. Another vision arises from the particular time and place of Summer Greens, its post-Apartheid qualities and symbolic meanings, its resultant uncertainties and ambiguities. The final chapter draws together the visions and frameworks of meaning encountered during fieldwork in Summer Greens.

8. CONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY AND LOCALITY: CLASS, RACE AND PLACE

This study has explored some of the complex and contested processes of drawing boundaries and negotiating identities in the new suburban space of Summer Greens. It has considered the various insecurities, ambiguous situations and contradictory processes encountered by residents, and has examined their different experiences and responses to aspects of contemporary social changes in South Africa. Differences have been shown to depend on a combination of factors, including the expectations, experiences and resources available at particular stages in their individual lives and in the lifecycle of the household. Social relationships within the suburb (and to a lesser extent beyond) have been analysed in terms of local understandings and expressions of public-private boundaries, neighbouring, sociality, livelihoods, home, community and place.

Ambiguities around ideas of neighbours, neighbouring and sociality were examined in Chapter Four through the concepts of privacy, reciprocity, propriety and trust. It was argued that residents in Summer Greens generally pursue independent and private lives, guarding their privacy, relying on neighbours only in special circumstances. The ability to control private space was shown to be one of the most important considerations in residents' assessments of whether their move to Summer Greens had lived up to their expectations. The findings illustrated the tensions arising over differences in the meaning given to space, differences in the use of public/private space, and differences in what is considered legitimate use of such space. The tensions reflect residents' convictions that there is something significant at stake: attitudes and behaviour which they believe lower the 'standards' of the suburb will cause property values to drop and place people's biggest financial investment at risk. The chapter argued that everyday skirmishes between neighbours are more than just mundane gripes over trivial differences; they are conflicts over the control of space and struggles over who has the power to define and justify belonging to as well as the identity of the suburb.

Chapter Five analysed the main livelihood strategies of residents as they are embedded in (though not confined to) the social, cultural and spatial conditions of the suburb. It showed some of the ways in which residents combine a variety of resources, networks and strategies to sustain their newly achieved class position and nurture their dream of further improvements in standards of living. Despite the tensions which may arise between household members and between residents with different understandings of what is appropriate commercial activity in a middle class suburb, the relatively unregulated informal economy and the flexibility of private domestic space were shown to be two central and interdependent means taken up by most households, whether residents are all but coping financially and emotionally at their chosen standard of living, or whether they are relatively more secure in terms of their employment, investments, savings, and disposable income, or whether they find themselves somewhere in between. The chapter showed that for the majority of residents interviewed, their tangled web of strategies reflects their anxieties over meeting aspirations yet helps them cope with uncertainties arising from the challenge of reconciling dreams with reality, negotiating ambiguities and contradictions, achievements and disappointments in their new position and surroundings.

Some of the ways in which residents organise and experience the home, how they appropriate and order private space in their pursuit of propriety, were examined in Chapter Six. The home was shown to be a key symbol, suggesting and justifying a complex set of social and cultural categories, values and relations, revealed in the ordering and decorating of home spaces. It explored the powerful ideology of home ownership and argued that home ownership generally increases the degree to which residents can control and realise the meanings of home. An analysis of how home owners implement these meanings through home maintenance and improvement activities revealed some of the ways in which home owners construct themselves as a bounded social group, distinct from others, including neighbours with different housing tenure. The chapter argued that this distinction, and its continuous upkeep, both necessitates and is used to justify the time and money invested and serves as a meaningful index of class position.

Chapter Seven presented two case studies of competing claims to vacant land in the suburb and revealed how divergent and changing definitions of community as well as ethnic-religious prejudice emerged in the disputes. It discussed the organisational dynamics of two community bodies involved in the conflict with the developer as well as the 'hidden hand' of the local state, showing how all four were active agents in constructing 'community', though at times their criteria and motivation differed. The chapter described how many residents feel a sense of betrayal by the developer and the municipality, as well as by fellow residents who are perceived as undermining attempts to "build a community" in the suburb. It discussed the challenges facing residents attempting to do so, given multiple visions of what this entails and different criteria for inclusion and exclusion in these visions.

Homogeneity has been a long-standing myth of suburbs, and it is now generally recognised that the term 'suburb' covers not only a range of differentiated residential settlements but that the vast majority of settlements themselves are "social and cultural hybrids" (Silverstone 1997:7) or "mosaics" (Knox 1995:209) (see also Jackson 1985; Gottdiener 1994; Fishman 1996; Harris & Larkham 1999a; Pile *et al* 1999). Paradoxically, the myth of homogeneity has coexisted alongside a myth of "suburban non-community" (Knox 1995:208) which sees suburbs as areas of "loose-knit, secondary ties where lifestyles were focused squarely on the nuclear family's pursuit of money, status and consumer durables and the privacy in which to enjoy them" (*ibid.*). In this vein, Mumford (1940:215) concluded that suburbs represent "a collective attempt to lead a private life". The analysis presented in the preceding chapters shows that in many respects Summer Greens illustrates this oxymoron. But fulfilling the desire for privacy requires a *collective* understanding of what leading a private life *means*, and how it can be achieved, as well as a *collective* effort to realise it. To this end, Summer Greens residents work through localised social networks with various degrees of cohesion, reflected in terms of common neighbourliness as well as in voluntary organisations such as residents associations, women's groups or religious fellowship. The operation of these networks is generally underpinned - even sustained - by a shared sense of purpose and possibility in Summer Greens, and by shared ideas of difference and their regulation, in

the suburb. At the same time, being 'un-neighbourly' or 'overly neighbourly' in the eyes of neighbours, or contesting the representation of residents' interests by the Summer Greens Residents Association (and establishing a parallel association for Muslim residents only), may be seen by fellow residents as challenging their sense of entitlement in, and expectations of, the suburb. In this light, the building of a community and sports hall rather than a mosque may be regarded as a triumph for the majority; a mosque would very likely have significantly (and visibly) shifted the socio-spatial dynamics in the suburb. The findings presented in this dissertation suggest that the identity of the suburb is being reconfigured by a different - though not unrelated - socio-spatial force which revolves around intensified demarcation of private space.

This chapter integrates the findings in an analysis of the central ways in which people define, interpret and represent the suburb of Summer Greens, both to themselves and to outsiders. It draws together the ways in which residents talk about place and people of Summer Greens, the words and images they use, the metaphors and tropes they apply, which for them, at the time of the study, captured the identity of Summer Greens. Emerging from the findings are four main discourses of locality through which residents contemplate and formulate circumstances and processes in their neighbourhood and prescribe ways of responding to them. They construct and reflect certain understandings of likeness and difference, and use local social relations and local knowledge to evoke and make sense of larger issues about the restructuring of urban space and the new social order in South Africa. In addition to their practical manifestation in everyday life, the discourses reveal some of the ambiguities and contradictions, assumptions and predictions, of living in a new and post-Apartheid environment. The past is present in complex ways which defy a single, uncontested narrative of Summer Greens. The chapter shows that the ways in which residents talk about Summer Greens are not only central to the "production of locality" (Appadurai 1995:204) but also to raising broader concerns of social change and new configurations of class, race and space. The discourses, or "maps of meaning" (Jackson 1992), reflect a tension between the past and the present which is carried through into the everyday practices of identification and creation of community.

As we have seen, Summer Greens is a relatively new space shared by people from diverse backgrounds, who have nevertheless been able to accommodate differences to the extent that a hegemonic conception of middle class suburban living is emerging. Moreover, the everyday ethos of the suburb is shaped not only by local but also global forces, a manifestation of what Appadurai (1995:212) calls "the global production of locality"; the repercussions of wider global processes are felt directly and indirectly in the suburb, inasmuch as residents include foreign migrants and refugees, especially from other parts of Africa, as well as local 'migrants' fleeing areas of Cape Town burdened with crime and unemployment. As a setting for interaction, Summer Greens thus contains - and is in part constituted by - difference, contradiction and conflict, as they co-exist, intersect and interact in everyday social relations. Any dominant image or "governing identity" (Suttles 1972:248) of Summer Greens is therefore always subject to challenge and to change, as "all articulation is partial and precarious" (Ernesto Laclau, 1990, quoted in Massey 1994:121).

From all reports, representations and realities of Summer Greens have indeed changed over the past decade, since the first houses were constructed in 1991 and the first residents moved in. These changes (often viewed negatively by residents) have been felt and seen not just by the first residents who still reside there, but also by residents who have lived there only for a couple of years. As my research spanned two years, I was able to see some of these changes myself, but for changes before that I have relied on people's accounts and written records.

Throughout the time I spent in the suburb, I repeatedly heard Summer Greens presented as 'the new South Africa', not just as a product of recent social change but as *being* the new South Africa, as embodying and representing aspects of such change. These were said to include open and amicable cross-racial interaction, new opportunities for wealth accumulation and new possibilities of movement and settlement that were previously restricted by race-based legislation and practice. Summer Greens is thus generally construed as offering the opportunity to (re)invent a post-Apartheid identity where race is no longer as significant as class. But at the same time - as the preceding chapters have

shown - there is an uncertainty about the process, whether its promise of prosperity can be realised and who will benefit. Thus whether residents are clinging to recent achievements in upward social mobility or to an old status of affluence and privilege, their experiences of both the new South Africa and Summer Greens are charged with a sense of uncertainty. "Times have changed", observed Jean Miller, a white pensioner. "For most of our lives time stood still. I mean, for 25 years nothing changed, and now suddenly everything is changing". Asked how she felt about that, she replied pragmatically yet with a hint of resignation: "I suppose it's alright, I mean, things could have been worse [than they are now] and you just have to adapt somehow and get on with it because you never know what's going to come next these days".

The governing identity of Summer Greens may indeed be 'the new South Africa', but like national representations of the new South Africa at large, this image of Summer Greens contains complex and contested layers of meaning. Residents analyse and make sense of social change in Summer Greens and in South Africa in different ways depending on their background and recent experiences. Out of the main metaphor of Summer Greens as the new South Africa, it is possible to draw four discourses of locality which each construct and evaluate the place and people of Summer Greens according to different priorities: one discourse emphasises the non-racial identity of Summer Greens, one constructs the suburb as middle class, one presents Summer Greens as a safe and community-oriented village, and one considers the suburb as a place in decline, losing its suburban middle class status. As 'models' they are, of course, simplifications of complex narratives and realities and they overlap, but each model emphasises its own construction of difference and prescribes ways in which to organise and regulate relationships between social categories. The first three discourses are generally charged with a positive interpretation of recent social change, while the fourth renders the same changes as negative and indicates a nostalgic yearning for past positions of status and privilege. Most residents merged two, even three models when they talked about Summer Greens, and some residents invoked different models at different times, which reinforces my argument that people's construction and experience of place is inevitably an ongoing,

dynamic and contested process. Moreover, the orientations conveyed in the models are central to everyday conceptions of the residents themselves and of their reality.

8.1 DISCOURSES OF IDENTITY AND LOCALITY IN SUMMER GREENS

8.1.1 A Non-Racial and Cosmopolitan Neighbourhood

The first discourse of Summer Greens arises from an emphasis on overcoming Apartheid segregation and discrimination. It presents the suburb as a non-racial, multi-cultural, inclusive place, where people are consciously overcoming deep-rooted racial prejudice and forming new friendships across racial divides. Summer Greens is compared favourably with previous places of residence which continue to be largely racially segregated, and the suburb is put forward as an example of racial harmony and integration to the rest of the country. This discourse was found among coloureds, whites, Africans and Asians alike. As shown in Table 3.11 (page 78), a third of the people interviewed asserted that the promise of integration had in fact been a major influence on their decision to move to Summer Greens, combined with affordability.

As discussed in Chapter Four, a number of residents expressed a desire for their children to grow up in a non-racial environment: "Our kids shouldn't grow up in the same environment that we grew up. In our environment, I never grew up with the black and white kids"; "The kids here don't worry about skin colour, they just play together as if it was the most natural thing in the world and that's how it should be"; "Children teach us [adults] there are no barriers when it comes to race or what colour you are... that opened my eyes, to forget about the past". The parents suggested that their children would be at a disadvantage in post-Apartheid South Africa if they did not integrate from a young age, often comparing it with their own experience. Elizabeth Thompson (39, coloured, municipal administrator) explained:

> I didn't want to go on living like we were kept in the old Apartheid years where you just had to live among people of your own [kind], you find that you, like when I had to interact with a white person or a black person it wasn't very easy for me. Now, it's, you know, it's okay, it's nothing, it's no big deal.

Colin Farrell, a 44-year-old coloured pastor, and his family have lived in Summer Greens for almost five years. He observed that, "Here we have learnt to live with all people and respect their culture. It's here that we have learned what the new South Africa is all about". Elizabeth dismissed as obstinate those people who remain suspicious of their neighbours (or potential neighbours) because of racist beliefs:

> Summer Greens to me is a melting pot of people. There are very few places [in South Africa] where everybody comes together. And those who don't like that must just move out, if they can't accept it. I've seen people coming to look at buying here and you can see them thinking, 'Am I going to live next to this brownie?' But then those attitudes, that's old stuff. To me that's pre-'94 stuff. Presently we have a mixture of Portuguese and English on that side and we have an Afrikaans family and people from Lesotho on this side.

Chapter Four included a description of how looking after the daughter of their Basotho neighbours had been a new and important experience for Elizabeth and her husband.

Alicia Scott (28, coloured, mother of three children) had never heard of any problems with the racial diversity in Summer Greens. She had moved out of Grassy Park (a coloured area) in 1996 and believes that the move has given her family, including her three small children, a more progressive outlook:

> I think it's harder for people still living in the old Group Areas to get along with other blacks or whites. I think people who don't move out of those areas don't change the way they think. Except maybe for those who work in mixed groups.

Many residents, particularly those who have lived in Summer Greens since its beginning, recognise the historical significance of the suburb as the first new suburban development in Cape Town after Apartheid that was open to all irrespective of racial classification (see Chapter One). As a new place on previously undeveloped land, Summer Greens did not have an explicit, historic association of race-based segregation, but prospective, non-white buyers nonetheless had to contend with the fact that Summer Greens was situated within the broader area called the Northern Suburbs, the majority of which had been designated for occupation by white people only under the Group Areas Act and had become popularly known as white Afrikaans areas. These circumstances gave the early residents a "pioneering spirit", as several of them called it, a sense that they were making Summer Greens historically significant by settling there. One of the first residents to

move into Summer Greens in 1991, Frank and Julia Rodgers (both early 40s, coloured) recalled:

> What really attracted us was the mix of people. This was new after Group Areas Act, so it has a historical meaning, especially to me because Summer Greens is trying...what it's trying to do is recreate the good old days of Harfield Village where I grew up [area of Claremont cleared for white settlement in 1970s], where we were all mixed. I mean, I have Malays in that house over there, Portuguese next to me here. It's good, you know.

Ivy Mayekiso (32, African) works in the launderette on the main road of Summer Greens. She moved from the Eastern Cape three years ago when her husband, who is in the army, was transferred to Cape Town. In her view, Summer Greens is different to the place she moved from, being a more open and friendly place:

> Everyone gets along [...] I like it here. No one cares that you're black, they all treat you the same. And the kids play with each other. My neighbours are coloureds and Indians. We don't have any problems with each other.

For mixed couples, living in Summer Greens is easier than in other, still largely segregated, suburbs where they feel that some people pass judgement on them. John Sanders and Vivienne Snyman, both in their mid-30s, moved to Summer Greens four years ago from Observatory, Cape Town, when the apartment they were renting was sold. John grew up in Newlands and works as an electrician for a large company. Vivienne is from Lansdowne and is finishing her post-graduate studies in education, having worked for some years as a teacher. She explained,

> Observatory is pretty mixed now, so it was fine, but when we had to move, we wanted to buy our own place, and we wanted somewhere where people don't look at you funny because he's white and I'm coloured. A friend of mine is an estate agent and told me about Summer Greens, being mixed and that [...] I like that about Summer Greens, nobody looks at you funny here because, you know, you're together.

In 1999, Bill Jackson, a 35-year-old white policeman, married Susan who is coloured. He believes that Summer Greens "is the new South Africa", remarking that:

> This is where white South Africans, black South Africans, coloured South Africans, Asian South Africans...we're all mingling now. You know, you realise there's not always that much difference, we're not that different really.

Born and raised in Johannesburg, Bill moved to Green Point, Cape Town when he was 25 to get away from his parents who were going through an acrimonious divorce. He fell in love with a (white) woman and they had a son. Around the time of the birth, Bill bought a house in Summer Greens where, he thought, "We'd be much happier as a family". However, shortly thereafter she was diagnosed as schizophrenic and tragically committed suicide. Unable to look after the baby on his own, Bill arranged for him to be adopted. After more than five years alone, he met Susan who grew up in Heathfield and Ocean View (both coloured areas). After several years of courting, they married, after which she moved in with him in Summer Greens.

I encountered a number of mixed couples in Summer Greens, mainly white-coloured but also several coloured-African relationships. I did not see or hear of any white-African couples. The young people who hang out in the area outside the local shops in the evenings and over weekends comprise several mixed couples, mainly white women and coloured men. Jenny Cobbett (24), who works in the local video store, agreed:

> Yeah, it's mainly white girls who go with the coloured guys. I don't know why...but I know most of the guys who hang around here, and I can't think of one white-white relationship. But it's mainly whites and coloureds, not so much blacks [Africans].

She is white and her boyfriend is coloured. For the past two years, they have rented a house in Summer Greens with her boyfriend's sister. The boyfriend's mother and Jenny's own sister have lived in Summer Greens for over five years, which was a major reason why Jenny moved from Kenilworth, but she said Summer Greens was "full of mixed couples [...] it's sort of...it's okay here, it's not an issue".

The non-racial character of Summer Greens is particularly important to 48-year-old Brian de Villiers. He was born to white parents in District Six, a mixed area in Cape Town, which was formally proclaimed an area for white settlement only in February 1966 under the *Group Areas Act.* His father was an alcoholic, and when he was 10 years old Brian ran away and ended up in Bonteheuwel, a coloured area. Here a local shebeen owner who had recently lost his own son (the same age as Brian) took him in. Despite his official classification as white, Brian now considers himself coloured:

> I have been labeled a 'whitey' because I've got a white ID book, but I grew up amongst the coloured community...I am a coloured [...] I've been called a hotnot[95] many many times and I used to get angry but now I'm not bothered. I'm proud of who I know I am. I might have been the black sheep of my family because my skin was a bit darker than my brothers and sisters, but I see myself as coloured.

Brian admitted that in his younger years he "ran a bit wild with drugs and liquor, and women too". However, twenty years ago he met his wife, Liesl, who is coloured. They both worked for the same large retail company, but their employer told them that their dating was against the *Immorality Act of 1951* which prohibited sexual relations across the racial divide. "It definitely wasn't easy being a mixed couple then. They made it difficult for us, but we got through it", said Brian, not least because they became skillful in "beating the system". He recalls an incident where he was standing on the platform of Cape Town station with Liesl, giving her a kiss, and four white policemen came out of nowhere and uttered mockingly in Afrikaans, "Look at the white man kissing the hotnot". Brian put on his broadest Cape coloured accent and said that they were not doing anything wrong. Thankfully the policemen believed that he was indeed coloured and they left him alone. The crowd on the platform cheered. Had the policemen asked for his identity book they would have seen that he was classified as white, and he would have been arrested for contravening the *Immorality Act*. In an unusual twist to the numerous attempts by coloureds with lighter skin to 'pass for white' (Western 1996), Brian wanted to be recognised as coloured regardless of his official classification as white. In fact, he eventually managed to change his identity status to coloured, which is also how he proudly classifies his two sons: "When my eldest son registered at college recently, and they asked him to tick a race [category] he just ticked 'coloured', just like that, no hesitating. I was really pleased. It's nothing to be ashamed of", he asserted. He felt comfortable in the non-racial environment of Summer Greens: "Here they all accept me. This is my family here".

On a couple of occasions, Brian referred to Summer Greens as "cosmopolitan", a word also used by several other residents to describe the suburb. He said, "I live here because

[95] Derived from the word Hottentot, it is used here as a derogatory word for Coloured people.

the people are from different cultures, different races...that's what I like, it's cosmopolitan". Mervyn Thompson said, "This suburb reflects a cosmopolitan look" [sic]. Keith Barry, a 29-year-old white computer consultant, also described Summer Greens as "cosmopolitan", saying it is part of an "exciting new South Africa". A visiting preacher in one of the local churches echoed those same words. John Petersen declared the suburb "totally cosmopolitan". When asked what they meant by the term cosmopolitan, residents generally explained it, as Brian did, with reference to the racial and cultural diversity of the residents. According to Mervyn,

> People make a conscious choice [to live here]. We want to know other colours, creeds and that. That's why we choose to live here. We have an Afrikaaner neighbour. They always think we're going to have 10 or 12 people living with you in the same house. Same we [coloureds] will think of the blacks [Africans]. They are going to have six families living there. But it is not so. We learnt that from living here.

To this extent, they do indeed appear to be expressing an orientation towards difference, "a willingness to engage with the Other", which is one of the criteria set by Hannerz for a genuine cosmopolitan perspective (1996:103). Defining the word 'cosmopolitan' as "multi-racial" and "multi-cultural" might even suggest that the term is replacing more explicit references to race in an attempt to distance themselves from a racialised discourse of the past. Only two of the people I interviewed *explicitly* associated the term with some of its other popular connotations of middle class sophistication, urbanity, sociability and mobility (Hannerz 1996; Tomlinson 1999). Thus, while the term may on the one hand be considered a more 'politically correct' word for race/ethnicity/culture, it nevertheless also contains a host of other common implications which residents appear - consciously or subconsciously - to consider useful to their project of reinventing themselves as, for example, middle class, sophisticated, urbane citizens of the new South Africa, even of the world. In other words, residents also use the term cosmopolitan to imply a newly acquired degree of social privilege and distance. They measure such achievements not only by a physical move away from their former, segregated neighbourhoods and lifestyles, but also through their direct engagement with the social, economic, political and cultural landscapes of post-Apartheid South Africa. Living in "cosmopolitan Summer Greens" is part of their reorientation toward the world and its expanded opportunities for

a reinvention of the self; a new start is now possible through enhanced mobility and access to the urban globalised market-place denied them in the past.

Residents' use of the term 'cosmopolitan' resonates to a certain extent with its application by Ferguson (1999) to urban residents on the Zambian Copperbelt. He defines as cosmopolitan "a stance of defiance and rejection" of pressures from rural relations and the (urban) localist style ideologically connected to, and signifying, rural village life (1999:212+289). Cosmopolitanism, he suggests, is "a signifying practice" incorporating styles of dress, manners of speech, ways of socialising etc. which may not make the residents "citizens of the world" but through which they reach out and connect with a world beyond the local (page 218). It could be argued that some residents in Summer Greens have adopted the idea of cosmopolitan style as a way of establishing a distance, in certain cases even a disconnection, from their former residential localities, associations and obligations to kin in particular; their sense of belonging has shifted its gravity, as residents see themselves as having overcome past constraints and now pursuing the possibilities of the present - at least as far as possible under new constraints.

The tension between past and present residence embodied in this discourse of Summer Greens thus relates to a willed orientation toward difference, contrasting old segregated lifestyles and parochial attitudes with a new broad-minded orientation and location. However, even the most fervent advocates of this inclusive discourse were not innocent of the occasional prejudice which crept into their conversation: Frank Rodgers denounced "the Jew-boys" whom, he claims, buy houses in Summer Greens and rent them out indiscriminately to disrespectful tenants; Mervyn Thompson, when discussing the controversy over land between Muslim and non-Muslim residents, said "Muslims want to take over this whole place"; and Brian thought "the Nigerians and Mozambiquans are moving in here and taking over". The otherwise warm and affable Pastor Thornton, who announced that "I come from Summer Greens where it's always summer for all the people", said he was frustrated by the "many foreigners and strangers in Summer Greens who abuse our shops and amenities", referring to them as "visitors" rather than residents or citizens and expecting their presence to be only temporary. Africans from South Africa

were more legitimately present than Africans from elsewhere in Africa. This indicates that non-racialism may be embraced verbally yet xenophobia retains a presence.

Bulelwa Mabuza (53, African, teacher), who moved to Summer Greens from Khayelitsha in 1996, draws the important distinction between a racially desegregated and a racially unbiased space: she found that while Summer Greens is "a multi-racial place, it is only partly racially tolerant". Her concern arises, as mentioned in Chapter Four, from her experience of white and coloured neighbours who are having to learn to accept her as a legitimate member of the home owning middle classes, rather than as a visiting domestic worker. Her remarks touch upon another example of prejudice in the suburb around African accumulation of wealth: a number of whites (and a few coloureds) interviewed were puzzled by their African neighbours who appear wealthy or drive smart cars. They expressed a sense of unease and discomfort over how to grasp new differences and similarities that are cross-cutting and redefining old boundaries. They struggle with racist stereotypes of how Africans have sourced their new wealth (for example through criminal activity or nepotism or joining the proverbial gravy train in politics or business).

The discourse of Summer Greens presented here thus draws a boundary which frames and embodies a broadly inclusive identity but which also sometimes sits uncomfortably with complex and contradictory images of the suburb and its residents.

8.1.2 A Middle Class Suburb

The second discourse is constructed around class. As the preceding chapters have shown, the majority of residents consider themselves to be middle class and speak of Summer Greens as being a middle class suburb. Without prompting, residents identified themselves as middle class, basing their self-assignment on a combination of criteria including occupation, housing tenure, education, and consumption patterns, which in turn are believed to reflect certain values and principles popularly associated with a middle class orientation and lifestyle. Yet as we have seen, especially in Chapters Four and Five, class identification is a difficult concept and conceals many different processes and

meanings. Moreover, the middle classes everywhere comprise a broad and heterogeneous category of people, and Summer Greens is no exception; there are people who qualify as middle class according to both etic and emic criteria, while others who meet only some of the criteria nonetheless consider themselves middle class. Thus, given the particular combination of residents in Summer Greens it is perhaps not surprising to find tension around the meaning of the term 'middle class' and around what constitutes appropriate comportment (both in public and in private) for a middle class suburb.

While the first discourse of Summer Greens signified a willed orientation toward racial and cultural difference (and perhaps even to eradicating it), the second discourse is predicated on a more explicit sense of achievement in upward social mobility and a concomitant fear of slipping back down the social ladder. As the study has shown, certain differences among residents, and the presence of people behaving in ways considered inappropriate or 'low class', are perceived as threatening to their newly acquired class status.

The discourse of Summer Greens as a middle class suburb embodies a powerful ideology of home ownership. This is considered a quality which confers respectability and status through responsibility, something which, according to the home-owning residents and indeed most tenants, cannot be achieved to the same degree through renting. As discussed in Chapter Six, privately-owned property is a financial asset associated with a social status (middle class) from which owners can derive a variety of socio-economic and other benefits which tenants cannot. The chapter argued that this distinction, and its continuous upkeep, both necessitates and justifies the time and money invested. For the home-owning residents, the distinction between tenants and themselves serves as an important index of class position. In other words, home ownership, they believe, both reflects and effects their middle class status. Though tied into a closely dependent relationship with banks, residents speak of the independence they have secured through ownership and the ability to mark and control private space. Wendy Parker (37, bank official, coloured), said, "I respect people's privacy and I expect them to respect mine - that is why I wanted

to move out of Factreton. I suppose it's just what other middle income people want in a middle class suburb". John Petersen summarised the opinion of all the owners I spoke to:

> It's my job and my income that allows me to buy property here. I've worked hard to get to where I am, and I believe I am entitled to my own place...and to live in a nice, safe, quiet suburb...with decent neighbours.

A single mother, Bulelwa Mabuza (53, teacher, African) is proud to have educated her children, one of whom is studying at university: "We're better off than my parents' generation because we have education [...] and freedom of speech and movement". However, she is frustrated that her other two daughters are currently unemployed, saying, "That's not how it should be at this point in time, they've all got a good education". Dreams of a better life for the whole family have been tempered for the time being by the reality of high unemployment.

Notwithstanding, everybody I spoke to shares Bulelwa's belief in the value of good education, and many residents are willing to pay for it, sending their children to private schools all over Cape Town. Liza Mondeo (36, coloured) has a daughter aged 15: "I believe in paying for a good education for my child and I am able to do it" on the salary she earns as a sales assistant. "It might get a bit tight sometimes, financially, but it will be worth it". Wendy Parker agreed:

> My eldest child is one of the few children in Summer Greens who goes to [a leading Cape Town school]. The school fees are much higher but my husband insists on sending him there. The school has facilities that we never had and we want to give that to our children. We pay extra for his computer classes but it's so important that he learns that, even if it's perhaps a bit more than we can afford.

Like a number of parents in the suburb, Leonard Carolus (38, compositor, coloured) believes that schools with an explicit Christian ethos provide better education than secular/government schools: "I think churches should be much more involved in schools now like they were in the past". He himself attended a Methodist primary school but since there is no such school in the vicinity of Summer Greens, he sends he daughter to a Catholic private school in Edgemead, the same school as Elizabeth and Mervyn Thompson's daughter. Elizabeth was educated at an Anglican school and Mervyn at a Catholic school in Athlone. They praise their daughter's school: "It's an absolutely

wonderfully strict school, a good school for morals - I won't recommend any other school. Government schools don't appeal to me, and certainly not at the moment. I think they are circuses", said Mervyn. Elizabeth added, "I think [the school] sticks to some of the good old values of family and faith and hard work. The fees are high but if you can afford the fees, you know your child is getting a good education, so it's not that bad".

The representation of Summer Greens as a middle class suburb is thus constructed around ideas of propriety (through employment, home ownership, and education) which enable and entitle residents to claim certain rights to privacy and to consume and display their achievements, as discussed in Chapter Six.

The middle class discourse also embodies a powerful idea of the nuclear family as the central and exemplary household structure for the suburb. The logo of the Summer Greens Residents Association bears out this ideal of a young, hetero-sexual, married, home owning, middle class couple with two children (the boy being older than the girl), all residing together in the same house. The assumption that the nuclear family constitutes normal and correct household structure is near-universal in middle class suburbia worldwide (Perin 1977; Whitehand & Carr 1999) and in fact underpins all religious institutions present in Summer Greens (manifested in sermons delivered, literature distributed, or the overt disapproval of children born out of wedlock - see Chapter Four), as well as much family-related legislation in South Africa and elsewhere. While it is indeed the most common type of household in Summer Greens - see Table 3.2 and its discussion page 69 - the suburb is home to a variety of domestic structures which reflect the reality of divorces, single-parent households, young people living independently as well as extended family arrangements where grandparents, in particular, often provide childcare. This suggests that the spatial layout, housing designs, property prices, and population profile also appeal to other family or household types, although - as suggested in earlier chapters - the attraction will depend on individual and family circumstances.

Suburbs are commonly considered to be the preferred habitat of the middle class (Silverstone 1997) although, as discussed in Chapter Six, this is increasingly belied by processes of gentrification and a diffusion of technology. Suburban settlement world-wide carries a host of connotations, not least in terms of the characteristics associated with its residents, their household organisation, their behaviour, priorities and values, as revealed in the preceding chapters. In South Africa, the term 'suburb' is generally deemed to embody qualities which stand in contrast to another form of settlement, that of the 'township'. Residents spoke of Summer Greens as a "clean", "quiet" and "peaceful" suburb, with "decent" people who "respect" their neighbours. One claimed that, "It's a different quality of person living here". When describing the township areas many residents have moved from, they used words such as "noisy", "dirty", "so much crime" and "bad behaviour". The tension between these two conceptions of residential settlements will be taken up again below. Some of the images in this second discourse are also drawn on in the third discourse of Summer Greens which constructs Summer Greens as a safe haven, a refuge from crime, violence and fear in the townships.

8.1.3 A Safe Community

As conveyed in several chapters, many residents have moved from crime- and gang-ridden areas of Cape Town, where violence appears to have embedded itself in the landscape, forcing people to cope with and adapt to fear on a daily basis. The discourse of Summer Greens as a safe community generally rests on residents' comparisons with their former neighbourhoods, where violence and the fear of it was enervating and the idea of staying was intolerable. They spoke of Summer Greens as a place of relative safety, where neighbours can be trusted to look out for each other, and where "children can be children" rather than witness or even become involved in violent crime. They used images such as "community" and "village" to reflect not only a sense of belonging but also the physical layout of the suburb: residents maintained that the pedestrian-oriented streetscape in Summer Greens made them feel far less vulnerable to violence on the streets than in their previous neighbourhoods, and the physical layout and people's vigilance are major contributing factors (see Chapter Four).

While many residents speak of Summer Greens as a community, several of them also concede that it is not "a close-knit community", as discussed in Chapter Four. Leonard Carolus (38, compositor, coloured) identified a tension between privatised life-styles and public engagement when he said, "We still have some way to go before we've got that kind of community. I think there are still some people who want to do their own thing, in their own little house". Patricia Erasmus (54, data capturer, coloured) argued that, "People need to come together more, but that's the big problem here, there are no community facilities, there's nowhere where the community can come together". They regard the continued development of a sense of community as being hampered, if not threatened, by a lack of public space and facilities. The absence of a community hall or sports facilities, for example, is seen as partly responsible for petty crime in the suburb as bored youth seek excitement (see Chapter Seven). The same assessment is made by the fourth discourse of Summer Greens; however, that discourse interprets the absence as but one of many reasons why the suburb is deteriorating.

8.1.4 A Suburb in Decline

This discourse differs from the preceding three in its expressly negative evaluation of the suburb. While all residents identify individual issues or incidents in the suburb of which they disapprove, this discourse represents an overall assessment of Summer Greens as being in decline. It is an evaluation made by a number of white residents (but also some coloured residents) whose expectations of 'the new South Africa' have been disappointed. They feel insecure about their place in the changing society and are uncertain of its future. South Africa is no longer what they thought it was, and the new South Africa is not what they thought it would be either: it did not bring a new 'order' but a new 'disorder', which they see reflected and enacted in Summer Greens in the daylight robberies of the local butcher and supermarket; in the groups of young men "loitering" on the street corner opposite the supermarket, smoking, drinking and sometimes dealing in drugs; in the minibus taxis that since 1998 charge down through the main road of the suburb (a dead-end) without license to do so; in the neglected house exteriors and untidy gardens here and there around the suburb; in the peeling paint on the suburb's perimeter

wall; in the walls and barbed wire they themselves feel compelled to erect around their properties for reasons of security and privacy; and in the seeming inability or unwillingness of the authorities to "do anything about it". Since 1994, they have also seen a growing number of Africans move into the suburb and some residents posit a "causal chain" (Ben-Ari 1995:203) linking the change in racial profile with the visible deterioration of certain buildings and public spaces. This discourse presents Summer Greens as a suburb in decline and increasingly resembling a "township", which to many South Africans still carries connotations of being disorderly, crime-ridden, poor, overcrowded, dirty and noisy.

"With all these blacks moving in, this place is going down. It's no longer a suburb, it's a location", said Dorothy, a 62-year-old white secretary, using an old term for black townships. She and her family moved into Summer Greens in 1993 at a time when white households were still the majority. Speaking nostalgically of that time, she recalled:

> In those days this place was lovely. It was clean and safe and it was a decent people living here. Everyone looked after their house and the gardens were looked after [...] We had garden competitions [...] It's not like that anymore. Those people moving in, they don't care, they don't respect other people and their rights. This place used to be quiet, now it's noisy and dirty.

In early 1999 Dorothy crossed her level of tolerance and moved to Edgemead, a suburb of predominantly white residents.

Chapter Two, Table 2.9 presented the changing racial profile of the suburb which showed an increase in the proportions of African and coloured residents and a decrease in that of white residents. While further longitudinal study is required before any significant conclusions can be drawn about a possible re-segregation trend, all the local estate agents and several residents see a clear causal link between the two trends. They claim that some of the white residents who could afford to had deliberately moved on to other suburbs where non-whites were still a minority (e.g. Bothasig or Edgemead). John Petersen declared this process a "white exodus" but agreed with Elizabeth that "those who don't like [the racial mix] must just move out". Estate agents' records show that many of the white people who moved out had been in Summer Greens since the early years, and the

agents speculated that by the mid-1990s those whites had reached their level of tolerance. One estate agent, however, also spoke of several other white residents who had been retrenched and were forced to sell their homes in Summer Greens and move to cheaper areas closer to Milnerton where they as whites were in a minority. Finally, it may of course also be that a number of the white residents moving out had simply reached a stage in their domestic life cycle where they were keen and able to move out and into more expensive housing: their purchase of a home in Summer Greens might always have been intended as a stepping stone, an affordable step into home ownership, which would take them into more up-market property elsewhere in the city. It is thus not possible to generalise as to the motives of those moving out, but the *image* of a white exodus remains powerful, and it is reinforced by some of the ways white (and a seemingly growing number of coloured) residents speak of Summer Greens as a suburb in decline.

Like many residents in the Victoria Palms section of Summer Greens, Marcus and Annabel Clifford (both white) drew a distinction between their section and the rest of the suburb: "Victoria Palms is still a pretty area but Summer Greens is a mess and has a bad element living there". Annabel recalled:

> When we first moved in it was nice...there was a better class of people living in Victoria Palms but a lot of them moved out [...] One of our neighbours moved to Bothasig because they didn't feel that it was safe for their children here [...] There are a lot of Nigerians who deal in drugs here and there's crimes and burglaries here all the time.

Her words reflect the discourse of decline by identifying one of several categories of people who are held to be responsible for the deterioration. These include Africans - both South Africans and those from other parts of the continent - Muslims and tenants. The prejudice is not exclusive to white residents. As mentioned in the earlier section on the first discourse, Frank (a coloured resident) blamed Jewish property owners, and Mervyn and Brian (also coloured) were concerned that Muslims, Nigerians and Mozambicans were "taking over". Denise, a 33-year-old clerk (also coloured) said, "I'm not a racist, but there are too many blacks and Nigerians in Summer Greens and they want to take over", her use of "blacks" presumably referring to South African Africans. Stanley, a 34-year-old coloured truck driver, referred to African residents as "baboons" who also "want to

take over". The aggressive language is frequently used in connection with these groups, as a correlation is made between their increasing presence in Summer Greens and the interviewees' growing sense of uncertainty and decline. However, neither the Africans nor the Muslims I spoke to were too concerned with prejudice against them, dismissing it as narrow-minded and conservative talk from people who feel insecure in the changing social landscape of South Africa. One Nigerian resident (one of a number of professional football players housed in two properties owned by a Cape Town football club) said, "They just need a scapegoat. I don't bother with those people, you know, they're not worth it, they're not going to change their attitude just because I'm friendly to them, you know, they won't change". A Zambian academic said he did not feel personally affected by the prejudice: "I don't really have a problem with them. I mean, it's sad they think that way about foreigners, but that's their problem, I mean, it hasn't become my problem yet".

As we have seen, residents develop a variety of senses of the place called Summer Greens through a complex process of analysis and evaluation of difference and sameness, and these are asserted in a variety of ways. Besides articulating identity and place in terms of a set of internal qualities of Summer Greens, the suburb is connected into metropolitan, provincial, national and global networks and resources from which residents can also draw meaning and a sense of belonging. They do this by relating Summer Greens to somewhere else, sometimes identifying *with*, sometimes identifying *against* "that place". It might be argued that establishing a sense of place and an identity by drawing a comparison with somewhere which, in their view, is *different*, is particularly important for residents when they are moving up - or down - in society, seeking to consolidate a new social status and establish a new identity (or clinging to an old status and an old identity). As Said (1978) has eloquently argued, place identity refers not only to a specific place; it is simultaneously making a statement about another place. The boundary around Summer Greens marks a clearly identifiable territory and operates around the relations *within* and *across* it, and a sense of place is thus derived from the relational nature of social boundaries (Wallman 1978; Cohen 1985). Aside from the identification with the 'new South Africa' discussed above, the most common identification against Summer Greens concerned townships.

During one of our many conversations Abby Davis suggested that Summer Greens should be renamed "Khayelitsha Section Two". Another resident confessed that "on Sundays [as family and friends come to visit residents] I call this place Langa, there's blacks everywhere". These metaphors of Summer Greens as an African township have a "mission" (Ben-Ari 1995:204, citing Fernandez 1986): they both highlight some of the characteristics associated with the suburb of Summer Greens and evaluate them by expressing an opinion on such a locality. The metaphors suggest the extent to which residents' representations of Summer Greens pivot on a tension between two conceptions of residential settlements, those of suburbs and those of townships. Each is historically rooted in the Apartheid urban landscape and each lingers in the post-Apartheid setting to the extent that public discourse continues to conflate rich with poor non-white neighbourhoods; they are commonly subsumed under the term 'townships', thus ignoring the growing internal class divisions among blacks *within* those residential areas. The discourses of Summer Greens thus contrast "suburb" with "township" and build the full stereotypes of each:

Suburb	Township
Middle class	Low class/working class
Clean	Dirty
Quiet	Noisy
Safe	Dangerous
Orderly	Disorderly
Peaceful	Violent
Affluent	Poor
White	Black

The contrasts are recognised by blacks as well. Pondering the white-black antithesis, one elderly African resident, Lerato Shakoane, said,

> I suppose Gugs [Gugulethu] is a suburb, but we always call it a township. That's how we grew up, [calling it] a township or lokasie [location]. Suburbs was where white people lived. [...] I think a suburb now is where rich people live, rich whites and rich blacks...well, maybe not rich, but people like us here in Summer Greens.

A number of both white and coloured residents whom I spoke to had never visited an African township and had no intention of going there, yet they subscribed to the comparison presented in the matrix, basing their evaluation on media accounts, hearsay,

and in some cases the reports they received from their domestic and garden workers. Assenting to the two stereotypes allows residents to justify a number of attitudes towards each place and its people, not least when, for example, township residents are regarded as 'trespassing' in the suburb when visiting family or friends (as suggested above). It also allows former township residents to justify their reasons for leaving a township settlement for suburbia, sometimes at high personal cost, both socially and economically. Perpetuating particular images of 'suburb' and 'township' serves to reinforce a social distance which many residents believe is merited on the basis of either their recent successful upward social mobility or their historically privileged social position. For some, it camouflages a daily struggle to sustain the new lifestyle they have chosen - and helps to ease any distress they feel about leaving family and friends 'behind' in the township settlements.

Despite the dramatic opposition of the two images, there is however a perception - as suggested above - that the distinction between the suburb of Summer Greens and the townships of Cape Town is under threat of becoming blurred. This understanding has in fact focused some residents' efforts into doing philanthropic work in the townships. For example, Mervyn Thompson, current chairperson of the Summer Greens Residents Association, has helped establish soccer teams and a residents association in Marconi Beam [the informal settlement nearest to Summer Greens], "offering my energy and expertise to that area to help them develop [...] We are so fortunate here in Summer Greens". His primary reason for offering his assistance appears, however, to be self-interest; he warns that Summer Greens residents can never feel safe, as long as there is poverty nearby, because:

> Crime will be rampant there, and then because we're an affluent area, they'll come into our areas while we're at work and break in here [...] Unless we look at what's happening there and put our voice in at the municipality to develop those areas, those kids there are going to grow up loose and they're going to be coming here because they think 'well, these people in Summer Greens are living nicely, they have a nice car' and then they'll steal it all from us.

Another resident echoed Mervyn's motivation, although she had yet to involve herself in "community work" in those areas; Beverley Feldman (42, white, works in human resources) asserted that:

> It's no good living in my cosy little Summer Greens, thinking that I'm okay so why worry about the have-nots, because it is going to spill into my area. If people are unemployed and starving, you can't really blame them for robbing from other people because they need to survive.

Maintaining a distinction between the perceived affluence of Summer Greens and nearby areas of poverty is thus not only physically and symbolically attempted by the security features of Summer Greens but also through investing energy to help the less affluent build local networks of support that will discourage any desire to deprive Summer Greens of its relative privilege and prosperity.

8.2 BELONGING AND BECOMING

The discourses of Summer Greens construct and embody senses of place. As knowledge of the local, as understandings of space and the properties of social life, they cannot be understood in isolation from the "real fabric" (Shields 1991:7) or the "textures" (Halperin 1998:72) of the concrete, everyday practices through which people live their lives and reproduce Summer Greens as a locality and a structure of feeling (cf. Williams 1973; Appadurai 1995). The discursive and non-discursive practices go hand in hand to draw and redraw the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion that produce the place and people of Summer Greens.

As a new locality, Summer Greens does not have a substantive local history of a depth that is rich with symbols offering some sense of identity, continuity and belonging. Nonetheless, in the short period of a decade residents have developed a sense of place and a territorial attachment to the suburb. In response to the question "If a stranger asked you, 'what place do you come from?', what would you reply?", 18 out of 40 people (45%) answered Summer Greens (other replies were Milnerton, Cape Town, previous areas of residence, elsewhere in South Africa or Africa). Developing an attachment takes time, and 13 of the 18 have in fact lived in Summer Greens for more than four years. However,

even residents who have lived there for only one or two years also identified the suburb as the place they come from, lending further support to the argument that their experience of upward social mobility involves attempts to disassociate themselves from their old neighbourhood, and that their reinvention of self relies on a move to disconnect with their past. These efforts are captured in, for example, Charleen October's earlier observation (page 87) that some coloured residents who consider themselves 'white' decline to greet other coloured people, and in Alicia Scott's suggestion (page 254) that unless people move out of old Apartheid-segregated areas they will continue to use race as their primary frame of reference.

Residents' attachment to the suburb is represented in a series of metaphors and images, the most dominant of which is - not inappropriately - 'the new South Africa'. In the early days of Summer Greens, the local media gave attention to this model (*Cape Times* 13/9/96), but more recently this representation has resurfaced. The following letter to the editor illustrates the rather jubilant acclaim bestowed on Summer Greens by an outsider:

Summer Greens is the model for co-existence

Things are not nearly as dismal as the media try to claim concerning the "New South Africa". Please hear some good news for a change. As one who since July 1999 has twice a week been providing evening medical consultations at N1 City Hospital, I have come to meet many residents from Summer Greens, that massive middle class development next to the N1 highway. I have made a point of asking the wide spectrum of residents what living conditions are like there. Often, with tears in their eyes they declare with pride that Summer Greens simply has to be the model for harmonious co-existence in South Africa.

It is most heart-warming to be able to report that I have not yet met a single dissenter. All testify to the wonderful social relations that exist there. House parties and *braais* are mostly fully integrated, children go to the same schools, lift clubs are unsegregated, and altogether things are truly "hunky-dory" there.

The sceptics may argue that most of the residents there are "go-getters" with adequate education and employment, and are thus more economically-endowed than the majority of South Africans who live in abject poverty and are unemployed and without hope. However, let it be said that the best hope for South Africa lies not from within the ranks of the wealthy upper class, or from the poor masses, but undoubtedly from the growing middle class. More developments of the calibre of Summer Greens must be encouraged throughout the country.

Dr Desmond Stumpf, Durbanville
Cape Times 5/9/00

The senses of place presented in this study result from the meanings people actively give to their everyday lives (Massey 1995). In other words, they develop in a variety of ways. When place-making in a new place, people bring to bear everything they know and have experienced to that point in their lives. Given the variety of individual life histories - the Apartheid segregation of the past and the newness of the Summer Greens experiment - senses of place develop through people's need to mark off difference from others, and they are therefore contested by different people with different power to declare and maintain their sense of place. As each chapter has shown, the intersection of identity with a sense of place is neither simple nor uncontested. The battles for control of pieces of land in the suburb (cf. Chapter Seven) are potent statements of social power, but many other - more subtle - ways in which identities are contested have been presented here. They illustrate the centrality of boundaries in Summer Greens in defining senses of place and belonging.

As maps of meaning, the discourses and images drawn from the data presented in preceding chapters and discussed here serve a referential function, helping residents make sense of their social world; they provide a framework for approaching difference, for reconstructing and interpreting relationships and events, and for managing uncertainty and insecurity (Shields 1991; Jackson 1992). But they also serve an anticipatory function, as they offer a guide to future encounters and interactions, both within Summer Greens and beyond. The maps assign meanings to spaces (turning them into places) as well as helping residents read and negotiate their way through such places. As ways of constructing class, race and place and managing their different meanings, the discourses emerging from the present study both reflect and effect the development of senses of place. The ways in which residents speak of Summer Greens are not only central to the production of locality (which simultaneously offers insight into their appraisal of previous residential localities); they also reflect a tension between the past and the present which is carried through into the everyday operation of identity and community. As residents have come together from diverse backgrounds, we are reminded that Summer Greens is not an entirely homogeneous suburban space but in significant ways a differentiated space that has emerged out of people's diverse responses to the production

of difference, out of cross-cutting social relations (especially class and race) within and beyond the suburb, and out of spatial connections and disconnections which remain in part traceable across the post-Apartheid urban landscape.

The study suggests that new middle class suburbs emerging across South African cities are crucial areas in which race and class relations are being redefined. Further comparative and longitudinal research in other post-Apartheid residential settings would provide much needed insight into new non-racial residential patterns and social contours of post-Apartheid living. This study suggests that although social differentiation among the residents is increasingly being restructured around class, race remains a salient variable in residents' constructions of themselves and each other. Moreover, ethnic-religious prejudice has been shown to influence local conflict and constructions of community, reflecting new shifts in identity politics in post-Apartheid South Africa. Old categories and old vocabularies are unable to satisfactorily capture and convey complex new realities: a new vocabulary is needed. As edges of difference, social boundaries may be a useful place to start the search.

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APPENDIX 1

The 1996 Population Census used the following definitions (Statistics South Africa 1996b):

Employment
"Employment means working for pay, profit or family gain. The term covers formal work for a salary or wage in a business, or a business establishment which has a value added tax (VAT) number, as well as informal work such as making things for sale or selling things or rendering a service in an establishment which has no VAT number" (page 6).

Employment, formal
"Formal employment takes place in a business which has a value added tax (VAT) number. A person in formal employment can be self-employed, an employer, an employee or a working family member" (page 6).

Employment, informal
"Informal employment takes place in a small or micro business without a value added tax (VAT) number. A person in informal employment can be self-employed, an employer, an employee or a working family member" (page 6).

Unemployment
"Unemployment has two definitions. The first, the strict definition, or new official definition, refers to a situation where an economically active person had been looking for work four weeks prior to an interview, but had found none. The second, the expanded definition, refers to an economically active person who had no work, and did not specify the time period of job-seeking behaviour at the time of Census '96, but would accept work if given the opportunity, and could start work immediately. The expanded definition was used in Census '96, because questions were not asked about job-seeking behaviour in the four weeks prior to census night" (page 21).

Population group
"Respondents were asked to indicate the populations group into which they would classify themselves. Therefore self-description, rather than any other method, was used for classification purposes. The categories were:
1. African/Black
2. Coloured
3. Indian/Asian
4. White
5. Other, to be specified by the respondent"

(page 16).

Occupation
The census used the following occupational divisions:

(1) Legislators, senior officials and managers
(2) Professionals
(3) Technicians and associate professionals
(4) Clerks
(5) Service, shop and market sales
(6) Skilled agriculture and fishery
(7) Craft and related trades
(8) Plant and machine operators and assembly
(9) Elementary occupations
(10) Other/not stated

Divisions 1-5 pertain to middle class occupations, with 4-5 generally considered to be lower middle class occupations (cf. Crankshaw 1997; Reid 1998). My calculations for middle class occupations are therefore derived from figures pertaining to Divisions 1-5.

Table A1

Employment by occupation and population group: South Africa 1996
(Source: Statistics South Africa 1996 Population Census)

Population group	Legislators, senior officials & managers	Profes-sionals	Techni-cians & associate profes-sionals	Clerks	Service, shop & market sales	Skilled agric. & fishery	Craft & related trades	Plant & machine operators & assembly	Elemen-tary occupa-tions	Other/ not stated	Total
African/Black	97 276	427 393	178 585	248 276	513 660	267 241	892 927	585 621	1 918 681	552 818	**5 682 478**
Coloured	30 370	74 870	55 413	105 031	92 843	35 428	160 345	99 095	372 244	103 876	**1 129 515**
Indian/Asian	27 418	41 800	36 338	53 687	35 663	1 768	42 563	35 463	18 814	69 972	**363 486**
White	205 652	316 718	266 513	294 414	171 471	50 809	195 469	51 847	54 229	249 329	**1 856 451**
Unspecified/ Other	4 188	10 175	6 033	8 545	7 170	2 032	10 693	5 887	16 139	11 057	**81 919**
Total	**364 904**	**870 956**	**542 882**	**709 953**	**820 807**	**357 278**	**1 301 997**	**777 913**	**2 380 107**	**987 052**	**9 113 451**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
African/Black	2	8	3	5	10	5	17	11	37	-	**100**
Coloured	3	7	5	10	9	3	16	10	36	-	**100**
Indian/Asian	9	14	12	18	12	1	15	12	6	-	**100**
White	13	20	17	18	11	3	12	3	3	-	**100**
Unspecified/ Other	6	14	9	12	10	3	15	8	23	-	**100**
Total	**4**	**11**	**7**	**9**	**10**	**4**	**16**	**10**	**29**	-	**100**

Table A2

Employment by occupation and population group: Summer Greens 1996
(Source: Statistics South Africa 1996 Population Census)

Population group	Legislators, senior officials & managers	Profes-sionals	Techni-cians & associate profes-sionals	Clerks	Service, shop & market sales	Skilled agric. & fishery	Craft & related trades	Plant & machine operators & assembly	Elemen-tary occupa-tions	Other/ not stated	Total
African/Black	29	66	44	19	11	1	7	9	15	19	**220**
Coloured	33	86	98	117	49	7	72	43	36	44	**585**
Indian/Asian	8	3	4	6	5	-	2	1	-	3	**32**
White	97	94	189	274	129	3	131	34	22	91	**1064**
Unspecified/ Other	17	39	38	51	17	-	31	6	6	21	**226**
Total	**184**	**288**	**373**	**467**	**211**	**11**	**243**	**93**	**79**	**178**	**2127**
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	**%**
African/Black	13	30	20	9	5	0.5	3	4	7	8.5	**100**
Coloured	6	15	17	20	8	2	12	7	6	7	**100**
Indian/Asian	25	9	13	19	16	-	6	3	-	9	**100**
White	9	9	18	26	12	0.3	12	3	2	8.6	**100**
Unspecified/ Other	8	17	17	23	8	-	14	3	3	9	**100**
Total	**8.5**	**13.5**	**17.5**	**22**	**10**	**1**	**11**	**4.5**	**4**	**8**	**100**

Table A3

Distribution of total middle class occupation and population group: South Africa 1996
(Source: Statistics South Africa 1996 Population Census)

	South Africa	
African	1 465 190	44 %
Coloured	358 527	11 %
Indian/Asian	194 906	6 %
White	1 254 768	38 %
Unspecified/ Other	36 111	1 %
Total	3 309 502	100 %