Urban Sustainability Amid Neoliberalism: the Tensions Between Capital and Economic Wellbeing in the Contemporary City

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Abstract

We live in a period of catastrophic environmental collapse, while our economies are increasingly unequal. As hubs of human activity, cities are the sites of intense economic activity; the environmental consequences; and frequently, the related social issues. Though cities are more responsive to democracy, national governments have been co-opted by the interests of capital. The ensuing shift towards neoliberalism has seen reduced social welfare provisioning and the increased mobility of capital. Consequently, cities compete for capital to provide economic welfare in their locale. With the observation that UK cities are in no way sustainable, this study employed grounded theory and 86 interviews with policymakers and key stakeholders were conducted in York (29), Bath (9), Bristol (8), Edinburgh (12), Plymouth (10) and Preston (11), from which an understanding of each city was constructed. From these, it was found that the need for economic welfare is the priority of both a city's local authority and its population. (Re)attracting capital dominates a local authority's resources. Owing to its private nature, however, capital is unequal and, accordingly, even those case studies considered to be 'wealthy' had significant problems with deprivation. A strategy devised by Defilippis (1999, 2004), and partially enacted in Preston, however, counters this. By using the resources of a city's anchor organisations to favour local, democratic control in land-use (e.g. mutual housing associations), investment (e.g. community banks) and the procurement of services (e.g. co-operatives), more egalitarian and spatially-fixed welfare may be encouraged. From the resulting economic wellbeing, the long-term goals associated with sustainability were found to become the priority of local authorities and their populations, while the encouragement of social economy models leads to superior sustainability outputs from a city's economic capacities. Therefore, through resolving the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing, urban sustainability amid neoliberalism is possible in the contemporary city.

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List of Abbreviations

4IR...Fourth Industrial Revolution

BCC ....Bristol City Council

BGCP .... Bristol Green Capital Partnership

BathNES .... Bath and North-East Somerset Council

CEC.. City of Edinburgh Council

CIC...Charitable Interest Company

CLES ....Centre for Local Economic Strategies

COP21 ....United Nation's 21st Conference of the Parties

CYC..City of York Council

GDP... Gross Domestic Product

GVA...Gross Value Added

LEP ....Local Enterprise Partnership

OECD................................Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

POE ....Publicly Owned Enterprise

PlCC...Plymouth City Council

PrCC ....Preston City Council

RDA...Regional Development Agency

SME.. Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprise

UoB .... University of Bath

UoY ....University of York

Acknowledgements

Author's Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university. All sources are acknowledged as references.

1. Introduction

This thesis is a grounded theory study into urban sustainability transitions in the UK. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews with policymakers and key stakeholders in York, Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston. Emerging from these conversations the central argument within this thesis is how the need for cities to attract capital as, "accumulated labour […] which, when appropriated on a private, i.e. exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour" (Bourdieu, 1986, p.241) and groupings that bring capital, is incompatible with urban sustainability. This is due to the inequality and deprivation that arises from this form of economic development which renders economic wellbeing, as the financial security that citizens require to meet their basic needs and a prerequisite to the long-term goals associated with sustainability, impossible. The need to attract capital has been increased by shifts towards neoliberalism, which may be seen as a late form of capitalism in which the interests of capital in society are increasingly prioritised (Gane, 2012; Harvey, 1989). Consequently, in this thesis I am interested to explore how the effects of capital may be reduced in order to create more sustainable urban practices in the future.

The motivation for undertaking a study such as this stems from an interest and active involvement in civic society in my own city: York. The latter includes volunteering with a community group, sitting on the committee for a running club, in addition to participation in an environmental group and the local Labour Party. The inspiration for conducting research on a city-scale, therefore, arises from the feeling that this is the level at which I may have democratic input. Academic curiosity also stems from the observation that all UK cities are far from being sustainable in any real sense of the word in that they all appear to have serious social problems, a severe net-negative impact upon the environment, and economies that poorly serve the needs of their residents, while their public institutions are in no way able to intervene adequately in these areas. It is in this context that this research takes a genuinely exploratory approach to discover the reasons for this lack of sustainability in an attempt to find answers as to how this may be addressed.

1.1. Introduction Structure

This chapter presents the background to the issues associated with urban sustainability, including the threat of climate change and impact more widely on the environment, the role

of cities within this, the factors that constitute sustainability, and the constraints that are placed on cities that may prevent them from achieving this. This is followed by how grounded theory was used in this study to address questions of urban sustainability transitions. In doing so, I will be expanding upon themes and key areas that emerged from conversations with interviewees. After this, the reasons why the six case-studies that were the focus of this study were chosen will be expanded upon. The next part presents the aim and objectives of the study. This is followed by an overview of the grounded theory approach through which these are achieved, including the philosophical stance and individual methods employed. Then, the three areas of knowledge that this study contributes toward are set forth, notably around different forms of urban governance and the implications for sustainability; the identification and exploration of three barriers to urban sustainability (those related to 'political fluctuation', 'lack of social economy models', and 'built heritage') that are not often considered in existing literature; and the exploration of grounded theory as a methodology for reconciling economic objectives with sustainability. The chapter concludes with a chapter-by-chapter summary of the structure of the remaining thesis.

1.2. Urban Sustainability in the UK

The projected levels of climate change represent possibly the most significant environmental threat to modern humans, and are thus the primary reason for looking to achieve sustainability. The most recent understanding set forth by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2018a, p.vi) – the intergovernmental body of the United Nations consisting of many of the world's leading climate experts – claims that, without a sharp decline in carbon emissions by 2030, global warming will reach 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. While climate-related risks for natural and human systems are higher for 1.5°C than at present, the IPCC (2018a) predicts significant differences between 1.5°C and 2°C. The appropriate urgent need to reduce carbon emissions in line with the former is addressed by the Paris Agreement signed at the United Nation's 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) in 2015 (UNFCCC, 2016). Current global plans, however, are predicted to lead to a 3°C rise in temperatures (Climate Change Committee, 2019a, p.11). Consequent to this, the UK now targets net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 (Shepheard, 2020). Despite this, intermediary targets in the UK have been met mainly by switches away from coal and towards natural gas and renewables (BEIS, 2019).

Such relatively easy gains cannot be made again, and the UK is not on track to meet its targets from 2023 onwards (Climate Change Committee, 2019b, p.11).

Although globally, urban areas occupy just three per cent of land, as hubs of human activity they contribute 75 per cent of carbon emissions and consume 75 per cent of all resources (de Wit et al, 2018, p.30; UNEP, 2015). Therefore, with the portion of the world's population who reside in cities being predicted to increase from the current 55 to 68 per cent by 2050 (UN DESA, 2018), contributions from urban areas are likely to become even more significant. Furthermore, according to the IPCC (2018b), with the need to reduce carbon emissions from buildings by 80 to 90 per cent, reduce energy use from transport by 30 per cent, and for renewables to supply 70 to 85 per cent of electricity by 2050, there are clear implications for cities if targets are to be met. Accordingly, understanding how to reduce carbon emissions from cities as specific entities has been identified as being crucial in tackling climate change (Broto & Bulkeley, 2013; Hodson & Marvin, 2012; Irvine & Bai, 2019).

Being a global problem, climate change requires an international response. A 'democratic deficit' in which many nations are responsive to the needs of capital, however, makes the appropriate policies difficult to enact (Barber, 2017; While et al., 2010). This has direct ramifications for cities with many aspects of their sustainability affected by nationally-dictated elements such as legislation, the market as an allocation system, or wider infrastructure deficits (Frantzeskaki & Loorbach, 2010; Geels, 2010). Furthermore, due to the budgetary constraints that nations place upon their own cities; for example, with austerity, in addition to the privatisation of services and infrastructure, cities are themselves limited in the extent to which they have the resources to pursue sustainability policies (HM Treasury, 2015; Lowndes & Gardner, 2016; North et al., 2017; Park et al., 2012; While & Eadson, 2019; 2022).

Cities, meanwhile, though nuanced, are more on the scale at which democracy functions, making them more responsive to the needs of people than nations (Barber, 2017; Purcell, 2006). The disparity in democratic participation is perhaps best expressed by the difference in trust between local and national government in England – 64 compared to 36 per cent respectively (DCLG, 2011a, p.2). Furthermore, cities are often on the forefront of the effects of climate change – many being on major rivers or on coastal regions and at risk of flooding (Bloomberg, 2015; Rosenzweig, 2011). Accordingly, with the establishment of city networks such as the C40 that features mayors from many of the world's prominent cities, and a high

level of visibility at COP21, cities appear to be ever more important in fulfilling the space left by national government inaction (Barber, 2017; Dasgupta, 2015; Hale, 2016; Leffel & Acuto, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2020; Pieper, 2016; Tollin, 2015; UN Habitat, 2015). Additionally, as sites of human intensity, Fuenfschilling et al. (2019) have identified cities as being critical for experimentation that may bring about sustainability transformations.

While the threat of climate change is perhaps the most pressing problem, from chemical pollution to freshwater withdrawals and biodiversity loss to air pollution, human activities are impacting the environment more widely and at unprecedented rates (IPCC, 2018a). Due to requiring the importing of materials and the exporting of waste materials, cities have inherent environmental implications beyond their borders (Mori & Christodoulou, 2012). Furthermore, with having built up in ad hoc ways over centuries, such impact is exacerbated by no UK city having been designed with environmental sustainability in mind; for instance, to accommodate more sustainable forms of transport or recycling functions (Bithas & Christofakis, 2006).

Recognizing the need to consolidate with other societal outcomes, since the UN report, *Our Common Future* (Brundtland et al., 1987), the environment has frequently been considered through its interaction with social and economic aspects (Hodson & Marvin, 2017). Here, 'sustainability', or 'sustainable development' is defined as, "[meeting] the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland et al., 1987, p.16). In practical terms, sustainability is predicated upon environmental, economic and social concerns being able to reproduce themselves (Kadir & Jamaludin, 2013; Zheng et al., 2014). There is ambiguity as, while there is agreement that social sustainability is defined as there being enough welfare for a population to be able to reproduce itself, some scholars argue for the addition of social equity and inclusivity (Bramley et al., 2009; Dempsey et al., 2012; Pierson, 2002). Rogers (1997, p.26) also suggests that cultural and political aspects are fundamental to sustainability. Consistent with this recommendation, commentators have argued that for sustainability to succeed it must achieve political goals, and that culture must be considered due to its impact on elements of sustainability such as perceptions of renewable energy (Cohen et al., 2016; Haf & Parkhill, 2017; Hawkes, 2001).

There are also a range of other factors that cities must reconcile to achieve sustainable outcomes. First, cities are constrained by existing infrastructure 'lock-in' (Thacker et al., 2019). Second, due to technological advances resulting in there being greater numbers of high-paid professional and low-paid service roles, decreasing middling manufacturing and administrative roles, and the benefits mainly going to the owners of capital, the economy is increasingly unequal (Doherty et al., 2020; O'Connor, 2015; ONS, 2019; Schwab, 2017). Third, shifts toward neoliberalism have seen less spatially-fixed economic welfare within cities through policies such as increased privatisation and reductions in the provisioning of social welfare programmes, such as those around housing, or social security to ensure that members of society can meet their basic needs, in addition to the increasing mobility of capital and the decline of traditional manufacturing industries; the latter two also being accelerated by technological advances (Defilippis, 2004; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002; While et al., 2004). Consequently, cities have moved from a 'managerial' form of urban governance in which there is a focus on providing social welfare programmes and public services to their populations to an 'entrepreneurial' form in which cities compete with each other to attract capital so that they may foster economic development and employment growth (Defilippis, 2004; Harvey, 1989; 2001; Jonas et al., 2011).

1.3. How This Study Addresses Urban Sustainability Transitions

This study looked to address the observation that cities are in no way sustainable with grounded theory as an inductive inquiry methodology. Due to their emergence from the voices of participants, this thesis explores four concerns that were found to shape urban sustainability, within which insight into sustainability transitions lie. First, this study engages with how urban sustainability is influenced by the culture of residents, where culture is defined as, "the social production and transmission of values and meaning." (Hawkes, 2001, p.1). Second, this study engages with the ways in which the ability of local authorities to provide public goods shapes urban sustainability, whereby public goods are defined as commodities and services that are available to all society such as the air we breathe or a social service goods. Third, this study engages with the role that 'economic welfare', as the ways in which the wages and profits from economic processes, including any intervention from government, meet the economic needs of a city's residents has on urban sustainability. To interject, while 'welfare' has an association with the 'welfare state', here the use of the term

is consistent with the manner employed by van Bavel (2016, p.4) in being economic in derivation:

> "It is often assumed that markets, if unobstructed, offer flexibility, and a rapid mobilization and efficient allocation of production factors, and that they create on-going economic growth and a rise of welfare."

Through its role in economic processes, it is within this concern that capital, and the groupings that bring capital, reside. Fourth, this study engages with factors that determine social wellbeing, such as equality, social cohesion and deprivation.

This study also explores elements within the collective conversations with interviewees as a means through which to create a pathway towards urban sustainability for an individual city. Adopting York as the primary case study, barriers were identified to the city becoming more sustainable: a political fluctuation in the local authority that reduces its ability to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies; the lack of a social economy (social enterprises, co-operatives etc.) that may bring wider sustainability benefits; and a cultural and economic conservatism stemming from the built heritage. Sustainability related problems were also identified that were found to be related to these barriers and may benefit from their being overcome: a lack of renewable energy production, income inequality, inadequate sustainable transport, a lack of 'affordable housing', and poor recycling waste provisioning.

1.4. Case Studies

This research is based upon six case studies. **York** was chosen as the primary case study due to the city possessing several notable characteristics that were thought worthy of research. York's rich built heritage is the basis for an international element in the modern era as the city attracts 8.4 million tourists annually (Visit York, 2018) and a large number of foreign students. Accordingly, York's economy has transformed from the 1970s onwards with significant traditional industries in railway and confectionery being replaced by an increasingly prevalent service economy based upon tourism, in addition to a substantial number of professional roles.

Although the secondary case studies, as will be detailed, were chosen on the basis of elements relating to York, they also possess their own characteristics that makes them worthy of study:

- Much like York, **Bath** is a city rich in built heritage which forms the basis for tourism as the city's main industry. However, in Bath's instance, the built heritage is Georgian, in addition to a Roman Bath.

- **Bristol** is notable for a significant environmental culture and the city won the European Green Capital Award in 2015. Bristol is a hub for the contemporary economy in the UK with the presence of particularly strong knowledge and high-tech industries.

- **Edinburgh** may be considered to be a global capital with significant built heritage including Victorian and Georgian respective 'old' and 'new towns', world renowned festivals, and being the Scottish centre for government, finance and education.

- **Plymouth** has a significant maritime past as a commercial shipping port, in shipbuilding and being home to the Royal Navy. While the first two remain significant, the city faces numerous economic challenges as it looks to reorientate itself.

- As a Lancashire city that grew rapidly during the Industrial Revolution with the expansion of textile manufacturing, **Preston** also faces considerable economic challenges. The city, however, has pursued economic development in an unconventional form being based upon a progressive procurement strategy in what has been termed the 'Preston Model'.

Therefore, there are varying characteristics and dynamics that make the case studies suitable from which to gain an understanding of urban sustainability.

1.5. Aim and Objectives

Consequent to the need for urban sustainability transitions and the challenges that must be overcome to achieve this, the aim of this study is to:

1. Explore how the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing within contemporary urban governance processes may be resolved, and their relation to sustainability transitions.

This aim will be achieved through two objectives:

1. Develop theory and concepts around urban sustainability transitions.
2. Explore how the application of grounded theory may be used to address issues of urban sustainability transitions.

1.6. Methodology

Consistent with the grounded theory approach that this study identifies with (Charmaz, 2006), this aim and these objectives were arrived at through an iterative process as. The research treats the reasons for levels of urban sustainability as a reality that may be accessed subjectively by those who experience that phenomenon in addition to through objective measurement. Therefore, the philosophical position is critical realism (Bryman, 2012). The primary focus is on the subjective element within data collection. Consequently, this study is qualitative and, though diverges at times, most closely identifies with the constructivist branch of grounded theory in which the resulting theory is considered to be a 'construction' between those involved (Charmaz, 2006).

Given that in-depth understanding was required, this study employed case studies. To reduce imposing existing perceptions, the theoretical sensitivity prior to data collection was to have a base level of pre-knowledge of case studies, enough to only be able to engage with the phenomenon. Constant comparative analysis was undertaken throughout whereby analysis guided subsequent data collection. New avenues of research presented themselves during this process. In total 86 semi-structured interviews (lasting on average 45 minutes) were conducted between June 2017 and January 2020 in York (36), Bath (9), Bristol (8), Edinburgh (12), Plymouth (10) and Preston (11). Interviews were supplemented by secondary data.

1.7. Contribution to Knowledge

Through exploring issues of urban sustainability as these emerged from the voices of participants, this study contributes understanding to three areas of knowledge. First, drawing upon empirical data, this study provides embedded analysis of the tensions between managerial and entrepreneurial drivers of urban development, and their impacts on governance for sustainability, therefore, adding to the body of work on 'urban entrepreneurialism' (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox, 1993; Defilippis, 1999; Harvey, 1989; MacLeod, 2011; MacLeod et al., 2003; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002; While et al., 2004). Second, resulting from the use of grounded theory in conjunction with York being adopted as the primary case study, this research explores three barriers to sustainability (those related to 'political fluctuation', 'lack of social economy models', and 'built heritage') that are not often considered in existing literature. Third, through the development of a theoretical understanding of a means of resolving the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing,

this study shows the effectiveness of grounded theory as a methodology for reconciling economic objectives with sustainability.

1.8. Structure of the Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is divided into 9 chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 present the literature relating to the factors that emerged from conversations with interviewees. Chapter 2 engages with theory and concepts of urban governance in neoliberal economies; notably, how cities have become increasingly 'entrepreneurial' as they compete for capital to provide economic welfare in their locale. This is followed by means through which to overcome this entrepreneurial need being set forth. Next, notable aspects of the wider political-economy are established, such as the role of markets, the underpinning philosophical basis, economic growth, and globalisation.

Chapter 3 establishes the literature more specifically around urban governance and sustainability in UK. This begins by presenting a history of local authorities in the UK, followed the literature that specifically engages with the entrepreneurialism of UK cities. With changes largely shaped by Conservative Party governance from 2010, aspects affecting urban governance in the contemporary period will be expanded upon, including austerity, the localism and devolution agendas, increased privatisation, and regional investment through the establishment of the Local Enterprise Partnerships, followed by how local authorities have remained resilient amid these changes. After this, the implications of sustainability for urban governance, and sustainability transitions will be presented. Then the relationship between culture and sustainability is expanded upon before going on to describe the specific connection between built heritage and sustainability. Next, notable aspects of a city's built environment – planning, housing and transport – will be discussed. This will be followed by a description of the ways in which the job market is changing, followed by the current shape of the social landscape given the various factors identified. Finally, the varying sustainability outputs of different business models will be discussed.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology employed for this study. After restating the aim and objectives, given the iterative nature, a broad overview of the decisions that were taken throughout this study will be set out. Then, the philosophical position is established. This is followed by the methodological underpinnings of the study. Thereafter, the chapter presents

the methods through which this theoretical and systemic approach was achieved in three sections: data collection, sampling and analysis.

In Chapters 5 through 8, the research findings are presented and discussed in the context of the literature in their respective thematic grouping: culture; local authorities and public goods; economic welfare; and social wellbeing. These chapters will each follow the same format in which the findings for York, as the primary case study, are presented followed by those for the secondary case studies in alphabetical order, before going on to discuss these findings in the context of each other, concluding with how they inform urban sustainability transitions.

In Chapter 9, aspects relating to the research findings as a whole will be presented. This is in two sections. First, the findings from the secondary case studies will be discussed regarding how they may be applied to the barriers to sustainability identified in York. Second, a theory to resolve the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing, and allow for urban sustainability transitions is advanced.

Chapter 10 presents the conclusions to the thesis. Firstly, after having restated both the research problem and the aim and objectives, the methodology through which these were achieved will be discussed followed by how they were answered. After this, there will be a reflection upon the study. Then, the knowledge that this research contributes toward is outlined, after which recommendations for future research are made, before setting out a concluding statement.

2. Literature Review: Theory and Concepts of Urban Governance

While the previous chapter introduced this thesis and established why it is important for cities to transition towards sustainability, the problems that may be encountered in achieving this, notably around the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing, and how this study looks to address such transitions, this chapter is the first of two that engage with the literature. Consistent with grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), the literature set out here derives from conversations with interviewees in data collection and was latterly engaged with to confirm, explain, and contextualise these findings, in addition to highlight areas in which the literature is lacking and generate new questions. The literature presented here, therefore, is a narrative that sets the scene for the findings that will be presented in Chapters 5 to 8.

This chapter discusses the wider theory and concepts that form the basis for why cities are governed in specific ways in capitalist economies. First, the dominant 'entrepreneurial' model of urban governance is established, followed by its specific characteristics relating, not only to capital investment, but also different population groups. Second, alternative pathways that academics, and also think tanks, have proposed to this model of urban governance including how to reduce the entrepreneurial need will be discussed. Lastly, as the landscape that provides the backdrop to such theories and concepts of urban governance, the nuances of neoliberalism as the political-economy will be expanded upon. This will include a foci on the role of markets within society, the philosophical basis upon which the doctrine rests, the relationship towards economic growth and the resulting impact upon the environment, and the role of neoliberalism in globalisation and the ramifications for this process.

2.1. Urban Entrepreneurialism

In his seminal article, *From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: the Transformation of Urban Governance in Late Capitalism*, Harvey (1989) identified that, across national boundaries and regardless of political persuasion, the way in which urban governance in neoliberal economies is changing in set patterns; from a 'managerial' role in which cities look to redistribute economic welfare to their populations, to one in which cities are 'entrepreneurial' in competing for capital to provide this economic welfare. This observation has been accepted and built upon by a range of other scholars, primarily in relation to US cities (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox, 1993; Defilippis, 1999; MacLeod, 2011; MacLeod et al., 2003; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002; While et al., 2004).

The managerial form of urban governance is rooted in the 'embedded liberalism' period of capitalism after World War II in which there was a 'class compromise' between capital and labour to reduce the volatility that contributed towards the circumstances for the war and the social problems associated with the Great Depression (Cottam, 2018; Dworkin, 1997; Hudson, 1998; Timmins, 2001). Meanwhile, the entrepreneurial form is rooted in the 'neoliberalism' period from the 1970s in which, due to the concentrations of wealth that are possible under capitalism, the interests of capital are increasingly prioritised (Harvey, 2007; van Bavel, 2016).

In practical terms there are four factors that have caused the changes associated with urban entrepreneurialism. First, social welfare provisioning has been reduced. Second, many publicly owned enterprises have been privatised. Third, capital is increasingly mobile. Fourth, traditional manufacturing industries upon which many cities were economically based have declined. In addition to shifts toward neoliberalism, the last two factors have also been exacerbated by technological advances (Harvey, 1989).

Therefore, as identified by Defilippis (2004), there is less spatially-fixed economic welfare in cities at a time in which capital, due to its role in economic processes, is both more in demand and more mobile. Commentators argue that this has created the circumstances for uneven bargaining power between cities (being immobile) and capital (being mobile; Defilippis, 2004; Harvey, 1989; 2006; Jonas et al., 2011). Consequently, cities compete with each other for capital through creating the conditions for investment, in so doing, privatising public wealth (ibid.). Additionally, Defilippis (2004) highlights how, through investment in infrastructure that may be made redundant should capital relocate, there is public acceptance of risk for private gains. The changes have also resulted in there being a shift towards image, such as the mobilising of architecture to reproduce a myth of urban vitality, while cultural forms of attraction have been key to this and have become increasingly intertwined with urban economic development (Crilley, 1993; Miles, 2010).

There are also more direct forms of publicly funded incentives for capital, such as subsidies, that have increased as cities have become more entrepreneurial. For instance, analysis of US State and Local Government data by Bartik (2017, p.65) shows that tax incentives for business have tripled in the last 25 years. Bartik (ibid.) concludes that there is little evidence that subsiding business produces net economic benefits and emphasizes that this 'zero-sum game'

may weaken local revenue collection. A recent high-profile example of this is the $3 billion in subsidies and tax breaks that was offered, and later rescinded amid protests, by New York to the internet marketplace; Amazon, to locate their second head office there amid bids from 236 US cities (Leibowitz, 2018).

The need to provide economic welfare in addition to the reduced budgets of local authorities has seen a range of non-state actors brought into urban governance (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2013; Eckersley, 2017; Lowndes & Gardner, 2016). Such 'growth coalitions' consist of professionals from interested businesses, representatives from local authorities, labour and community groups (Peck, 1995). Furthermore, these changes have taken place at the same time as locally owned businesses are being replaced by corporations, who are characterised by absentee-owners and managers who often live within a locale only temporarily, consequently shifting interests away from the local economic community (Wollmann, 2006). This multi-level nature adds a layer of complexity to urban governance, while the inclusion of non-democratically elected members in decisions that affect the public more widely has led to growth coalitions being termed 'post-democratic' by MacLeod (2011). However, Leach & Percy-Smith (2001) argue that by bringing the active support of local communities into governance this may allow for some of a city's more intractable problems to be tackled.

With the resources of a city being diverted towards economic development, the changes associated with urban entrepreneurialism have seen capital effectively relieved of its responsibilities to the provisioning of the goods of social reproduction (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox & Mair, 1988; Defilippis, 2004; While et al., 2010). Some elements of labour, however, may benefit as, according to Florida (2002), cities look to provide the suitable living conditions for the groupings who make a disproportionately large contribution to human capital – the 'educated, 30-somethings' – as those with sought after professional expertise that are required for high-value industries. Indeed, Boyle (2011) argues that such professional classes, who are more able to afford environmental amenities and different forms of cultural activities and houses, may be facilitated in policy. Certainly, although much like cities, labour may be thought of as immobile, Goodhart (2017) identifies a mobile aspect of labour similar to the groupings Florida may be referring to – footloose, often urban, socially liberal and university educated. Goodhart (p.4) terms such people 'Anywheres' which, he argues, account for between 20 to 25 per cent of the population.

According to Goodhart (ibid., p.4), 'Anywheres' contrast with 'Somewheres' – those rooted in a specific place or community, usually a small town or in the countryside, who are socially conservative, often less educated, and who make up roughly half the population, with the remainder being classed as in-between. It may be this Somewhere grouping that Peck (1995) classifies as those 'two-thirds of the population' who are not considered for their human or finance capital in the working and service classes and who are further marginalised by urban entrepreneurialism. Similarly, this grouping may closely match the 'local residents', 'workers', 'the poor', the 'homeless' and 'those dependent on public services and environmental amenities' who Cox (1999) identifies as the 'losers' in interurban competition. Regardless of terminology, this grouping being more inclined to be embedded within their locale may be more representative of the 'permanences' which Harvey (1996) refers to when discussing the relatively stable relationships of people living within an area. It may be said, as has been observed by Gray & Barford (2018), that subjecting such areas to the economic volatility of competition is ethically fraught.

2.2. Alternative Forms of Urban Governance

The extent to which cities are compelled or choose to respond to the need to provide economic welfare by being entrepreneurial in competing for capital is debatable (for example, see the differences between Harvey, 1989; Miles 2010; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Regardless, commentators have discussed ways of overcoming this need. Bartik (2018) takes the view that investing in the skills of local people may better serve a locale. Hanna (2018) believes investing directly in, or taking ownership of smaller firms is a better option. This, Hanna (ibid.) claims, would ensure a portion of profits are distributed back into the local economy and keep corporations from relocating. Harvey (1989) believes that alliances built across locales may challenge interurban competition. Brenner & Theodore (2002) assert that the urban, with struggles around land-use, housing, wages and environmental justice all of which expose more progressive alternatives, is a decisive battleground.

In the article *Alternatives to the "New Urban Politics": finding locality and autonomy in local economic development*, and subsequently expanded upon in the book *Unmaking Goliath: community control in the face of global capital*, Defilippis (1999, 2004) proposes a strategy that reduces the urban entrepreneurial need to attract capital to provide economic welfare. This involves utilising the procurement capabilities of locally based public organisations and

local investment agencies to act as an economic ombudsman between their locality and the rest of the world to control capital and allow for local autonomy. To interject, the expenditure of subnational governments in the UK – everything below Central Government, from the devolved administrations to Local Enterprise Partnerships (regional economic development agencies) downwards – is 9.35 per cent of national gross domestic product (GDP: the total value of goods produced and services provided for one year; OECD, 2019). For context, this compares with a 16.17 average across countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD; an international organisation made up of many of the world's most developed economies such as the UK that looks to shape policy; ibid.).

Defilippis' strategy revolves around using these budgets to encourage collective community ownership over capital within a locale in the three areas that correspond to the realms of socio-economic relations: the means of production, with worker or community organisations; the means of reproduction, with community land trusts (non-profit, community-owned developers), limited-equity co-operatives (whereby residents purchase a share in a development and commit to resell this at a price determined by an internally designed formula) and mutual housing associations (non-profit organisations that provide 'affordable housing' to community residents); and the means of exchange (with credit unions and local currencies).

Defilippis contends that this greater community control over capital will result in the inclusion of the less represented, and a broader mix of the community (workers, residents etc.) into urban governance – counteracting the undemocratic effects of the increasingly multi-level nature of urban governance. Furthermore, Defilippis asserts that, by creating more space for local democracy around place-based communities, this affords the opportunity to increase levels of democracy. Additionally, by 'tying' businesses to a city's infrastructure, local authorities would not have to use incentives for them to remain in the locale.

Though the link is not acknowledged, the same strategy has been utilised from 2005 by the US think tank; The Democracy Collaborative, in a project in Cleveland, Ohio (Democracy Collaborative, 2019). Termed 'community wealth building', this approach revolves around community-based, worker co-operatives being supported by local anchor institutions (large organisations that are unlikely to relocate and thus have a significant stake in their local area),

with a focus on bringing 'green jobs' to urban communities who have been the 'geographical losers' of the mobility of capital and consequently 'suffered disinvestment' (ibid.).

In the UK, since 2006 the think tank; the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), has adopted a similar role and propagated this approach (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Jackson & McInroy, 2017). The first large-scale project began in 2007 when CLES worked with Manchester City Council to analyse their procurement spend and supply chains (Jackson, 2017). Subsequently, a Corporate Procurement Department was formed that makes it easier to give local authority wide consideration to sustainability related benefits from procurement decisions as opposed to just cost (ibid.). For instance, consideration is given to distance travelled by goods and services, ethics of the supplier, the creation of apprenticeships, and support for the voluntary & community sector and local businesses (ibid.). Overall, there has been an estimated efficiency gain of £65 million in the ten year post-implementation period (ibid., p.18), while procurement spend with organisations based in, or with a branch in Manchester increased from 51.5 per cent in 2008/09 to 73.6 per cent in 2015/16 and 86.5 to 90.7 per cent for the same criteria in the Greater Manchester region in this period (ibid., pp.20-21).

As of August 2019, CLES was working in 30 localities in the UK across local authorities, health, housing, higher education and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, while developing a more holistic strategy (CLES, 2019). As in Manchester, this mainly revolves around procurement practices (ibid.). Unlike in Manchester, this also includes anchor organisations (ibid.). Procurement practices are also encouraged to be actively involved in addressing social needs, such as in asking service providers to build progression routes for employees (ibid.). In addition to local authorities being encouraged to insource public services, CLES also urge anchor organisations to use their procurement budgets to actively create local supply-chains as 'ecosystems' of local enterprise, such as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), social enterprises and worker co-operatives (ibid.). Such models are emphasised due to their greater tendency to support local employment, reduce carbon emissions and spend more money locally (ibid.).

Consistent with the proposal of Defilippis (1999, 2004), in addition to the means of production there are other elements to CLES's strategy with the consideration for how the land owned by anchor organisations may benefit the local community (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC,

2019). According to CLES, "over 2 million hectares of public land has been sold off to private interests" (CLES, 2019, p.20). Therefore, CLES propose that available buildings, parks and other land holdings are made available to the community, to either govern as a commons or are transferred to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, while the buildings and facilities of anchor organisations are made available to local community groups and charities for free when not being used (ibid.).

CLES propose using the pension funds of anchor organisations to provide 'affordable' credit to citizens, local community groups and SMEs – those with insufficient access to finance (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Jackson & McInroy, 2017). A recent example of local pension funds being used for local investment is with three major London pension organisations who have combined assets under management of nearly £57 billion and are working together to create a London-focused investment fund (Local Pensions Partnership, 2020).

Of any city in the UK, Preston in Lancashire has most deeply implemented the strategy (CLES, 2019). Here, the procurement strategy goes beyond that of Manchester, involving seven anchor organisations and an active creation of producer co-operative supply-chains in what has been termed the 'Preston Model' (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Jackson & McInroy, 2017). There have been arguments against this 'municipal protectionism' that intervening in the market results in the favouring of less efficient businesses undertaking services, therefore 'welfare loss' (The Economist, 2018). This reasoning, however, is based on the 'trickle-down' effect that, as discussed in Section 2.3.1., disproportionately goes to the owners of capital which, as CLES observe (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019), tend to be extracted from local economies. Accordingly, through retaining wealth locally, a 'multiplier effect' can be created that can boost local economic growth and resilience (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Ward & Lewis, 2002).

2.3. Neoliberalism

Part of the role of the state is to increase the welfare of its citizens, and the role of economics and the market within this is to provide this welfare. The defining characteristic of neoliberalism, however, is that the role of the state is to actively encourage markets into all aspects of social and cultural life: governing *for* the market, rather than *because* of the market (Gane, 2012). In the remainder of this section, several defining elements of neoliberalism are

set forth, starting with the role of markets, the philosophical basis for the political economy, economic growth, and finally, the role of globalisation in the current period.

2.3.1. Markets

Setting capitalism apart from other political-economies is an allocation system in which not only are products traded in a market system as in 'production markets', but the factors of production; capital, land and labour, are themselves tradeable (van Bavel, 2016). These 'factor markets' are generally referred to as 'the free market', 'the market' or 'markets'. There appears to be a natural logic in which markets, unfettered by external influences such as regulation, taxes and state spending, allocate resources efficiently and that the wealth generated by entrepreneurs and the holders of capital 'trickles-down' into society and eliminates poverty (Meadway, 2019; Peck et al., 2009; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Pindyck & Rubinfeld, 2015).

In truth, the market alone is not always an efficient allocation of resources for society. Malleson (2014) illustrates this with an example of a pregnant woman trying to compete with a man with the implication being that, while the man may provide more valuable labour, it would not be an efficient allocation of resources for society should a pregnant woman be unemployed. Indeed, there is unequal bargaining power between different actors in the market. For instance, through a lack of capital or personal circumstances, wage labourers may not be able to demand a more realistic value of their labour. Meanwhile, the Labour Party (2017) report *Alternative Models of Ownership* highlights the short-term and frequent risk averse nature of capital which consequently requires public subsidies and guarantees to underpin longer-term projects.

There are many other problems associated with markets. The market assumes that all goods are private. However, many are public; that is, non-excludable and/or non-rivalrous (Mankiw, 2011; Pindyck & Rubinfeld, 2015). The properties of public goods contradict that the market presumes that everything has a price, can be treated as a commodity and are only considered for their monetary value (Harvey, 2007). What can and cannot be sold, in addition to who can participate, is culturally defined (ibid.). Neoliberal ideology looks to overcome cases in which ownership by a private entity is not immediately possible, such as in education, health care or the police, by the state applying the market principle of competition (Foucault et al., 2008; Harvey, 2007).

A fundamental neoliberal claim is that private entities operating in a market system breeds competition which, in turn, leads to efficiency and innovation (Mankiw, 2011; Pindyck & Rubinfeld, 2015). Despite this assertion, central planning of the economy successfully took place in the US during World War II in which contracts were placed based on skills, productive capacities and lowest cost, with competition and patent owning put on hold (Michaelides & Milios, 2005). According to Mason (2015, p.86) this resulted in, "scientific innovation, in turn leading to high productivity, then high wages, and consumption keeping pace with production for the next 25 years." Given that the social returns from research and development are between two and seven times greater than the return to a private entity alone, leaving such decisions to the private sector may lead to under-provisioning (Tyler, 2013, p.393).

Although the neoliberal doctrine views markets as being incorruptible due to there being no members to which they are accountable, other forms of exchange – co-operatives, associations, families, communities etc. – have multiple goals that represent a more-wider society because they can be held accountable by their members (Streeck & Schmitter, 1985; van Bavel, 2016). van Bavel (2016, p.266) expands that, "such groups are also expected to promote the welfare of their members, to organize reciprocity, redistribution and to dampen the negative externalities of exchange in order to achieve these multiple goals." This contrasts with the market which Granovetter (1985) argues is socially embedded in its formation and organization, but not in its ends.

Accordingly, Polanyi (1944, p.76) concludes, "To allow the market mechanism to be sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment indeed, even of the amount and use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society." Certainly, as observed by Defilippis (2004), capital has no notion of place or community. Why society may not have been demolished is because there are no pure markets: all economic systems, to an extent, are a hybrid with multiple modes of coordination with all forms involving elements of competition, exchange, redistribution, and reciprocity (Hahnel & Wright, 2016). For instance, not even in the Anglo-Saxon countries of the UK, Australia, New Zealand, or the United States, as those that have seen the deepest reforms, has neoliberalism been implemented fully (Peck et al., 2009). Even at the local level, neoliberal implementation is unstable and variegated (Brenner & Theodore, 2002). With the stagnation and inequality that may result from full

implementation, there can be no pure form of neoliberalism, which must parasitically co-exist with other forms of production and exchange (ibid.).

Consequently, as observed by Polanyi (1944, p.76), through social capital – "the intrinsic capacity within which individuals and their social relationships can provide the means for community action capable of achieving shared objectives" (Peters et al., 2010, p.7601) – humans are constructing a, "protective covering of cultural institutions" as a buffer against the market. Accordingly, intervention in the market by public institutions takes place to allow for collective, future orientated decision-making (Malleson, 2014). The Nordic countries have been proficient at intervening in the market to achieve favourable societal outcomes (ibid.). Despite this, due to the nature of the market, there are still large inequalities (ibid.). Meanwhile, as argued by Malleson (2014, p.xxii), societies who have greater market regulation are no less efficient: "inefficiencies for markets through taxes and welfare are balanced out by increasing opportunities and capabilities due to heavy public investment."

2.3.2. Philosophical Basis

Neoliberalism being centred on the market rests on the philosophical basis of freedom for the individual (De Lissovoy, 2015; Monbiot, 2019). However, such an ideal is based on the freedoms related to capital ownership while attention is not drawn to the 'unfreedoms' imposed on others for whom such interests are detrimental (ibid.). For instance, James (2008, p.215) uses the example of 'freedom' after the Second Gulf War in Iraq that, "entailed the full privatization of public enterprises, full ownership rights by foreign firms of Iraqi businesses, full repatriation of foreign profits and the elimination of nearly all trade barriers."

Freedom being centred around the economic actor means individuals are responsible for their own success or failure (Harvey, 2007). Accordingly, neoliberalism promotes an active dismantling of the 'shared privileges' of society, such as health, education and other public services that comes from communities and networks (Clarke, 2007). Though it may sound oxymoronic, individual freedoms and societal wellbeing are not necessarily compatible. For instance, democracy focuses on the common good and justice: ideals that are often contradictory to the unfreedoms associated with private profit and property (Barber, 2017; Malleson, 2014; van Bavel, 2016). Indeed, as said by Russian revolutionary and geographer; Kropotkin (n.d.), "Competition is the law of the jungle, but co-operation is the law of civilisation." This democratic deficit is epitomised by the preferences of the public who prefer

regulation to markets, less profit to business and more social responsibility, the abolition of zero-hour contracts and public ownership over areas such as the water, electricity, gas and railway sectors (Elliott & Kanagasooriam, 2017; Smith, 2017). True freedom, as argued by Bauman (1999), has a collective rather than individual basis. Harvey (2007, p.41) summarizes many of these arguments with the assertion that, "Social justice presupposes social solidarities and a willingness to submerge individual wants, needs, and desires in the cause of some more general struggle for, say, social equality or environmental justice."

Individual philosophical beliefs regarding the nature of humans to be good may dictate preference of economic system. For instance, Thatcher felt that people were not inherently good and needed incentives to work for the common good (Clifford, 2016). However, as argued by James (2008), a political-economy such as neoliberalism in which individuals maximise their gains at the expense of others while altruism is discouraged may lead to a cultural change in the people of that society. Certainly, Harvey (2011) observed such changes in the favelas of Brazil in which the property rights that freed up the entrepreneurial mentality and energies also reduced social solidarity and mutual support. According to Harvey (2007, p.80), with such cultural changes, "it then becomes difficult to combat anomie and control the resultant anti-social behaviours such as criminality, pornography, or the virtual enslavement of others."

Brenner & Theodore (2002) propose that neoliberal ideology has now filtered into thinking and behaviour to become 'common-sense' among the population. Indeed, Mills (2014) contends that the public imagination has been so deeply affected that there is now a belief that all economic activity should be profitable while notions of solidarity and ethical finance are oxymoronic. Badiou (2001) observes that capitalism lowers our expectations of economics – that, while unjust, at least we're protected from 'terror' and 'totalitarianism'. Fisher (2009) refers to a claimed current inability to imagine any viable alternative as 'capitalist realism'.

However, such societal imagining can change. As Spash (2017) points out, human beings do not purely act out of self-interest, they are capable of empathy, altruism, and such human beings staff corporations which, in turn, do not purely maximise profit. Meanwhile, Parr (2015) highlights that even exchange value has to be established as a social norm. Indeed, Zukin (1993) argues that due to the socially constructed nature, people have a say in the

market and can negate it from being an end in itself and create a world in which they are a means to an end. Fisher (2009, p.80) himself highlights the privatisations that have taken place since the 1980s would most likely have been unimaginable a decade previously, and goes on to comment:

> "The very oppressive pervasiveness of 'capitalist realism' means that even glimmers of alternative political and economic possibilities can have a disproportionately great effect. The tiniest event can tear a hole in the grey curtain of reaction which has marked the horizons of possibility under 'capitalist realism'. From a situation in which nothing can happen, suddenly anything is possible again."

Indeed, while many of the philosophies that surround neoliberalism may contradict many of the social dimensions of sustainability, particularly around equity and inclusivity (Bramley et al., 2009; Dempsey et al., 2012; Pierson, 2002), belief in co-operation, the collective and social solidarities may negate the extent to which neoliberal ideology becomes common-sense within the population (Harvey, 2007).

2.3.3. Economic Growth

An area that has direct ramifications for all aspects of sustainability and is a key tenet of neoliberalism is economic growth. Although the need for, and the positive effects of economic growth is unquestioned in political circles, the media and, to an extent, academia, the reasons for this are ambiguous (CTP, n.d.; Travers, 2012). Much production is based on credit (Blackwater, n.d.). Therefore, in these circumstances in order to maintain profit there is an economic need to grow so that interest is exceeded by income (ibid.). Another rationale is around employment: should the population grow, the size of the economy must match this to provide the same levels of employment (Jackson, 2009b). Consequently, where there is private ownership over the means of production, growth must offset the decrease in jobs caused by advances in technology (ibid.). Expanding upon this, Jackson (2009a, p.8) claims, "with less money in the economy, output would fall, public spending curtailed and the ability to service debt is diminished". However, the Covid-19 pandemic has shown that quantitative easing from the Central Bank in the UK in which money is injected into the economy may, to an extent, overcome the problems associated with the lack of economic growth (Stratford & O'Neill, 2020).

Economic growth may increase the total from which capital can extract profits. This total, however, is shared with labour. The neoliberal argument to help gain ideological consent from labour is that due to the 'trickle-down' effect economic growth benefits all (Dowd, 1989; Harvey, 2007). Despite this claim, in practice the benefits of economic growth are not shared equally (Chambers, 2010). The extent to which an increased surplus value of labour is captured by labour, for instance, is dependent upon bargaining power with the owners of capital, which generally favours the latter (Malleson, 2014). Such surplus, therefore, predominantly goes to the holders of capital, in turn exacerbating problems of inequality (ibid.). Certainly, the inability of labour to defend its share of the economic total following the 2008 financial crash, however, in which a decade later the UK population is on average 1.6 per cent poorer, has shown that strong growth is not always necessary (Stirling, 2019a).

An 'inclusive growth' discourse has emerged in recent times in which, through actions such as voluntary employment charters and improved skills programmes, the gains from economic growth may be spread more evenly (McInroy, 2017). Inclusive growth has been criticized as being weak in practice and, though recognising the inequality in provisioning by the market, there are arguments that it seeks to enable as opposed to challenge this (CLES, 2019). The OECD (2016), meanwhile, argues that an inclusive labour market must revolve around designed education and training, while poverty must be eliminated through public investment in housing, transport and environmental goods to facilitate inclusivity.

Although economic activity is directly linked to environmental impact, somewhat paradoxically neoliberalism looks to solve the problems of society such as environmental impact through demand creating a market for technological innovation, which would then, it is claimed, reduce this impact (Haarstad, 2016; Joss & Cowley, 2017). Despite this, economic growth remains the ultimate goal, for instance, in the interests of restoring growth after the 2008 financial crash, environmental regulation being side-lined (Smith, 2010).

In *Prosperity without growth? - The transition to a sustainable economy*, Jackson (2009a) writes extensively on the links between economic growth and environmental impact. Jackson notes that, as economic growth compounds, energy per unit of economic output (used as a proxy for environmental impact), must decrease at the same rate just to maintain the same level of environmental impact. While Jackson (p.8) observes there has been a decoupling, with energy per unit of economic output declining by one-third in 30 years, in the last 20 years

growth has still led to an increase in energy use by 40 per cent. A drop in energy use per economic output of 11 per cent is required per year to offset growth (p.55). Similar claims, in these instances around an absolute increase in material use despite a decoupling with unit of economic output, due to economic growth, are observed elsewhere (Material Flows, 2018; Ward et al., 2017). Perhaps significantly, however, these observations do not account for Jevon's Paradox in which the resulting decrease in price from increased efficiency will in turn lead to greater demand with the resulting greater environmental impact (Blackwater, n.d.; Jennings & Newman, 2008).

To help reduce the impact of the economy on the environment, Jackson (2009a) first suggested a 'green stimulus' in 2009 in which investment is targeted towards energy security, low-carbon infrastructures and ecological protection. In so doing, Jackson argues that this would offer jobs in the short-term, energy security and technological innovation in the medium-term, and sustainability in the long-term. Despite these changes, Jackson concedes that the economy would retain the need to grow. Similar strategies have surfaced more recently with Klein's (2019) *On fire: the (burning) case for a green new deal* and the think tank, New Economics Foundation's (2021) *Green new deal*.

James (2008) attributes mass advertising, marketing and the constant requirement to expand consumption so that it may increase share prices in the short-term to the need for economic growth. According to James (ibid.), this creates a 'relative materialism' – the requiring of material goods beyond that to meet fundamental needs – that is superficially exciting, but hollow when satisfied. Similarly, Fisher (2009, p.21) refers to the effect of this materialism as "hedonic depression" in which pleasure is constantly pursued but there remains a sense that, "something is missing". Fisher points to a pathologisation of such problems whereby they are treated as an individual problem, with the consequential opportunities for pharmaceutical companies, while systemic causes are not alluded to.

In *The Selfish Capitalist* James (2008) writes extensively on the negative effects of materialism on aspects such as philosophical beliefs in making people more selfish and less empathetic. Jackson (2009a) observes that the constant state of comparison that materialism creates for individuals can undermine social wellbeing. Whereas James (2008) points to the doubling of people suffering from mental illness between the 1970s and 2000s – pooled from the research of Demyttenaere et al. (2004), Oakley-Browne et al. (2006) and UNDP (2003) – in

English speaking nations (11.5 to 23 per cent): those who have most deeply embraced neoliberalism and in which countries materialism may be more prevalent.

Accordingly, the requirement for economic growth creates a conflict for governments. In *Limits to Growth*, Jackson (2009b) observes that, while government has a responsibility towards social and environmental ends, it also has responsibility for the economy which, with the current dependence on growth, creates an incentive to support structures that are both socially and environmentally destructive. However, Jackson highlights that by overcoming growth imperatives, government will be freed from this dual role. Should this be the case, Jackson takes the view that economic measurements other than GDP may be considered that reflect the social and environmental goals of a post-growth economy; for example, the Human Development Index (UNDP, 2020) which aggregates scores on life expectancy, schooling, and income.

However, the inclusion of economics, in the form of the current political-economic system, has led to claims that sustainability is an attempt to see capitalism as the solution to, as opposed to what is in reality the main cause of environmental (and social) problems (Hodson & Marvin, 2017). Indeed, sustainability is predicated on economic growth (Brundtland et al., 1987) which is both environmentally destructive and, as in the 2008 financial crash, prone to stagnation (Jackson, 2009b). Additionally, Akbulut & Adaman (2020) claim that the concentrations of power resulting from capitalism are incompatible with the equity and democratic participation that are required for the environmental decision-making aspect of sustainability. Klein (2014) goes further, laying responsibility on capitalism for a change in philosophy that inevitably leads to the environment being commodified and eventually destroyed.

2.3.4. Globalisation

Carter (2007, p.272) classifies globalisation as, "the processes that are integrating the global economy: mobility of capital, deregulation of economic activity, global division of labour, reducing social protections, a changing role for the state and a rapid growth in communication links." Therefore, while there is a technological element, globalisation, as an expansion of neoliberalism, is also a politico-economic process. Indeed, Defilippis (2004) points out that globalisation is not inevitable, it requires public sector governance such as the *World Trade Organisation*, and cannot exist without local economic consent.

According to Klein (2008, p.160), the increased mobility of capital has had consequences world-wide: "when limitless sums of money are free to travel the world at great speed, and speculators are able to bet on the value of everything from cocoa to currencies, the result is enormous volatility." There are contrasting views. Goodhart (2017) argues that the extent to which globalisation is pervasive may have been exaggerated with, he asserts, most employment in advanced economies being in the service sector, providing such services that are only sold within the same area. Power (1996, p.37) echoes similar sentiments in the US, commenting that economic activity, "is local and provides residents with the goods and services that make their lives comfortable" and that, "local economies are dominated by residents taking in each other's wash". Malleson (2014, p.114) supports such claims with the estimation that locally orientated economic activity represents 60 per cent of the economy. Similarly, Ghemawat (2001) found that less than 25 per cent of global economic activity is international, with the majority of this being regional. Therefore, distance still matters. And, while the interests of capital have become increasingly prioritised with neoliberalism, even the 100 globalised corporations have nearly half their sales in their domestic market (UNCTAD, 2013, p.25). However, Defilippis (2004) warns that despite there being large elements of local economic activity, this is not enough for locales, who are still dependent upon less 'fixed' forms.

2.4. Conclusions

Therefore, contemporary theory and concepts of urban governance must be viewed in the context of neoliberalism as a late form of capitalism in which the state has been co-opted by market elites in the interests of capital. The resulting changes in the political-economy, in addition to technological advances, have had particular consequences for cities which has seen them become more entrepreneurial as they compete with each other for capital for its role in economic processes to provide economic welfare in their locale.

Scholars, however, have offered alternatives. Most notably, a cohesive, city-wide strategy is set forth by Defilippis (1999, 2004) in which locally controlled budgets are utilised to encourage democratic, local-ownership over the means of production, reproduction and exchange. In doing so, in addition to encouraging local democracy, this would 'tie' businesses to a locale and incentives would not have to be used for them to remain.

Consequent to neoliberalism, a doctrine that rests on a philosophical basis that advances the interests of the individual as an economic actor, cities operate within a wider political-economy in which there is the prevalence of markets and economic growth, with social and environmentally destructive outcomes. Meanwhile, with a technological element, globalisation may be seen as an expansion of neoliberalism. Despite this, the global economy is not entirely integrated, with there still being large 'local' elements to local economies.

With this chapter having discussed the literature emerging from conversations with interviewees relating to the theory and concepts of urban governance in neoliberal economies, in addition key factors of the political economic landscape within which cities operate, the next chapter focuses on factors more specifically affecting UK cities and their sustainability.

3. Literature Review: Urban Governance and Sustainability in the UK

With the previous chapter having set forth the literature relating to theory and concepts of urban governance, this chapter engages with the literature around urban governance and factors affecting sustainability specifically in the UK. Much like the previous chapter, and consistent with grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), the voices of participants were interpreted through inductive reasoning and later brought into conversation with the literature. Accordingly, this chapter introduces many of these topics as a narrative that will latterly be engaged with in the findings chapters.

First, issues of urban governance are set forth, from the very conception of local authorities in the UK to the literature that specifically engages with urban entrepreneurialism in the UK. This is followed by the landscape of urban governance in the modern UK, largely defined by Conservative Party governance in the wake of the 2008 financial crash. Accordingly, this section will describe the onset of austerity, increased privatisation, the replacement of Regional Development Agencies with Local Economic Partnerships in the role of regional economic development, and the localism agenda, later evolving into devolution. This is followed by how, in the face of these changes, local authorities have remained largely resilient. After this, the landscape around sustainability and urban governance is presented, before going on to describe how the literature engages with urban sustainability transitions. The focus of the chapter then shifts more towards the day-to-day issues affecting cities. Beginning with the role of culture in sustainability, the relationship between built heritage and sustainability is described. Then, aspects relating to the built environment, such as planning, housing and transport, are established, before setting forth the changing nature of the job market, largely defined by technological advances and inequality and, predominantly resulting from this in addition to all the other factors described, the current shape of the UK from a social perspective. Finally, as a potential source and solution to many of the problems identified within this chapter, different business models and their varying sustainability outputs are expanded upon.

3.1. A Brief History of Local Authorities in the UK

Setting the background for urban governance in the UK, the following section presents a brief history of local authorities from their inception to the present day. The UK is a unitary state, meaning Central Government has absolute power to create or abolish local authorities and

their administrative regions (Elazar, 1997, Norton, 1994). Such local authorities may only exercise the powers that Central Government choose to delegate (ibid.). Furthermore, these powers can be curtailed or expanded (ibid.). Although there are parliaments and assemblies in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, their power ultimately rests with Central Government in London (Institute for Government, 2019). This contrasts with federal states, such as Germany, in which there is a written constitution that maintains equal power between local authorities and central government (Bognetti & Schugart, 2020, Norton, 1994).

Local authorities in the UK date back to the *1835 Municipal Corporations Act* in which local bodies were created to address the negative consequences of rapid urbanisation and the Industrial Revolution, particularly around poor sanitation and anti-social behaviour (Norton, 1994). However, according to Wollmann (2006), who writes extensively on the development of local authorities in both the UK and Germany in the article *The fall and rise of the local community: a comparative and historical perspective*, local authorities in the UK were primarily concerned with aiding cities' capitalist development. Indeed, Wollmann (ibid.) goes on to claim that focus was around local taxation and services such as roads, water supply and sewage. Stewart (2003, p.269) correspondingly identifies local entrepreneurs as the beneficiaries of the creation of local authorities in which, "most factories and commercial undertakings were owned by families who lived locally and often played a significant role on the council." This contrasts with local authorities in Germany that were established while populations were more rural and were created around the local socio-cultural community to provide public services that they themselves decided upon (Norton, 1994).

During this period in the UK there were various third-sector organisations that provided social services, with local authorities being a last resort (Wollmann, 2006). Many of these were working-class organisations that were based around social reproduction, such as housing, lending and insurance (ibid.). There were increasing numbers of organisations funded by, and affiliated to the church (ibid.). Additionally, voluntary organisations were providing a wide range of services; for instance, through voluntary hospitals and charities such as Bernardo's (Lewis, 1995; Teasdale et al., 2012).

Following World War II, and with the problems associated with the Great Depression, the embedded liberalism period saw state ownership of key sectors, such as coal, steel, and car production (Harvey, 2007). Furthermore, there was the active creation of social welfare

through the establishment of the NHS and Social Security in addition to the building of state-owned housing and free universal secondary education to ensure that all members of society could meet their basic needs (Balchin & Rhoden, 2002; Cottam, 2018; Dworkin, 1997; Hudson, 1998; Timmins, 2001). The engagement of local authorities increased as they were integrated into national social welfare policies and mandated to carry out local functions (Wollman, 2006).

There are differing accounts of how this changed the relationship between local authorities and the third-sector. According to Hazenberg et al. (2016), the state pushed out the third-sector who were subsequently unsure of their role. Similarly, Cottam (2018) claims that William Beveridge, author of the *Beveridge Report*, identified that communities were being pushed out in favour of 'bureaucratic' and 'impersonal institutions'. In contrast, Lewis (1995) argues that, while this was true to an extent, many third-sector organisations remained within the welfare state and their dynamism meant they were successful in being able to provide services that the public sector could not, or did not provide. Agreeing with this last point, Harris (2010) claims that public services provided a base around which third-sector organisations could grow and deliver new services; for instance, as occurred with the Citizens Advice Bureaux.

In 1974, there was a re-organisation that, in England alone saw the number of local authorities reduced from 1,300 to below 400, with increases in populations served from an average of 36,200 to 107,000 – seven times the size of their German counterparts (Eckersley, 2017, p.155; Norton, 1994, p.365). According to Wollman (2006), the logic behind such changes was based on administrative efficiency and economies of scale in addition to allowing for greater central control, and resulted in local authorities being remote to their communities. Consequently, scholars identify that residents now largely feel inconsequential to the decision-making process – reflected in persistent low turnouts at elections – and see their relationship towards their local authority as being functional (Copus, 2014; Headlam & Hepburn, 2015). Consistent with these observations, Wainwright & Little (2009) identify that residents frequently feel local authorities are often stuck in their ways and unresponsive towards the needs of their citizens.

With the onset of neoliberalism from the late 1970s, local authorities were increasingly used as agents of Central Government ideology as many of the services that they were responsible for providing were opened up to the market through legislation and reductions in budgets (Eckersley et al., 2014; Wollmann, 2006). For instance, Compulsory Competitive Tendering resulted in purely costs being considered in the provisioning of public services, therefore favouring corporations who are less inclined to consider societal benefits in their costs, such as around labour (TUCG, 2014; Wainwright & Little, 2009). Accordingly, local authorities adapted to a role of being commissioners, rather than providers of public services (Knapp et al., 2001). Consequently, as observed by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES, 2018), attitudes have changed from an environment of citizens with rights to public goods to one in which service users are merely consumers of services procured on their behalf. An additional negative aspect resulting from these changes is that, although exponents argue for the increased efficiency from the marketisation of public services, Cottam (2018) contends that the time, skills, and data required to enter the bidding process is incredibly inefficient and favours corporations, in particular large multinationals, who have greater resources.

These changes have also seen the democratic nature of public services weakened as the role of elected councillors is more one of being concerned for service provision as opposed to governing in any real sense (Copus, 2014). Meanwhile, Wollmann (2006) claims that, though previously the milieu of the independent candidate, in the 1970s UK national political parties started to penetrate the local political system as it became a sub-competition of national party politics, further pushing out the participatory opportunities of citizens.

This period also saw increased conflict between Labour-run local authorities, that questioned neoliberal reforms, and the Conservative Government (Bassett, 1984). Central Government responded by tightening spending controls and removing responsibilities, such as utilities, hospitals and further education, and creating new organisations around traditional local authority remits, such as Housing Action Trusts and City Technology Colleges, with private business sponsors included for the latter (Stoker, 2004; Travers, 1986). Such changes also saw the re-emergence of the third sector and the local community in the provision of services (Crowson, 2011; Hazenberg et al., 2016).

Newman (2014) argues that the adversarial relationship between local authorities and Central Government has continued into the present day. Overall, consequent to the relationship between local authorities and central government in unitary states such as the UK, Barber (2017) takes the view that cities are unable to act commensurably with their responsibilities and needs. However, Barber (ibid.) goes on to point out that even in federal states many key functions, such as the police, are dictated centrally.

3.2. Urban Governance in the Modern UK

Urban governance in the present-day UK is largely defined by policy measures undertaken by the Conservative Party-led Coalition following their election in 2010 in the period after the 2008 financial crash, and subsequent re-election as sole governing party since 2015. In this section, the key aspects of these are set forth.

3.2.1. Austerity

Although the financial crash was caused by deregulation, with their election the Coalition Government were able to position the crisis as being due to profligate public spending under New Labour (Lewis & Perry, 2012; Nicholls & Teasdale, 2017). Reducing the financial deficit was framed as being necessary while the proposed austerity was said to resonate with the shared responsibility and interdependence associated with the post-War period (Appelbaum, 2014; Clarke & Newman, 2012). Consequently, austerity policies and reductions in social welfare spending were implemented (Edmiston, 2017).

Consequently, between 2009/2010 and 2018/2019 saw cuts to grants from Central Government of 38 per cent, from £34.6 to £24.8 billion (Institute for Government, 2020). This figure includes the introduction in 2013 of a 50 per cent retention of local business rates which from 1990 has been set and pooled nationally, and was set to increase to 75 per cent by 2020/2021 though has so far been delayed (HCLGC, 2021). Local authorities that are responsible for social care are able to increase council tax by 2 per cent a year (Institute for Government, 2020). Overall, local authority funding has changed from £40 billion in Central Government grants and £21 billion from council tax in 2009/2010 to £15 billion in Central Government grants, £8.5 billion from business rate retention and £26 billion from council tax in 2018/2019: a decrease in real terms by 18 per cent (ibid.). Furthermore, the Covid-19 pandemic is estimated to have cost local authorities an additional unfunded £1.1 billion (LGA, 2020).

The Central Government grant being redistributive means the effect of this decrease in funding has not been uniform (Bailey, 2017; Lowndes & Gardner, 2016). Metropolitan districts (primarily local authorities in cities), in which there are higher levels of deprivation, have seen the largest reduction due to the Central Government grant composing a higher portion of their budget (Innes & Tetlow, 2015). Accordingly, as observed by Gray & Barford (2018), access to many public services is now dependent upon the local tax base.

While local authorities saw reductions in their budgets to reduce Central Government's financial deficit, spending on other areas such as the NHS, international development, education and defence were relatively protected (HM Treasury, 2013). However, the evidence suggests that local authorities are financially efficient in general, and are certainly more efficient than Central Government (Prentis, 2009; Travers, 2012). Indeed, prior to being Prime Minister, David Cameron identified that, "a pound spent closer, is a pound spent wiser" (Cameron, 2009). Although Lowndes & Gardner (2016) claim local authorities were selected for reductions in funding due to being the institutions with the least political power in Whitehall, the resulting withdrawal of the public sphere in favour of the market is consistent with neoliberal ideology (Gane, 2012). Indeed, Hamnet (2014) takes the view that austerity is part of a long-term political project to roll-back the welfare state both nationally and locally in favour of private interests. Correspondingly, Chakrabortty (2016) identifies austerity as primarily being a transfer of wealth to a small elite. Furthermore, the ability of the state to run a deficit amid the Covid-19 pandemic have shown arguments in favour of austerity to be incorrect (King, 2021). Despite the damaging effect on cities, austerity has encountered little opposition from public groups or trade unions, or even local authorities as the key institutions who are law-bound to deliver it (Davies & Blanco, 2017).

Austerity is said to have resulted in a greater focus on statutory services and away from discretionary spending, the latter being more preventative support such as health promotion, early outreach, and supplementary services (Streeck, 2014). Departments identified by Gray & Barford (2018) as being the focus of cuts are planning, housing, public health, highways and transport, environmental services, adult education and economic development, in addition to public amenities, such as libraries and parks.

Social care, as a statutory responsibility of unitary and metropolitan authorities, has increased as a portion of local authority spending from 54 per cent in 2009/2010 to 66 per cent in 2019/2020 (Atkins & Hoddinott, 2022). Despite this, due to overall decreased budgets and demographic pressures (demand for social care is estimated to double between 2010 and 2030) this is an area that has also been affected (Lawrence, 2016, p.32). Indeed, Gray & Barford (2018) claim that children's services have been one of the areas most affected by cuts. Children and young people are said to have experienced reduced access and increased waiting times, with attempted suicide being a barrier to access for some child and adolescent health services (House of Commons, 2015). Historically underinvested adult mental health services have seen similar reductions in funding (Bailey et al., 2013; Mattheys, 2015). Consequently, despite being protected relative to other services, even in the early stages of austerity, social care was seeing reductions in services (Fernandez et al., 2013; NAO, 2014).

3.2.2. Localism

Amid austerity, the Coalition Government introduced a broad array of policies within the *Localism Act (2011)* around a claimed agenda to, "decentralise power away from Whitehall and back into the hands of local councils, communities and individuals to act on local priorities" (LGA, 2011). An aspect of the *Localism Act* introduced a 'general power of competence' which, according to Layard (2012), allows local authorities the freedom to act in their own interests and those of their communities without concerns over acting beyond their legal powers. For instance, they were given the ability to establish joint initiatives with the third sector and other local authorities (Fenwick & Gibbon, 2015). According to Lowndes & Pratchett (2012), such changes would allow them to be active agents in their locale as opposed to purely administering Central Government dictated services locally. Using provisions in the *Localism Act*, through collecting 26,000 signatures the 'It's Our City' campaign in Sheffield triggered a referendum that took place in May 2021 to decide whether Sheffield City Council remains a cabinet system or changes to a committee system, with the public voting for the latter (It's Our City Sheffield, 2020; Sheffield City Council, 2022). The campaign claims that while in the former a relatively small number of councillors have power, in the latter power is more widely dispersed across councillors (ibid.).

The literature is sceptical regarding the Coalition Government's commitment to localism (for example, see Cochrane, 2016; John, 2014; Jones & Stewart, 2012; Layard, 2012; Pike et al., 2016). Compulsory Competitive Tendering has been replaced by the *Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012)* in which social, economic, and environmental considerations are able to be accounted for in the procurement practices of local authorities. Therefore, although not enforced, this opens the door for the provisioning of services by local third sector organisations (Bedford & Harper, 2018). However, through appearing to open up services to other providers without the development of such sectors – for instance, between 2009/10 and 2012/13 Central Government funding to the voluntary sector fell by £1.9 billion (Finnegan, 2016) – localism, as has been observed by various commentators (CLES, 2018; Fenwick & Gibbon, 2015; Glennon et al., 2017; Lowndes & Pratchett, 2012; Teasdale et al., 2012), may be surreptitiously motivated to legitimise the shrinking of provisioning by local authorities.

3.2.3. Privatisation

Indeed, localism is intertwined with privatisation, with the consequent value of contracts outsourced to the private sector having doubled from 2010 to £88 billion in 2014, while the number of outsourced workers increased to over 3.3 million (Harper, 2019; Plimmer, 2014). This is in addition to a previous round of privatisation, with the UK accounting for 40 per cent of the total privatised assets across the OECD nations between 1980 and 1996 (Hanna & Guinan, 2013). Such policies run concurrent to the research of Doron & Harrop (2012, p.7) which finds that 62 per cent of people believe public services should mainly be provided by the government. Through outsourcing, public institutions lose their in-house capacity which, for example, made it difficult for local authorities and the NHS to respond to the problems associated with the Covid-19 pandemic (Hall, 2021; Hall et al., 2020). The encroachment of private interests also occurs in less direct ways. For instance, MacLeod (2011) views the relatively recent proliferation of Business Improvement Districts, in which services in public areas are paid for privately, to be an example of the privatisation of public spaces across town centres in the UK.

Private encroachment into large aspects of society have also been more direct with the extensive and well-resourced political lobbying by large 'outsourcing' companies, such as G4S, Serco and Capita, that win many contracts from public institutions and have grown recently

to be some of the most valuable companies in the UK (Harper, 2019). Overall, the economic 'efficiency' that these large outsourcing companies find from which to profit may be purely through placing downward pressure on labour in areas such as pay, holiday entitlement, sick pay and pension contributions (FLEX, 2021; Harper, 2019).

The privatisation of national infrastructure also effects cities. One such example in rail travel was in 2009 when National Express walked away from the East Coast Mainline franchise due to falling revenues (Tobin, 2013). The service was then renationalised and run by a small publicly owned company: Directed Operated Railways (ibid.). Over a five year period services improved and £1 billion was paid back into the Treasury (Topham, 2015). In 2014, however, the Coalition Government reprivatized it (Moulds, 2014). Harvey (2004) refers to such capital gains from the privatisation of public services as 'accumulation by dispossession'.

3.2.4. Local Enterprise Partnerships

Replacing the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) under New Labour, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) were conceived as part of the *Localism Act (2011)* to provide funding for local economic development in regions across the UK (BIS, 2010; Gonzalez & Oosterlynck, 2014). The RDAs were fewer in number and covered a larger area but were said to have been relatively better resourced and more empowered (Pugalis & Townsend, 2012). Indeed, early indications showed that the LEPs were significantly less successful at encouraging gross value added (GVA: the value of goods and services produced) growth in the less prosperous regions than the RDAs (Healey & Newby, 2012; Townsend et al., 2012). Unlike the RDAs, LEP regions are partly determined through a 'bottom-up' process by local authorities and local businesses (Deas et al., 2013). The claimed intention is that LEPs include the voluntary sector, however, over 65 per cent have very little to no such representation on their board while 18 per cent have little or no engagement with the voluntary sector at all (NCVO, 2020). The stated aim is that LEPs are partially autonomous, therefore local actors are liberated from Central Government (Deas et al., 2013). However, this 'liberty' is narrow as funding for LEPs has been arranged by Central Government so that it is tentative based on strategies to encourage economic growth (ibid.).

3.2.5. Devolution

Following the 2015 general election victory for the Conservatives, 'localism' evolved into 'devolution' which, according to Lowndes & Gardner (2016) is a further strategy to stimulate economic growth based on sub-regional autonomy and competition as combined authorities 'bid' for specific powers that are currently held by Central Government. Devolution is said to have been championed by the 11 largest UK cities outside London: the Core Cities (Blond & Morrin, 2015; Public Sector Executive, 2015). Meanwhile, in 2014 the Smith Commission's report promised to devolve more powers to Scotland in fulfilment of voting 'no' in the Scottish independence referendum (UK Government, 2014). Notably, in both the devolved nations of Scotland and Wales greater local autonomy has allowed them to buffer their local authorities against austerity, with reductions in spending on services at 12 per cent being half that observed in English local authorities (Hay & Martin, 2014; Smith et al., 2016).

The installation of mayors as part of devolution deals was initially rejected overwhelmingly by cities (BBC News, 2012). Mayors are now a prerequisite to each individual 'deal' (Paun et al., 2021). Commentators have individually highlighted three reasons why this policy may have surreptitious motives. First, Bailey (2017) argues that mayors provide a visible figurehead for the reduced local budgets resulting from austerity, despite being centrally orchestrated. Second, Lowndes & Gardner (2016) highlight that mayors may challenge the Labour dominance that often exists within larger city regions. Third, Hammond (2016) comments that the installation of mayors may draw power away from the scale of local democracy and into a more executive, regional level and, somewhat conspicuously, closer to Central Government. Certainly, 'deals' are negotiated by LEP policymakers, and with little or no public consultation and in parameters defined by Central Government with future powers tentatively based on centrally defined performance targets (Lowndes & Gardner, 2016). Furthermore, debates around devolution are rarely in reference to democracy or other fundamental factors that affect people's lives, such as reducing regional inequalities or the environment (Bailey et al., 2015).

Indeed, devolution deals are primarily around aspects of economic development, such as investment, transport, jobs and skills, in addition to health and social care (Lowndes & Gardner, 2016). While these are important, scholars argue that the affected local authorities will still be far from autonomous and will remain highly constrained by reduced budgets (Gray

& Barford, 2018; Pike et al., 2016). An example of this is £6 billion of Manchester's £7 billion devolved budget already being accounted for by health and social care spending (Lowndes & Gardner, 2016). Overall, Bailey (2017) claims, the consequence of devolution, in combination with the retention of local business rates and dissolution of Central Government grants for local authorities, will be to 'lock-in' existing inequalities in economic growth rates. Bailey (ibid.) argues this is a conscious policy choice based upon the ideological belief that investing in 'growth areas' will foster the ultimate political goal: greater net growth.

3.2.6 The Resilience of Local Authorities

Despite the spending cuts and the narrative of pessimism and concern, there is still an optimism to local authorities as they have generally proven to be remarkably resilient (Lowndes & Gardner, 2016; Taylor-Gooby & Stoker, 2011). John (2014, p.688) attributes this to, "the institutionalisation of party politics in a well-organised management structure, whereby power is concentrated in the hands of senior officers and councillors who are in partnership with each other, which is untouched by a changing external environment." This rigid structure, however, may reduce wider democratic participation from the community or backbench councillor (Cotterill & Richardson, 2011; Richardson, 2012).

John (2014) cites the 1980s as a learning period for local authorities and their relationship with Central Government. Much of the resistance to neoliberal policies came from municipalities such as Liverpool and the Greater London Councils who refused to set budgets, forcing Central Government to intervene directly in providing local services or concede (Bennett, 1995; Marqusee, 2013). Although they were ultimately defeated by centrally imposed constraints, such as tax reductions and legal challenges, John (2014) claims that local authorities learned to be pragmatic and search for new means of providing welfare for their constituents as opposed to seek confrontation.

A similarly adaptive approach has been taken by local authorities towards recent budget reductions, with officers being proactive in seeking the best possible outcomes for services (Lowndes & McCaughie, 2014). Numerous paths have been taken to offset funding reductions and protect services with local authorities often sharing services, such as HR, with other authorities (Audit Commission, 2013; Hastings et al., 2013; NAO, 2014). Digital technology is said to be increasingly used to improve customer services, while innovative methods are providing community enhancing services to their residents, such as peer-to-peer lending

(Lowndes & Gardner, 2016). 220 local authority contracts have been insourced from previously privatised services between 2016 and 2018 while, according to a survey by the Association for Public Service Excellence, insourcing is the policy, or planned policy of over 77 per cent of respondents due to the effect of saving money and providing better quality jobs to the workforce that this may bring (APSE, 2019, pp.26-27). However, there were indications as early as 2013 that the limit to efficiency measures had been reached (Audit Commission, 2013). Furthermore, as warned by Lowndes & Gardener (2016), the adaptation by local authorities to recent policy changes may merely be enabling austerity.

3.2.7. The 'Entrepreneurialism' of UK Cities

Having presented the literature around how cities have become more entrepreneurial in competing for capital in the previous chapter, in addition to establishing the background for local authorities in the UK in this section, attention now turns to how urban entrepreneurialism applies to UK cities. Beginning with the literature specifically engaging with UK urban entrepreneurialism, this section concludes by bringing these discussions into conversation with the urban governance in the modern UK, as set forth.

Although the literature is far less extensive for the UK in this regard, the existing literature observes a divergence with the US. Kantor & Savitch (2005) notes that cities in the UK are far more constrained centrally while US cities have far more control over tax, housing, land-use and other policies, which allows them to be mobilised to attract capital. Jonas & Wilson (1999) note that such powers available to local authorities in the US include tax abatements, labour laws, air quality standards, and health and safety in the workplace. Harding (1991) agrees regarding both the fiscal and regulatory constraints placed on UK local authorities, though highlights the regulatory and servicing powers, in addition to property assets that have been used as bargaining tools within growth coalitions. Harding (ibid.), however, also indicates that growth coalitions in the UK are more reflective of national capital and politics as opposed to local and, therefore, coalitions that are city specific and may compete with each other. This work is substantiated by the research of Bassett (1999) who found that, although there were elements of joining together to promote inward investment in Bristol, local politics and business was fractured and rarely constituted a 'coalition'.

Bassett (1999) also takes the view that, since the 1990s there has been a degree of convergence between the US and UK. Bassett (ibid.) highlights the emergence of 'partnership organisations', a more active business elite, and increased competition around new growth industries such as finance and technology which is seeing cities in the UK increasingly focus on image in addition to land and financial packages and local mobilisation. Furthermore, Bassett (ibid.) contends that in the 1980s local business leaders were appointed to newly formed agencies, allowing for access to urban policymaking which by the turn of the century came to fruition. Despite this, Bassett (ibid.) also cites the lack of strong mayors further to the 'powerful' role of Central Government agencies operating regionally and the 'dominance' of professional ideologies in different policy arenas as being factors reducing intercity competition.

Moving into the present era, changes associated with the policies of the Conservative Government since 2010 may be encouraging urban entrepreneurial tendencies. Mayors are now included as part of devolution deals, which may lead to the greater mobilisation of resources to compete with other locales. Through austerity and localism there is the withdrawal of the public sector in favour of private interests. The creation of LEPs has led to the greater inclusion of local business leaders into urban policymaking, potentially helping to develop growth coalitions. It may, however, be the retention of local business rates and the reduction of the redistributive Central Government grants due to austerity that creates the greatest encouragement of urban entrepreneurialism as cities look to overcome this shortfall in economic welfare. O'Brien & Pike (2019) observe both 'managerial' and 'entrepreneurial' elements among the urban governance around City Deals – in which selected local authorities are afforded conditional fiscal powers to raise and deploy tax revenues for infrastructure – whereby the highly centralised governance system creates the conditions for entrepreneurialism which is subsequently taken up by local actors. More generally, O'Brien & Pike (ibid.) refer to localism and devolution as 'rhetoric' and believe there to be a 'risk averse' political and public administrative culture in both Central Government and local authorities, and thus an erring of managerialist tendencies.

3.3. Sustainability and Urban Governance

Having set forward debates around urban governance, this section draws sustainability into such conversations. Given cities' evident need to take account of both environmental and social aspects, why is their response to sustainability problems so limited? Scholars have argued that it is because delivering actual transformations requires fundamental shifts in markets, practices, policy and culture (Frantzeskaki & Loorbach, 2010; Geels, 2010). Such radical shifts are difficult to achieve and this, in addition to infrastructure lock-in, means that it is highly uncertain (Thacker et al., 2019). Furthermore, given the transboundary nature of the environment (pollution, carbon emissions, etc.), sustainability raises many new challenges for urban governance, in addition to relationships towards rural hinterlands, for example around renewable energy, as carbon sinks, or local food supply (Jonas et al., 2011). Accordingly, Geels (2010) points out that it is not enough to claim that because most of the world's population now lives in cities they have most of the part to play; rather, it must be understood how and to what extent they can play this part.

Cities must also reconcile sustainability with the entrepreneurial need to attract capital. In this context, apart from the instances in which the extra costs that come from environmental considerations reduce competitiveness and are expelled entirely, environmental policies are frequently viewed by policymakers as a means to complement, as opposed to an alternative to economic growth, while social considerations are often excluded completely (Cox, 1999; Garcia-Lamarca et al., 2019; Jonas et al., 2011). For instance, cities may need to identify themselves through the environment and 'banish' negative environmental externalities if they are to attract professionals, inward investment and tourists (Béal, 2012; Garcia-Lamarca et al., 2019; Hodson & Marvin, 2017; Jonas & While, 2007). Jonas & While (2007) go on to highlight that cities do in fact engage in many policies around sustainability that are not entrepreneurial and aim to improve habitability as opposed to increase competitiveness while also looking to restrict their global impacts in areas such as carbon emissions.

Despite this, Griggs et al. (2017) emphasize the limited results of urban sustainability policies, and view the 'sustainable city' itself as being an empty term that is used to galvanise support for the related policies when there are more fundamental reasons for their failure. Indeed, drawing attention to an incompatibility between economic growth and both environmental

and social outcomes, Davidson & Gleeson (2014, p.175) assert that, "neoliberalism cannot deliver on sustainable cities".

Consequently, there have been shifts from addressing climate change through sustainability, and more recently cities have tended to identify their relationship to the environment in other ways (Jonas et al., 2011; Romsdahl et al., 2017; While et al., 2010). Terms such as *Resilient Cities*; in which there is an acceptance of increasing environmental problems, or *Low-Carbon Cities*; in which there are moves away from fossil fuels and towards renewables as a source of energy, are increasingly used in discourses around cities and the environment (de Jong et al., 2015). In this context, the Smart Cities discourse promotes the use of information and communications technology on a city-scale to address environmental problems, while no changes are made to the structural causes of environmental degradation (Ahvenniemi et al., 2017; Bibri, 2018; Höjer & Wangel, 2015; Kunzmann, 2014). This may be a method favoured more for neoliberal ideological beliefs around seeing market opportunities from such technological innovations rather than concerns for the environment (BIS, 2013; Davidson & Gleeson, 2014; Taylor-Buck & While, 2017; Vanolo, 2014). In all these instances the relationship between economic, environmental and social factors are rarely acknowledged. While there is the Transition Town movement, according to Pickerill (2010), this has been criticized for being entirely community focused while failing to acknowledge capitalism as the structural cause of climate change.

With reduced budgets from austerity and increased private sector control over public services and infrastructure, local authorities require the involvement of a range of both state and non-state actors to be able to implement environmental policies (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2013; Bulkeley & Kern, 2006; Park et al., 2012). Eckersley's (2017) research on climate policy in Newcastle, for instance, showed that the need to include actors resulted in close relationships with the local university as well as non-profits. However, there were also concerns for how local business and other powerful actors may react to changes in policy (ibid.). This contrasted with Eckersley's (ibid.) findings in Gelsenkirchen, Germany, where there was more concern about the views of its citizens, with private companies playing a much more subordinate role.

Despite the constraints, the local authorities of both Nottingham and Bristol have established their own energy companies. Although these subsequently suffered financial problems and were sold (BBC News, 2020; Pittam, 2020), other local authorities have been able to

implement renewable energy projects. For example, Wrexham County Borough Council created a scheme in 2012 to install solar photovoltaic technology onto three thousand council owned properties (APSE, 2012). At a cost of £27 million, the scheme was said will, "reduce the amount of CO_2 emitted by three thousand tonnes a year and generate up to £1m a year in surplus income for the next twenty-five years" (ibid., p.21). This surplus will be used to, "help alleviate fuel poverty amongst council tenants by reducing electricity bills by between £100 and £300 per property per year" (ibid. p.22). This project is backed by Central Government Feed-in Tariffs created in 2008 to subsidise producers of renewable electricity which, however, is now closed to new applicants (Ofgem, 2021). In the proceeding years solar panels have become increasingly visible across the county borough with their incorporation into council controlled buildings and the development of a solar farm, at an estimated total reduction of 102,740 kg of carbon emissions (Wrexham Council, 2022).

Central Government policy is having a similarly detrimental effect on the insulation of homes. The UK has among the worst insulated homes in Europe, with an estimated 25 million homes in need of insulation to meet national carbon emission targets (Gustafsson, 2018). The Zero Carbon Homes Policy, devised in 2007 for 'new builds' to not emit any carbon in day-to-day running at an estimated increased cost of 1-2 per cent, was also disbanded in 2015 (Oldfield, 2015). Consequently, improvements to energy efficiency in homes are said to have stalled in the proceeding years and there are still large opportunities for carbon savings in this area (Harvey, 2017; Rosenow et al., 2018). Bloomberg & Hidalgo (2016), arguing for cities generally to be more empowered so that they may be 'bolder' in pursuing sustainability, claim that autonomy around building standards brings three times the emissions savings. Much like energy efficiency in the home, in England there is no clear policy direction around waste, while in Wales, in which there are devolved powers through their own Assembly, there is the integration of local and regional policy with legislation (Bees & Williams, 2017).

Given the constraints, urban sustainability governance has revolved around issues such as encouraging cycling, recycling, healthy lifestyles and energy saving (Brand, 2007; Hodson & Marvin, 2017). This is due to these being the areas in which local authorities can add value to the quality of life of their citizens (Brand, 2007). There are additional arguments that focusing on such issues can help foster a local identity and sense of pride in the face of homogenising neoliberalism while also legitimizing the role of local authorities (Dempsey et al., 2012;

Mocca, 2017). Although the majority of local authorities in the UK have declared a Climate Emergency (74 per cent by February 2021) in which ambitious carbon emission reduction targets are set such as carbon neutrality by 2030 (Climate Emergency, 2021), it remains to be seen whether they are able to go beyond their current role and achieve these.

Moving beyond management practices, a role that some local authorities in the US are taking in addressing the fundamental causes of sustainability related problems is to engage with community and non-profit organisations in helping to adopt the appropriate policies (Portney, 2005). Indeed, as discussed by Carter (2007), through allowing a wider range of voices, democracy is integral to sustainability by not only enforcing the common interest, but also making better decisions around a complex matter such as the environment. Certainly, further research in the US points to the correlation between non-profit organisations and 'expansive' sustainability efforts by local authorities (Portney & Berry, 2016; Portney & Cuttler, 2010). Furthermore, a study by Pitt (2010) shows that local governance in the US which enables greater community participation also increases the extent to which a city enacts carbon reduction policies and engages regionally in climate actions. Therefore, by utilising their unique position within a locale and adopting the role of bringer of social capital within their area, such local authorities may find they can gain encouragement and support for sustainability related policies.

3.3.1. Urban Sustainability Transitions

Cities frequently look to set out and mobilise support for strategic sustainability goals through the creation of a plan, or 'vision' (for recent UK examples see Bristol One City, 2021; Edinburgh 2050, 2020; Exeter City Futures, 2020; Sheffield City Region Vision, 2017). The literature is mixed regarding the effectiveness of visions (Arup, 2015; Geels & Schot, 2007; Huxley et al., 2019; Kern, 2011; Mendizabal et al., 2018). Given the constraints that are placed on cities in making sustainability transitions, Grimm et al. (2008) observe that leadership is required that is both committed and knowledgeable about its implementation. According to Whitehead (2003, p.1187), there is a mistaken tendency to assume within visions that there exists the potential for a thing called a 'sustainable city', while the authors of such are 'ignorant' to the, "complex discursive processes and socio-political struggles through which sustainable cities are produced". Indeed, Lapsley et al. (2010) argue that visions are primarily created with a mind of acquiring investment. Identifying further with the entrepreneurial model, Eadson &

While (2021) claim that notions of the 'green economy' within such visions also mainly with a mind of attracting investment. Jennings & Newman (2008, p. 10) view community participation as being integral in their creation so that visions, "reflect a city's distinctive qualities and provide inspiration and guidance on the journey toward sustainability". According to John et al. (2015), however, those involved in creating visions take a mostly functional 'top-down' approach to engaging with citizens.

Academic literature, meanwhile, tends to focus on common aspects of sustainability across numerous cities. For example, Bulkeley & Betsill (2005) look to consolidate multi-level urban governance with climate change, while North et al. (2017) address climate change policy in the context of austerity, and Webb et al. (2016) seek to understand how local authorities in cities may facilitate a transition to sustainable energy. There is little urban sustainability research that employs case study methodology. Those that do tend to focus on a framework from which they extrapolate the results to general city relevance (for example, see Davies & Blanco, 2017; Geng et al., 2014; Gouldson et al., 2014; Ofei-Manu et al., 2017; While et al., 2004). The work of Higgins & Campanera (2011), which compared Quality of Life survey responses in 63 city locations in the United Kingdom, revealed results bespoke to individual cities. However, this research only ranked broad sustainability themes against other cities and lacked in-depth analysis.

There is an emerging Urban Transformations academic field that pursues an active agenda of sustainability change which, according to Fuenfschilling et al. (2019), is because cities are critical for experimentation that may bring about sustainability transitions. For instance, through case studies of three cities in Japan, Indonesia and Vietnam, Irvine & Bai (2019) identify that the 'frontrunner' status in urban revitalisation and sustainability creates identity and positive inertia within and beyond a city's borders. Whereas Lam et al. (2020) argue that the 'amplification' of sustainability initiatives, such as projects, products, practices, approaches, or technologies, not only increases their impact within that initiative but also outwardly. Meanwhile, according to the work of Palmer et al. (2020, p.12), in their embryonic stage sustainability projects or activities need to be supported by an, "enabling infrastructure of training, facilitation and within an accessible, allowing and dignified space" to achieve 'transformative organisational effects' that allows them to contribute towards sustainability shifts. Finally, the research of Nguyen et al. (2020) highlight the benefits that the

encouragement and support that city networks, such as the C40 Climate Leadership Group, give to urban climate project experimentation. Therefore, much like other branches of academia, this literature tends to focus on common aspects of urban sustainability that may be applied more widely through the use of case study methodology. The distinction is that Urban Transformation literature focuses specifically on areas of immediate change.

3.4. Culture and Sustainability

Notably, neither of the ways in which policymakers or academia engage with urban sustainability shifts involve culture. Given the fundamental nature, however, the role of culture in sustainability is the focus of this section. Culture is a word that has many meanings in the English language. Hawkes (2001, p.1 & 10) identifies both an 'arts and other intellectual works' and a, "social production and transmission of values and meaning" interpretation of culture. With the way in which the former relates to ideas, customs and social practices, this was first suggested as a fundament of sustainability by Hawkes (2001, p.vii) with the reasoning that, "A society's values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the ways they are expressed are a society's culture". Correspondingly, Packalén (2010, p.118) argues that this interpretation of culture is the central pillar of sustainability, expanding further that, "One can therefore see the debate about what sustainable development really is as a discourse about ways of thinking, values, culture and lifestyles. Everything we do is culturally determined". In this sense, culture permeates into all aspects of a societies' actions: the food we buy, choices around housing and mobility, what we do for leisure, and the goods and services we consume. Overall, culture, Packalén (2010) contends, impacts upon sustainability in ways relative to science, technology, or education.

The possibility of shifts towards more sustainable cultures is explored to a limited extent within the literature. Through reinforcing and supporting each other's beliefs around consumerism, community-based projects have been shown to encourage more sustainable lifestyles (DEFRA, 2011; Jackson, 2005; Middlemiss, 2011). Through inducing social learning, the participatory approach in co-operatives has also been found to lead to the adoption of more sustainable lifestyles (Purtik et al., 2016; Vergragt et al., 2014).

Interventions by policymakers to promote pro-environmental behaviour change are either informational or structural (Steg & Vlek, 2009). Informational strategies focus on knowledge, awareness, norms and attitudes (ibid.). An example of this would be a campaign to raise

awareness around recycling. Structural strategies can involve external factors that may affect behaviours (ibid.). Such practices can comprise giving people a free bus pass for a period, in doing so potentially changing their perception of public transport and their subsequent behaviour (Bachman & Katzev, 1982). 'Green provisioning', such as making recycling more accessible, meanwhile, results in environmental decisions being a more feasible option in people's lives (Spaargaren, 2003).

There are other factors beyond the immediate control of policymakers that affects the extent to which populations engage with aspects of sustainability. Within the Covid-19 pandemic, for instance, consumer preferences were found to change in favour of buying with a social conscience and supporting ethical businesses (eBay, 2021; Ethical Consumer, 2020). Inglehart (1995) argues that higher socio-economic groups are more likely to show greater support for the environment due to their economic and physical security having allowed them to adopt 'post-material' values based on quality of life and subjective wellbeing. The work of Gore (2020), however, shows that affluence is linked to greater carbon emitting lifestyles. The general consensus within the literature is that socio-economic status is positively linked, to an extent, to environmental concern, with key aspects being around levels of education and knowledge of the environment, in addition to being more readily able to pay for environmental quality (Franzen & Mayer, 2010; Gelissen, 2007; Givens & Jorgenson, 2011; Pampel, 2014; van Heuvelen & Summers, 2019).

3.4.1. Built Heritage and Sustainability

The literature on culture and sustainability tends to focus on how the second interpretation of culture (arts and other intellectual works) affects social or economic sustainability (Giliberto & Labadi, 2021; Guzmán et al., 2017; UNESCO, 2012). By not focusing on the first interpretation of culture (social production and transmission of values and meaning), Hawkes (2001) argues analysis has marginalized the concept of culture as an effective tool in achieving more sustainable outcomes. Accordingly, also not explored in the literature is how the second interpretation of culture may affect the first, and consequently how the second interpretation may affect sustainability more widely. However, while, by extension, to my knowledge there exists no research regarding how built heritage – as a subgroup of the second interpretation of culture – may affect the first interpretation of culture, given the way in which the case

studies relate to built heritage, this section explores the relationship between built heritage and sustainability more widely.

The literature overwhelmingly views built heritage as (potentially)having a positive effect on sustainability related issues. Socially, built heritage is thought to help foster a sense of identity around which there is greater cohesion and inclusion, while also negating the homogenising effects of neoliberalism and globalisation (Haf & Parkhill, 2017; Nasser, 2003; Pendlebury et al., 2004; Rostami et al., 2014; Tweed & Sutherland, 2007; UNESCO, 2015). Economically, tourism resulting from built heritage can create jobs and generate income locally (UNESCO, 2015). Tourism may also provide an intrinsic economic imperative to conserve historic areas (Guzmán et al., 2017; Vileniske, 2008). Additionally, Nijkamp & Riganti (2008) argue for the need to preserve built heritage for future generations and for its intrinsic values.

Within the literature there are also negative elements associated with built heritage, the work of Nasser (2003) in particular has explored many of these. Notably the commercial value of built heritage may become central to the local economy, resulting in that area receiving more attention and resources than elsewhere (ibid.). The increased footfall and pressure on the road network from tourism can impact negatively on locals, while local retail trades may bias toward this market (ibid.). Tourism can add an artificial inflationary pressure on the local economy, pushing land and property prices beyond local affordability, and pushing local people away from the area (Nasser, 2003; Pendlebury et al., 2004).

Heritage tourism is a specific type of tourism which, according to Waterton & Watson (2013), in the UK became an industry in itself as of the mid- to late-1980s. According to Smith (2021), the people who visit heritage sites tend to be well educated, middle-class, older and from the dominant ethnic backgrounds. 'Heritage' is a contested term or, as argued by many academics, is not a contested term, but often a dominant discourse created by officialdom that reflects a homogenized, White, Christian, elitist notion of the past (Smith, 2006; Watson & Waterton, 2010). This is not the only way in which heritage may be conceived. For example, in *Uses of Heritage* Smith (2006) discusses Aboriginal cultural practices in Australia whereby ancient cave paintings are repainted to keep alive certain values and meanings, and the regular rebuilding of Japanese historic buildings, thus demonstrating other notions of heritage. It could be argued that such cultures are not static and involve current and future generations. Western heritage, in contrast, takes the form of monuments or historically

significant buildings – tourists do not interact with, but are passive recipients of such forms of heritage (Smith, 2006). Furthermore, the branding of heritage, as to increase tourism, such as UNESCO World Heritage designation, proliferates this Eurocentric view of heritage (Choay & O'Connell, 2001; Smith, 2006; Timothy, 2014).

That heritage tourism has become more prevalent since the 1980s may reflect concerns around national identity within an increasingly multicultural and post-colonial society (Wright, 2009). This period also coincides with the rise of the issues related to the entrepreneurial city, a characteristic of which is an increased focus on the cultural economy and tourism (Harvey, 1989; Hodson & Marvin, 2017). Certainly, this period has seen the promotion of built heritage as an economic asset (Guzmán et al., 2017; Hewison, 1987). The unique nature of the majority of built heritage to a particular locale, somewhat ironically given the homogenising effects of neoliberalism, allows monopoly rents to be appropriated (Morgan & Pritchard, 2004). However, Hewison (1987) has warned that the tourist industry commodifies and creates a marginalised view of the past for economic gains in the present that, in turn, stifles cultural development and creativity.

The competitive element regarding cultural attractions may also take the form of providing greater quality of life for citizens that, in turn, attracts the necessary professionals to a city. However, urban transformations based on 'cultural boosterism' in Glasgow following the European City of Culture in 1990 was argued by Mooney (2004) to have deepened inequalities. This is because, as opposed to overcoming the structural problems resulting from the loss of manufacturing in a more egalitarian form through public sector investment, the cultural activities that took place helped create a narrative of the entrepreneurial city that sought to promote regeneration through market driven development (ibid.). Furthermore, as argued by Graham & Aurigi (1997), by commodifying and orienteering a city towards the experience of the notional visitor, this creates conflict with residents.

With increased tourism and the consequential greater environmental impact from tourism, in addition to a greater awareness of the implications to the local economy and social aspects, the term 'sustainable tourism' has emerged. Godfrey (1998) argues that this concept is not well defined. According to Ruhanen (2013), due to their closeness to the associated problems and role in planning tourism, local authorities are uniquely placed to foster sustainable tourism. Despite this, there are claims that narratives of sustainable tourism are being used

to mask the economic growth reality of tourism (Michael Hall, 2011). Indeed, consistent with the issues associated with urban entrepreneurialism, the concept of sustainable tourism may be co-opted by the interests of economic growth; for instance, it may be used to attract more 'ethical' tourists. Perhaps due to these reasons there is little sign of the acceptance of the ideas around reducing tourism to increase sustainability, such as 'steady state tourism' or 'slow tourism' (Bramwell & Lane, 2011).

3.5. Urban Planning

This section presents the literature around the key areas of the urban built environment, notably the ways in which cities may be planned for sustainability, in addition to housing and transport. Firstly, however, the ways in which the changes associated with neoliberalism have impacted urban planning is set forth. In the literature the consensus is that such shifts have seen the interests of capital being favoured in planning the urban environment as cities compete to attract investment into infrastructure projects (Buxton et al., 2005; Clifford, 2016; du Gay, 2004; Filion et al., 2016; Harvey, 1989). This is perhaps best exemplified by the definition change in compulsory purchase from, "public benefit" to, "significant benefit to the local economy" in the *Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)*. Neoliberal reforms require planners to facilitate as opposed to restrict development (Harvey, 1989). This is primarily achieved through performance targets with an emphasis on efficiency unlike more traditional goals around equity, democracy deliberation and social justice (du Gay, 2004). According to Buxton et al. (2005), plans are simplified, and often negotiable, thereby speeding up the development process and reducing risk to investors (ibid.). Additionally, with reductions in their budgets, local authorities are less able to plan or intervene in the urban built environment (Filion et al., 2016). Despite these assertions, the work of Clifford (2016) finds that many planners have been able to defend their professional autonomy and do intervene in planning decisions in favour of public welfare.

3.5.1. Planning for a Sustainable City

In the literature there are common themes around planning the urban environment for sustainability, among these are energy-efficient heating (district heating) and recycling (Arora et al., 2017; Bees & Williams, 2017; Sager, 2015; Webb et al., 2016; Winter & Le, 2019). The biggest aspect, however, revolves around the positive relationship between density and sustainability, and the consequential encouragement of a more 'compact city' (Eames et al.,

2017; Gordon & Richardson, 1997; Hassan & Lee, 2015). The majority of this research has been conducted in the US. Notably, Hammer et al. (2011, pp.22-23) find that energy consumption for electricity and transportation is related to urban density, with suburban living emitting twice the carbon of central living. Additionally, according to Montgomery (2013, p.266), suburban homes are four times more expensive for public services – due to needing more paved streets, drainage, sewage, waste, and other services, such as fire and ambulance stations.

Meanwhile, scholars have identified that urban nature can provide 'psychological restoration', reducing stress and mental fatigue (Kaplan, 1995; Joye & van den Berg, 2013). Indeed, studies in the Netherlands found that residents with a high percentage of green space within one to three kilometres of their home had relatively low levels of physical and mental health problems (de Vries et al., 2003). This can partly be explained by the increased opportunity for exercise (ibid.). However, urban greenery also promotes a message of a place being cared for, therefore being a place of safety and in which there are increased opportunities for social interaction (Coley et al., 1997; Maas et al., 2009; Nasar & Fishert, 1993). According to research conducted by Weinstein et al. (2009), contact with nature can also impact positively upon values and have humanizing effects that may increase a sense of connection towards others, in turn enhancing traits such as generosity. There is no size of urban green space that provides the greatest number of benefits; while large, immersive destination parks are needed, there is also a need for medium and community gardens, through pocket parks and green strips to potted plants and 'green walls' (Montgomery, 2013).

In planning for sustainability, neighbourhoods being designed for mixed-use between housing, jobs and places to shop has numerous benefits (Montgomery, 2013; Sager, 2015). Notably, less need to travel great distances may reduce superfluous car-use and encourage walking and cycling (ibid.). Furthermore, people living, working, and playing in the same area may have many social benefits, such as lower crime rates and increased mutual support (Montgomery, 2013). The out-migration of industrial sectors has left empty brownfield land in central locations in many cities (Tang & Paul Nathanail, 2012). The service sector that replaces this generally requires less land on which to operate (ibid.). Therefore, such cities may be able to seize the opportunity to plan for sustainability with the encouragement of being more compact, a range of green spaces and mixed-use neighbourhoods.

3.5.2. Housing

The urban sociologist, Lefebvre (1996) takes the view that if you live out your life in a shared urban space then you have a natural right to participate in shaping its future. Conversely, the way in which the market allocates housing reduces participation to a monetary right. Furthermore, with the way in which capital functions, projects that would be considered sustainable urban developments, such as a new park, may be appropriated by people with greater wealth who can more afford to live there (Harvey, 2011). This is particularly applicable to the housing rental market; for example, in East Vancouver the planned renovation of a public park ceased due to local opposition from a public who feared increased rents (Montgomery, 2013). Such appropriation has been termed 'gentrification', which is a process defined by Sager (2011) as the change of populations in a locale from working- to middle-class. Montgomery (1995) asserts that there is a 'healthy bout of revitalisation' which adds vitality to a place, though this can tip over into 'unhealthy' gentrification in which there is 'sameness'. Intervention into the market through such methods as the inclusion of 'affordable housing' – currently defined as 80 per cent of market value (Barton & Wilson, 2021, pp.8-11) – in new developments may ensure more equal access to a locale (Montgomery, 2013).

With the changes associated with embedded liberalism, after World War II local authorities were the main source of new houses, building approximately 200,000 a year (Hutchings, 2018). By the late 1970s this had reduced to 100,000, and to 60 a year by 2000 (ibid.). This is primarily due to Thatcher's Conservative Government restricting both a local authorities' ability to borrow to build housing and their right to subsidise house building (Gurran & Whitehead, 2011; LGA, 2021). Responsibility for house building was also shifted to the non-profit sector with housing associations who fund development through a mixture of private and public borrowing while purchasing land on the open market (Gurran & Whitehead, 2011). The introduction of 'Right to Buy' entitled tenants to buy their council homes, and at substantial discounts, in doing so reducing the incentive for local authorities to build their own housing (Disney & Luo, 2017). In the preceding period neither housing associations nor the private sector have been able to compensate (Hutchings, 2018; Morphet, 2016).

As a result of these factors, the UK has a constrained housing stock. For example, the housing and homeless charity, Shelter (2019) claims that 3.1 million new social rented homes are needed. In England alone the government currently has an ambition to deliver 300,000 new

homes a year (Homes England, 2018, p.18). The problem may not just reside in numbers of housing, but also price, with the National Housing Federation (2019) estimating that to address the deficiency in housing requirements 42 per cent of all new homes built in England should be 'affordable'. In 2017, 23 per cent of new homes built were 'affordable' (ibid.).

Potentially contributing to a more egalitarian form of housing, there has been an increasing role for community land trusts (CLTs) who hold land in trust in perpetuity; therefore, preventing rent extraction in addition to reducing financialisaton and asset speculation (Johanisova et al., 2013). However, Scurrah (2018) contends that, while CLTs may satisfy areas of local demand, they are unlikely to be able to function on a large enough scale to solve national housing demand. The rise of short-term rentals through platforms such as Airbnb has added potentially both good and bad dynamics to the housing stock. Although there are aspects of the sharing economy and low-cost accommodation disrupting the existing hotel market, there is also the increased opportunity for rent-seeking from spatially fixed housing with the corresponding disruption to communities (Gurran & Phibbs, 2017; Lee, 2016; Rae, 2019).

Although from 2012 English local authorities were allowed to borrow against housing rental streams to finance house building, there was a centrally imposed restriction on the amount they could borrow (Hutchings, 2018). However, in October 2018, to increase supply this restriction was removed and, in turn, according to Hutchings (ibid.), this may stimulate a new era of housebuilding by local authorities.

3.5.3. Transport

Being responsible for 23 per cent of carbon emissions, transport is a major contributor towards climate change (IPCC, 2018a, p.142). There is a culture of overt car-use that, in addition to being relatively convenient, may also stem from disproportionate policy support due to car-use being ideologically associated with economic growth and freedom for the individual, with conventional policies being to 'predict and provide' (Carter, 2007). Such policies, however, are simplistic with research suggesting that people will generally drive just enough to congest the roads (Montgomery, 2013). Appropriately, Scanu et al. (2020) argue that changes towards more sustainable transport systems require the intervention of public institutions. Overall, with road traffic accidents worldwide being responsible for 1.35 million

deaths per year, and being the leading cause of deaths for 5 to 29 year olds (WHO, 2018, p.3), society pays a high price for road traffic as a form of transport.

Despite the negative consequences from an over-reliance on cars, there is often a backlash to removing them from places (Montgomery, 2013). This partly stems from stakeholders' fear of losing the right to live and move as they have become accustomed (ibid.). There are techniques policymakers can use to reduce car-use. These range from restrictions on car parking in new housing projects to trials such as having one-off car-free days, thereby allowing people to see the benefits of a lack of car-use (Awareness Days, 2022; Badiozamani, 2003). There are also examples of successful congestion charges, as was introduced in London in 2003 that caused an 18 per cent reduction in traffic and significant growth in bus-use – which was increasingly funded through the charges – in the first years alone (Transport for London, 2004).

Through the danger and noise they create, cars have large consequences for the places through which they travel and, as a result, levels of traffic are inversely linked to social activity on a street (Appleyard & Lintell, 1972; Freeman, 2001; Hart & Parkhurst, 2011). One common method to reduce the negative effects of cars is to slow them down (Department for Transport, 2013). A study in Wales by Jones & Brunt (2017, pp.701-702) compared accidents in 30 mph to 20 mph roads and concluded that reducing all 30 mph roads to 20 mph in the devolved nation would prevent 6-10 deaths and 1203-1978 injuries per year at a value of prevention of £58-94 million. Meanwhile, dedicated cycle paths separated by low kerbs are desirable to enable both children and older people to feel safe enough to cycle while reducing the danger that cyclists can pose to pedestrians (Barber, 2017; Thoem, 2022). Much like how more roads create more motorists, improvements in cycling infrastructure leads to more cyclists, though such infrastructure for cycling, and for walking, costs significantly less (Montgomery, 2013). Through the creation of walking and cycling infrastructure and linking them to bus and rail networks to create a sustainable transport network, a convenience can be created that rivals car-use (ibid.). As one-third of people, especially children and poorer people, do not drive, such a network would be used by a much more egalitarian portion of the population (ibid.).

Potentially having a large impact on the quality of bus services is ownership. Most bus companies were owned and operated by local authorities until the mid-1980s when the *Transport Act 1985* resulted in the majority of these being privatised (Jeffrey, 2016). In the subsequent period passenger journeys have declined from over 2 billion in 1985/6 to 1 billion per year in English cities other than London by 2015/6 (Department for Transport, 2016, p.4). Conversely, in London, in which there is a franchise model whereby local authorities co-determine the service, including routes, ticket prices, frequency and quality standards that operators then bid for the right to operate, passenger journeys increased from 1.1 billion to 2.5 billion a year during the same period (ibid., p.4). Price is a significant barrier to increased use with £4 for a 5 mile journey in other parts of the country costing £1.50 in London (Pidd, 2019a). Despite the relatively high prices outside London, these are still subsidised (ibid.). For instance, Transport for Greater Manchester subsidises approximately 20 per cent of the region's bus services at a cost of £27.1 million a year (Pidd, 2019b). The *Bus Services Act 2017* for regions in England outside of London would, if included in individual devolution deals, give devolved regions the power to franchise bus services.

3.6. The Changing Job Market

The job market has a large bearing on the social formations within cities. In Western countries employment is increasingly moving towards high-paid professional jobs related to cognitive ability that in turn creates demand for low-paid and low-skilled service jobs (McInroy, 2017; O'Connor, 2015; ONS, 2019; Schwab, 2017). There is also a reduction in the number of traditional middling jobs, such as manufacturing and administrative – both being negatively impacted by technological advances, the former also being negatively impacted by offshoring, while the remaining manufacturing jobs have shifted towards being high-skilled and high-paid (Goodhart, 2017; O'Connor, 2015; OECD, 2020; ONS, 2019; Schmuecker, 2014; Tait, 2016; van Winden et al., 2011). Employment that cannot be substituted by automation is complemented by it (Autor, 2015; Nedelkoska & Quintini, 2018). Therefore, with the increased specialisation possible from offshoring, while semi-skilled labour is reduced, skilled labour is said to gain from the effects of offshoring with greater wages and employment (Goos & Manning, 2007; Grossman & Rossi-Hansberg, 2008; Hummels et al., 2018; Piketty, 2017). These observations are reflected in the numbers: despite a rising output of seven per cent from manufacturing between 1990 and 2018, associated employment declined from 21 to

eight per cent between 1982 and 2018 (Rhodes, 2020, p. 4 & 8). With for every ten middling jobs that disappeared in the UK between 1996 and 2008 approximately 4.5 of new jobs being high-skill and 5.5 being low-skill, the overall effect has been a 'hollowing out' of the job market (O'Connor, 2015).

The main effect of the changes in employment is unequally distributed rising wealth, with the benefactors being the providers of intellectual and physical capital (Schwab, 2017). Indeed, although productivity in the UK has increased 2.5-fold since the 1970s (ONS, 2022), Stratford & O'Neill (2020) argue that gains have been captured by managers, shareholders and land owners. Prior to this, union bargaining and legislation ensured a fairer distribution with labour (ibid.). Most workers apply for jobs in which they have significantly less bargaining power than employers (Malleson, 2014). It is due to being rarer, however, that more highly skilled workers have greater bargaining power and consequently benefit more greatly from increased productivity than semi-skilled workers (ibid.). Meanwhile, owners of capital are able to profit from interest payments, capital gains and dividends (Doherty et al., 2020).

Going forward, changes to the job market look set to intensify due to increased automation in what Schwab (2017) has termed the, 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' (4IR). Building on the digital revolution of the late 20th Century, Schwab (2017, p.7) states that the 4IR is, "characterised by a ubiquitous and mobile internet, smaller and more powerful sensors that have become cheaper, and by artificial intelligence and machine learning." Such technological advances have large implications for employment with numerous claims around vulnerability to automation varying between 30 and 50 per cent of jobs within the next two decades (Bank of England, 2021; Berriman & Hawksworth, 2017, p.7; Frey & Osborne, 2017; Manyika et al., 2017). Arntz et al. (2017), however, claim that such research does not account for all aspects of a role being made redundant and predicts 10 per cent for this figure.

Although Schwab (2017) claims demand for new goods and services resulting from the 4IR will lead to the creation of new employment, businesses and industries, there appears to be fewer jobs being created in newer industries than in previous periods. For instance, in the US in the 1980s there were 8 per cent of new jobs created through technological advances, with this figure lowering to 4.5 per cent in the 1990s, while only 0.5 per cent of new jobs have been created in industries that did not exist before 2000 (ibid., pp.37-38). This is because, as

Schwab (2017, p.38) observes, "innovations currently tend to raise productivity by replacing existing workers as opposed to creating new product needing more labour to produce them."

Back to the current job market, with the disruption in work patterns due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there are increased calls for reductions in working hours (BBC News, 2021; Pearson, 2020). There are various benefits to a shorter working week. The research of both Debus et al. (2014) and Sonnentag et al. (2008) suggests that people require regular time away from work in which they can 'switch off' mentally. From considerable increases in productivity per hour with higher worker motivation to fewer in-work accidents and mistakes, there are also numerous benefits in the workplace (Autonomy, 2019). Knight et al. (2012), meanwhile, link higher working hours to greater environmental impact, partly through the 'compositional effect' in which people who have less time and more money will have more environmentally damaging behaviours, such as in transportation, but mainly through increased economic activity. Overall, with there being 17.9 million work days lost in the UK in the 2019/2020 year, work related stress, depression, or anxiety is a major social problem (HSE, 2020) that may be improved by reductions in working hours.

In the UK, during the embedded liberalism period of capitalism fairly constant rates of increases in productivity were matched by increases in wages and decreases in working hours (Stirling, 2019b). Although pay has continued to track productivity, since the 1970s working hours have remained the same (ibid.). This disparity is strongly accounted for by neoliberal policies promoting cuts in investment, reduced public spending, privatisation, atomising workers, and labour deregulation, limiting their ability to organise; all to devalue the workforce, increase flexibility and restore profitability (Arrizabalo et al., 2019; Harper, 2019).

The increasing precarity in the UK job market has seen greater numbers of 'zero-hour contracts' from around 225,000 in 2000 to nearly 1 million in 2017 (Alander, 2018). Zero-hour contracts favour employers through having the labour they require without any of the commitment beyond their need, with the risk of not being able to guarantee work being transferred to workers (Arrizabalo et al., 2019). With for example 23 per cent of those employed in the hospitality sector on zero-hour contracts, these contracts are mostly in the service sector which has traditionally been susceptible to precarious employment and low union presence (FLEX, 2021; Koumenta & Williams, 2018, p.31). Schmueker (2014) discusses how, in the interests of welfare, there is a need for such sectors to provide training and

progression routes for their employees. Despite this suggestion, in reality, labour is cheap and high turnover is accepted as a business cost (Devins et al., 2014). Many of these roles are what Graeber (2013) termed 'bullsh*t jobs' for their demeaning, exploitative and often unnecessary nature. However, even in employment such as public administration and education, zero-hour contracts are increasingly present (Arrizabalo et al., 2019).

Overall, there are large social consequences from the changing job market. According to research by the Living Wage Foundation (2019, p.5), 1 in 6 UK workers (5.1 million people) experience insecurity and earn less than the 'real Living Wage' – defined by the Living Wage Foundation (2021) as, "a wage that meets the costs of living" and is currently set at £9.90 per hour. Due to widespread poor employment, while 1 per cent of the social welfare bill goes to support unemployment, over 30 per cent goes to support those in work but who are paid too little to meet their basic needs (Hood & Keiller, 2016). Meanwhile, according to the work of MacInnes et al. (2013, p.36), with there being 1.4 million part-time workers who would have a preference for working full-time, there are high levels of underemployment. The Living Wage Foundation (2019) highlights that precarious work disproportionately affects those who receive the lowest pay, and makes financial planning difficult. As Mirowsky & Ross (2003, p.275) point out, "it's good for people to have a job; it's better for people to have stable employment." Although Stratford & O'Neill (2020) highlight that the Covid-19 pandemic may exacerbate inequalities in the job market, they claim that government has the ability to resolve many of these problems, such as legislating sick pay for outsourced workers and the right to a contract that reflects their hours for people on zero-hour contracts, stressing the forthcoming *Employment Bill* (2021-22), which aims to make provision about the rights of workers, as an opportunity to do so.

3.7. The Social Landscape

Having set out wider societal factors in this and the previous chapter through which social formations emerge, attention now turns to the social landscape as the backdrop to many of the issues that are faced within the case studies. Consistent with the neoliberal desire to marketize all aspects of society, social problems in the modern day UK are not seen as structural factors to be remedied by support so that one may be able to develop the necessary skills to navigate society (Thomas-Smith, 2020). Instead, this is seen as the responsibility and failure of the individual (ibid.). An anti-social welfare narrative has been constructed through

claims around a 'culture of worklessness' and 'welfare dependency', that citizens do not have a right to social welfare but should rely more on family, charity or the market in time of need (Dermott & Pomati, 2016; Garthwaite, 2011; Main & Bradshaw, 2016; Patrick, 2014; Slater, 2014). This has been effective, even among the recipients of social welfare (Jensen & Tyler, 2015; Shildrick & MacDonald, 2013).

Through a poor job market and insufficient social welfare provisioning, according to Arrizabalo et al. (2019, p.284) for certain parts of society, "salary does not allow the reproduction of labour, this only being achieved through family support and the indebtedness of households." For the first time in a century, for some groupings life expectancy is stalling (Marmot et al., 2020). Suffee (2020) highlights that, due to wage stagnation and austerity, even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic over 9 million people were in 'problem debt'. While, according to Barnard (2019, p.1), the freeze on working age and tax credits will have led to more than 400,000 being 'swept into poverty' between 2016 and 2020. Overall, the top 1 per cent in the UK increased their share of national income from 6.5 to 13 per cent between 1982 and 2005 (Harvey, 2007, p.17). Meanwhile, a fifth of the population, despite many being in work, live on an income below the poverty line and over one million people are considered to be 'destitute' (Cottam, 2018, p.29). Indeed, during the current period, even under capitalism inequality is said to be at a new peak (Piketty, 2017). Doherty et al. (2020, p.3) assert that, "as long as corporations have a governance and management structure that prioritises shareholder profits, we can expect our societies to become more unequal."

The extent to which inequality is socially damaging has only relatively recently begun to be understood. There have been shown to be large negative impacts on subjective wellbeing through income inequality (Tibesigwa et al., 2016). Furthermore, from increasing mental illness to reduced trust, the research of Wilkinson & Pickett (2010) indicates that health and social problems increase with inequality. This may, at least in part be because inequality encourages us to compete with each other in our lifestyles and consumption habits, creating an anxiety with the result being that enough is never enough (Cottam, 2018).

Ferguson & Lavalette (2014) assert that, despite the limitations of the welfare state around bureaucracy and familial assumptions, it has provided a safety net for people. In addition to the problems associated with reduced budgets, Cottam (2018) identifies that the current welfare state is less effective than it could be, being defined by outdated problems that were

present in the time of its conception; for instance, after World War II people required basic provisions such as housing, education, and health care. Whereas now problems relate more to those associated with ageing and isolation (ibid.). Cottam (ibid., p.18) argues that the welfare state has the potential to be just as relevant as ever, but that it should, "create capability" as opposed to, "manage dependence".

The benefits of a safety net are in evidence in the work of Putnam (2015) in the US. Putnam (ibid.) observes that although children from more wealthy backgrounds drink and take drugs more, they are protected by their families and communities from the consequences, which leads them to learn from the risks they take. With decreased social welfare provisioning, austerity has exposed people more to what Guinan & Hanna (2017, p.6) term, "the vast disruptive power of markets and globalisation, [which] unleashed upon people, communities and regions now requires a 're-embedding' of the economy in society and nature if we are to avoid a catastrophic spiral into fascism and environmental collapse." O'Hara (2014) observes that services are decreasing in a period in which demand is increasing. Consequently, the day-to-day experiences of those requiring social welfare is one of, "fuel poverty, food insecurity, social isolation, insecure tenure, social and familial breakdown and ill health" (Edmiston, 2017, p.266). Indeed, Cooper & Dumpleton (2013, p.3) estimate that even relatively early in austerity in 2013, 500,000 people were reliant upon food aid. There is said to be a 'strong association' between poverty, income, debt and poor mental health (WHO & CGF, 2014). Certainly, in the last ten years there has been a 34 per cent increase in those detained under the *Mental Health Act (1983)*, while prescriptions for antidepressants have almost doubled and one-in-six now suffer from mental health problems (Thomas-Smith, 2020).

Governments, however, are reluctant to take responsibility for providing the better employment that would reduce many of these problems (Cottam, 2018; Dowler & Lambie-Mumford, 2015). Instead, they prefer to reduce social welfare provisioning, thereby incentivising people to enter the job market (Dowler & Lambie-Mumford, 2015). Indeed, neoliberal theory holds that there is a reserve price of labour, which is raised by social welfare, and unemployment arises when this is too high (Harvey, 2007). Despite this, in truth, people in our society face immense material and cultural pressure to get a job (Malleson, 2014).

3.8. Business Models

Discussions around the job market and the social consequences are frequently based upon the assumption of privately owned businesses. However, commentators argue in favour of other models that seek to capture and broaden productivity gains to reduce work hours for a better work/life balance, particularly in the semi-skilled employment that is particularly prone to precarity and low-wages, such as social care (Bedford & Harper, 2018; CCCV, 2020; Labour Party, 2017; Lawrence, 2016; Lawrence et al., 2018; McInroy, 2017). In addition to traits around ownership, there are numerous business models, all of which have varying outputs that not only have social, but also economic and environmental, and cultural and political implications. This section discusses the sustainability consequences for these different models.

3.8.1. Corporations

The dominant business model in the current political-economy is the joint-stock company, or 'corporation'. In the Anglo-Saxon corporate governance model, corporations are a limited entity that are legally recognized as a person meaning that, while they enjoy many of the benefits of a human such as the ability to accumulate capital, those who stand to gain from such have no personal liability (Harvey, 2007; Ireland, 1996). Management has a 'fiduciary duty' to act 'in the best interests of shareholders' (Doherty et al., 2020). This has been interpreted as maximising profit and raising the share price in the short-term (ibid.). Indeed, corporations are responsible for three of the four growth imperatives identified in Section 2.3.3.– private ownership over increases in production, production based on credit and a need to encourage consumerism. Short-termism is exacerbated by the increasing mobility of capital (Goodhart, 2017; Mandel, 2014). Such claims are substantiated by changes in the ownership of 'ordinary shares' – stocks sold in public exchange – of UK corporations, with the proportion of those owned by individuals having fallen from 54 per cent in 1963 to 13.5 per cent in 2018, while foreign ownership has increased from seven to 55 per cent over the same period (ONS, 2020).

Perhaps due to public awareness of the activities of corporations, such as tax avoidance and evasion, trust in the private sector is low and there is an increasing need to justify their social licence to operate (Doherty et al., 2020). Malleson (2014, p.109) argues that a pre-requisite for corporations to be able to exist is legislation that rely on current, and potentially changing

social norms such as, "the right to hire workers who have no say in management, and workers lack the right to buy out their firm […] while the banking sector and stock and bond markets are geared towards them." Malleson (ibid., p.110) expands that there is, "a long history of societal investment into the training and educational services that inculcate millions of people with the ideology and the know-how of the corporate business form. There are public schools and technical colleges to train workers, business schools to train corporate managers, and consultancy firms to offer advice and strategic help." Therefore, such privileges must be maintained for corporations to be able to function and, according to Spash (2017, p.9), the current narrative that is being propagated to achieve this is, "all is well with the world, there is such a thing as an efficient competitive economy, the rich deserve their wealth, corporations are a valid and good institution, markets supply freedom and economic growth will eradicate poverty."

Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are corporations. Though there exists no research in this area, their size may lead to them having different outputs. The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills has robust categories for what constitutes an SME. SMEs are corporations with a turnover of less than £25 million, less than 250 employees and gross assets of less than £12.5 million (BIS, 2012). There are six million privately owned businesses in the UK. 76 per cent of these employ only the owner. 99.3 per cent employ between 0 and 49 people (small businesses). 0.6 per cent (36,100) employ between 50 and 249 employees (medium businesses). 0.1 per cent (7,800) employ 250 or more employees (large businesses). Employment in small businesses is 13.3 million (48 per cent of total) and turnover £1.6 trillion (36 per cent of total). Employment in medium-sized businesses is 3.5 million (13 per cent of total) and turnover £0.7 trillion (16 per cent of total). Employment in large businesses is 10.9 million (39 per cent of total) and turnover £2.1 trillion (48 per cent of total; BEIS, 2020b). Due to their size, SMEs may be more likely than large businesses to be owned privately and locally. Therefore, there is a differentiation in terms and, hereafter, SMEs will be referred to thusly, while large businesses will be referred to as 'corporations'.

3.8.2. Publicly Owned Enterprises

A publicly owned enterprise (POE) is any business that is owned by a public institution, be this at local, regional or national level. One of the main arguments against POEs is economic inefficiency in comparison to corporations (Hanna, 2018). Overall, the literature is

inconclusive as to the validity of these claims (Chang, 2007; Hall & Nguyen, 2018; Kole & Mulherin, 1997; Millward, 2000; Willner & Parker, 2007). Certainly, despite such claims, according to Fiorio & Florio (2013), privatisation has led to higher prices to the consumer of such services. Indeed, on the occasions in which corporations were said to be more efficient, this was found to be purely based on the profit measurement (Aharoni, 2000; Megginson & Netter, 2001; Mühlenkamp, 2015; Rutgers & van der Meer, 2010). However, there may be other variables not accounted for in the research regarding POEs efficiency, such as political interference or a lack of competition or capital investment, sometimes due to surreptitious reasons for the latter, that may affect a POE's performance (Hudson, 2013; Shirley & Walsh, 2000). Consistent with this, Peng et al. (2016) observe that POEs are a reflection of the political-economy.

Indeed, according to Cumbers (2012), public ownership has fallen short due to bureaucracy and top-down control. POEs, however, may be given any mandate in addition to any level of control or transparency required (Schumacher, 1973). For instance, governance structures may be adopted that include direct workers and service user representation (Hanna, 2018). For such reasons, the World Bank recommends smaller, local publicly owned and controlled POEs (DTT, n.d.). Certainly, given the right circumstances, due to versatility POEs may have numerous sustainability related outcomes such as considering production on a wider societal scale as opposed to a need to maximise production (Andrews & Entwistle, 2014). Consideration may also be given to longer-term public goods, such as the environment, perhaps prioritising renewable energy (Hall & Weghmann, 2019). Furthermore, POEs do not have an onus to grow, they therefore have a reduced environmental impact in comparison to corporations (Zovanyi, 2012). For all these reasons, POEs form a large part of the OECD economy, with 2,111 POEs across 34 countries (OECD, 2014). Accordingly, re-municipalisation, particularly of energy companies, has been gaining support throughout the world in recent years (Kishimoto et al., 2017).

3.8.3. Social Enterprises

'Social enterprise' generally refers to any organisation that operates in the marketplace and uses the resulting income to meet social goals (Chell, 2007). The term is often used to include many different models such as worker co-operatives, mutuals (a private company that is owned by its customers or policyholders), credit unions (a non-profit-making money co-

operative whose members can borrow from pooled deposits at low interest rates), development trusts (a trust that is commonly concerned with regeneration of an area, is not for private gain, has long-term goals, and is community based and accountable) and the trading arms of charities (Vickers & Lyon, 2014). However, in the UK social enterprises have generally focused on community empowerment in what has often been termed 'community enterprises' (Rahdari et al., 2016). These are the focus of this section.

During the New Labour period, England had the most developed state support structure in the form of grants and subsidies for social enterprises in the world (Mawson, 2010; Nicholls, 2010). With the election of the Conservative-led Coalition Government there was a change in policy whereby there would be support for social enterprises delivering public services, but they should seek more private and social investors (Nicholls, 2010). In the UK in 2017 nearly nine per cent of the small business (0-49 employees) population are social enterprises, with 99,000 social enterprises employing roughly 1.44 million people in addition to working owners and partners (DCMS & BEIS, 2017, p.8).

Bland (2009, p.6) asserts that social enterprises provide the, "motivation, ingenuity and customer focus" of the private sector while being more responsive to customer needs by not being motivated purely by profit, while avoiding the 'one-size-fits-all approach' of the public sector. Despite this, the competing demands of both social and business goals are observed to create a tension within such organisations (Garrow & Hasenfeld, 2014).

Social enterprises bring social benefits through means such as providing a niche service that is not profitable or hiring people who may not otherwise be employable in the market; for instance, a person with learning disabilities (Hillman et al., 2018). The extent to which social enterprises may bring economic benefits, however, is an under researched area. For example, by diversifying the local economy and providing a service through local means, they may add economic resilience. From an environmental perspective Johanisova et al. (2013) identify that, due to the lack of need to grow, social enterprises could be used in a degrowth strategy. Whereas Hillman et al. (2018) argue that, due to a wider focus than immediate profits, social enterprises may be more inclined to pursue renewable energy than a corporation.

For the potential benefits that social enterprises may bring to be widespread, however, they must themselves be much more prevalent which, given their sensitivity to the political climate and reliance on external funding, may not be feasible. As argued by commentators (Amin et

al., 1999; Nicholls & Teasdale, 2017; Teasdale et al., 2012), it may be that social enterprises are enabling as opposed to challenging the neoliberal state due to how they operate within the state and given their positive externalities while not fundamentally questioning the corporate model.

3.8.4. Worker Co-operatives

In the sense that worker co-operatives have both market and social objectives, they too are social enterprises. However, unlike other social enterprises, the overriding principle of worker co-operatives is that the people engaged in a workplace have a say in that project, both through ownership and the way in which it is run (Graeber, 2012). Accordingly, worker co-operatives are said to be enabling 'economic democracy' whereby decision-making is proportionate to the degree to which one is affected (Akbulut & Adaman, 2020; Booth, 1995; Doherty et al., 2020; Hahnel & Wright, 2016; Malleson, 2014). In addition to worker co-operatives, there are co-operatives around every form of trading: producer co-operatives, in which producers of the same or similar products co-operatively market and sell the products; consumer co-operatives, when customers of a service own it through membership; and, community co-operatives, when people within a locale own a common asset, such as a pub or shop. Therefore, going forward in this thesis, unless there is a prefix, 'co-operative' refers to all of these models.

Worldwide, co-operatives employ 279 million people (ILO, 2022). For an OECD country, the UK has disproportionately few co-operatives and mutuals (a private firm that is owned by its customers or policyholders) with the co-operative sector accounting for two per cent of GDP compared to Germany, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, and New Zealand in which this is between five and ten per cent (McCarthy, 2018). According to Co-operative UK's (2021b, p.3) report on the nation's co-op economy for 2021, with an annual turnover of £39.7 billion, there are 7,237 co-operatives employing 250,128 people while there are 'almost' 14 million memberships of co-operatives. With a turnover of £28.4 billion, retail is the largest sector. Retail is driven by *The Co-op* and *John Lewis Partnership* who alone have a combined turnover of £22 billion (ibid., p.9 & 16). However, co-operatives span the remainder of the economy, notably in education (£560.1 million turnover), finance (£253.4 million), health and social care (£128.8 million), housing (£588.6 million), manufacturing (£350.3 million), social clubs and trade unions (£549.7 million), and sports and recreation (£755.3 million; ibid., p.9).

In combination with worker trusts in which the trust owns the business on behalf of the employees, with an annual turnover of £11 billion there were 440 worker co-operatives in the UK in 2019 (Co-operatives UK, 2019, p.9). Worker co-operatives are generally small-scale, with only 41 in the UK qualifying as 'medium' or 'large' businesses (Lawrence et al., 2018, p.14).

According to Chomsky (2013), such ideas as co-operative ownership and participation are natural, they are merely crushed for ideological reasons to make corporations, as capital-owned businesses, more amenable. Indeed, open source software is not alone in demonstrating altruism is a common human trait, be it for a creative need or co-operation for the common good (Wistreich, 2014). Certainly, research suggests that 63 per cent of people would like more participation in their workplace (Freeman & Rogers, 2006, pp.40-41). While this desired participation may not be all consuming, perhaps this reflects a feeling of subservience in the workplace. Worker co-operatives, however, are not perfect in this regard. For instance, Malleson (2014) claims proportionate democracy is only possible in smaller workplaces – beyond this, as is also observed by Doherty & De Geus (1996), the pressures of size and efficiency require representative democracy. Malleson (2014) goes on to identify issues around the over-hiring of non-members as leading to the decline of democratic practices. Unquestionably, organisational structures in worker co-operatives must balance participation with efficient decision-making. However, participation is much greater than for corporations: 13 per cent of worker co-operative members felt they directly participated in important decisions compared to four per cent for a corporation, while 30 per cent of worker co-operative members felt they did not participate in governance compared to 80 per cent for a corporation (Bradley & Gelb, 1981, p.222). Therefore, by adding the practice of democracy to worker's lives, this may also serve to enhance democracy more generally (Greenberg, 1981) – people learn and are able to create democracy by practicing democracy (Pateman, 1970).

As with any business model, worker co-operatives are not perfect and, as with other groups in society, workers are primarily concerned with their own interests. It stands to reason, however, that the alignment of their interests may result in more sustainability related benefits than comes from the shareholder interests of corporations. For instance, worker interests may be more embedded in the social, economic, and environmental well-being of

their immediate area. Certainly, Booth (1995) highlights the local ownership of worker co-operatives as a reason why there would be an inclination to reduce environmental damage to the immediate community. Zamagni (2016), meanwhile, argues that worker co-operatives 'humanize' the market, forcing corporations to consider their impact upon workers and consumers. Despite this, according to Doherty & De Geus (1996), even in a solely worker co-operative market-place there would still be need for a central agent to solve the problems of coordination that would inevitably arise between different worker co-operatives and communities – both their interests not being completely aligned.

Perhaps a key fundament remains that, due to corporations themselves being a commodity and the often resulting detachment to investors, the potential need to maximise profits is limitless (Davies, 2009) – a characteristic referred to as 'accumulation for accumulation's sake' by While et al. (2010). Whereas, due to only being incentivized to grow until worker income is maximised, worker co-operatives only seek to make profit (Davies, 2009). In the analysis of studies comparing worker co-operatives with corporations, Booth (1995) observes that without this 'empire building' need to grow exhibited by corporations, worker co-operatives demonstrate superior environmental outcomes. Booth (ibid.) also finds that, due to workers sharing in profit they are more motivated to look for efficiency gains while, in combination with the influence to be able to implement such insight, worker co-operatives are more efficient with resource inputs. Bowles & Gintis (1993) cite this, in addition to accountability to its employees, as the two primary reasons that worker co-operatives have superior societal outputs than corporations.

Within the literature there are also diverging economic outcomes between work co-operatives and corporations. Due to greater worker motivation, worker co-operatives generally have higher productivity (Doucouliagos, 2020). Worker co-operatives are said to be more economically resilient, lasting on average at least as long (WCMC, 2014). Indeed, in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic, co-operatives were four times less likely to cease trading during 2020 (Co-operatives UK, 2021b, p.4). This stability may in part be due to the socialised nature of their capital and a reduced reliance on support from financial markets (Sabatini et al., 2014). It may also be that during economic downturns worker co-operatives tend to lower wages across their business as opposed to make redundancies (Bailly et al., 2017). This in turn negates the societal costs of redundancy, both economic and social. Wage equality has been

shown to be greater in worker co-operatives (Magne, 2017). Meanwhile, although research suggests wages are less in worker co-operatives than in corporations, it may be that the latter hire more high-value workers while the former have a greater willingness to hire people from the local labour market who may otherwise be excluded (Clemente et al., 2012).

Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of co-operatives in comparison to corporations is that their being more rooted in their immediate area negates many of the negative effects associated with capital, which may be inclined to move to the area of highest returns in turn placing downward pressure on wages, taxes, and environmental protections etc. (Malleson, 2014). Indeed, in Brazil in which there are one and a half million landless people, the global investment based decisions of corporations has left, "ghostly industrial suburbs and huge stretches of fallow farmland", and hundreds of producer co-operatives have been formed to reclaim unused land (Klein, 2008, pp.454-455). The disparity in social responsibility between co-operatives and corporations is perhaps demonstrated by the five largest co-operatives, despite being significantly smaller, paying 50 per cent more corporate tax than Amazon, Facebook, Apple, eBay, and Starbucks in the UK in 2016 (Lawrence et al., 2018, p.13).

There are notable benefits for the employees of worker co-operatives. In corporations, managers are often seen as 'experts' while people at the bottom of what can be very hierarchical systems, even though they may be knowledgeable and have ideas, are not given an opportunity to express their creativity (Malleson, 2014; Mason, 2015). Being a member of a worker co-operative may not make work more interesting, but satisfaction frequently increases (McQuaid et al., 2012). Additionally, many worker co-operatives rotate jobs to overcome divisions of labour which, according to Adam Smith (1776, p.603), is important as, "The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations […] generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature to become." Consequent to such considerations, being in control of one's own place of work has been shown to bring benefits such as in health and well-being (Erdal, 2000; Pérotin, 2006). Additionally, Sabatini et al. (2014) claim the more egalitarian governance structures in worker co-operatives and more altruistic purposes than corporations diffuse trust, social capital and social cohesion.

Despite the potential societal related benefits, worker ownership of an enterprise may be alien to many people in the UK. Consequently, partially through legitimising the model, the creation of worker co-operatives and their ability to recruit is closely linked to the local density

of existing worker co-operatives (Arando et al., 2009; Co-operatives UK, 2017; Pérotin, 2006). Another barrier to the creation of worker co-operatives may be the entrepreneurial will to start a business in which one would not be the sole beneficiary. When an enterprise expands it is far easier and better for that person to hire someone rather than make them co-owners (Aldrich & Stern, 1983; Schwartz, 2012). The co-operative principle is that when hiring labour, after a period they must also benefit accordingly (Malleson, 2014). This is based on the belief that ownership of a workplace is dictated by contribution as opposed to the ownership of capital (ibid.). When a business is sold, the co-operative belief is that the first option should be to its workers (ibid.). 63 per cent of small business owners are over 50 and more than one in five are aged between 61 and 70, of whom 64 per cent have no clear succession plan (PMC, 2016). Appropriately, business succession has been identified by Lawrence et al. (2018) as a primary means through which to encourage more worker co-operatives over the coming decade.

3.8.5. Business Model Conclusions

From the discussion around business models, two themes emerge. Firstly, although much of this discussion is theoretical with some of the literature being based upon empirical evidence, much is based on speculation that may sound reasoned, but in practice is hard to isolate as a variable. And secondly, when viewed in sustainability terms, while no business model is perfect in that they are all subject to misaligned interests and the potential for co-option, there are relatively large contrasts between corporations and all other models, the latter having superior outputs. This is especially true considering the on-going changing relationship between labour and capital due to technological advances.

A common theme for models such as social enterprises and co-operatives is that, while often found in isolation, they are more commonly found in networks. For instance, the World Fair Trade Organisation is a global association that creates supplier and producer supply-chains for its 364 social economy organizations across 76 countries (Doherty et al., 2020, p.1 & 6). By artificially creating supply-chains among these community orientated models this means, as opposed to minimising costs and maximising margins, there is stability among what are often small organisations that would otherwise not be able to exist (ibid.). Similarly, in response to the reduced provisioning of social welfare resulting from austerity policies following the 2008 financial crash, this is occurring on a city level with the *Social and Solidarity*

Economy in Barcelona with models such as social enterprises and co-operatives (Wahlund, 2019). Here, institutional support for the social economy, which constitutes eight per cent of employment in the city, has enabled a 'solidarity' market between these models based upon co-operation and exchange (Ecos, 2019).

Focusing specifically on worker co-operatives, in among the services that the Mondragon Co-operative Network in Northern Spain offers to its member co-operatives, such as its own university to teach technical skills, is its own bank (Lawrence et al., 2018). While ten per cent of the group's surplus goes to charities and 45 per cent goes to individual member's capital accounts, 45 per cent is mandated to go to Mondragon's collective reserve for co-operative specific financing, thereby allowing co-operatives to access finance that does not put pressure on them to compromise co-operative ownership and democratic governance (Malleson, 2014, p.58). Similarly, the co-operative network; Lega Co-op in Northern Italy, has its own financial consortium – Fincooper (Ammirato, 1994; Malleson, 2014). Much like Mondragon, Lega Co-op acts as an umbrella organisation in providing services for its member co-operatives: lobbying the government for support, providing legal, business and accounting services, research and development, co-ordinating business evolution and financing the development of new worker co-operatives (ibid.). Therefore, networks grow to achieve economies of scale for such models as opposed to, as in corporations, individual models growing (Cottam, 2018; Malleson, 2014; Zamagni, 2016).

Social enterprises and co-operatives are models notable for being neither private nor publicly-owned. Coming instead from civic society, such organisations are sometimes referred to as the 'third sector'. In addition to these models, the third sector may also include voluntary and community organisations such as charities and associations (NAO, 2013). Due to a greater focus on social goals than corporations, as in Barcelona, such models are sometimes collectively referred to as the 'social economy'. According to Noya & Clarence (2007, p.10), "what is critical about the idea of the social economy is that it seeks to capture both the social element as well as the economic element inherent in those organisations which inhabit the space between the market and the state." Meanwhile, Rifkin (2000) warns that, due to the damaging, commodifying effect of capitalism on culture, and the way in which social economy models negate this, they are important for the meaning and trust that they increase in society. In addition to those organisations identified as being in the third sector, the UK think tank,

CLES (2019) also identifies SMEs and POEs as models that are better alternatives to the corporation as they support local employment, reduce carbon emissions and spend more money locally. Therefore, going forward in this thesis, the term 'social economy' refers to all such models.

3.8.6. Transitions from Capitalism

Having set out the varying business models that may populate the economy in addition to the inherent contradictions between capitalism and sustainability, the remainder of this section considers how transitions may be made from this political-economy. The corporation is the archetypal capitalist model. Becoming more prevalent from the 1860s, corporations did what other models beforehand did not – they vertically integrated production and distribution, and organised the flows of capital, labour and land (van Bavel, 2016). Therefore, as the conduit for capital, corporations afford a vast accumulation of wealth by a small number of people. While the economy is the productive and service capacities of society, divergence from corporations is also divergence from capitalism. Despite the varying outputs shown in this section, the businesses that populate this economy are not ones necessarily to be chosen based on one's own priorities. Schwartz (2012), for instance, argues that government support should be given to worker co-operatives given the public benefits that come from these models. Despite this, there are entrenched interests who benefit from corporations and have the power to maintain them in the face of negative externalities; as said by Hanna (2018, p.82), "the restructuring of the political-economy is often violently and vigorously opposed."

Capitalism, however, does not only reside within business models. For instance, participatory budgeting in Porto Alegre, Brazil (Abers, 2001; Harvey, 2012) runs counter to the neoliberal philosophy because there is collective decision-making over aspects of the municipal budget. Indeed, as established in Section 2.3.2., the philosophical basis for the current phase of capitalism rests on the principle of freedom for the individual as an economic actor, in doing so benefiting a relatively few market elites. Therefore, any form of shared privileges, democracy or solidarity runs counter to this. In *Alternatives to capitalism: proposals for a democratic economy*, and set out in Table 3.1., Hahnel & Wright (2016) propose three circumstances that may lead to a transition from capitalist societies.

Table 3.1. Hahnel and Wright's Three Stages of Transformation from Capitalist Societies

Ruptural	A sharp break with existing structures changed and new ones built in a fairly rapid way, thereby seizing state power, and using that power to destroy the power of the dominant class within that economy.
Interstitial	Building new forms of social empowerment within niches in the capitalist society, not posing an immediate threat to elites.
Symbiotic	Using state power to extend and deepen the institutional forms of social empowerment in ways in which it also solves certain problems of the elites.

Regarding a ruptural stage, according to van Bavel (2016), the causes of the decline of the market have mainly been endogenous. The financial crash of 2008 may have been one such cause, however, this was utilised to exacerbate the inequality between labour and capital (Clarke & Newman, 2012; Farnsworth & Irving, 2018; Gray & Barford, 2018; Nicholls & Teasdale, 2017). Though, this is not to say that the next crisis of capitalism does not cause a rupture. Additionally, in the current period of humanity the potential exogenous threats to the political-economy are more widespread than in the case studies explored by van Bavel (2016); for instance, with climate change or the Covid-19 pandemic.

Hahnel & Wright (2016) argue that symbiotic strategies solve the socio-economic problems associated with capitalism, such as poverty and inequality, but leave intact the core power of capital. Such a claim is consistent with the observation by Brenner & Theodore (2002) that if the market was the sole means of allocation there would result intolerable levels of inequality and economic stagnation and, therefore, it requires other state and social formations. For the same reasons Amin et al. (1999), Nicholls & Teasdale (2017) and Teasdale et al. (2012) take the view that the positive externalities of social enterprises without any fundamental change in ownership model may enable, as opposed to challenge the market. Despite this, Hahnel & Wright (2016) contend that, should social empowerment be increased to the appropriate level, there is the potential for transformation from symbiotic strategies.

Hahnel & Wright (2016) assert that an interplay between interstitial and symbiotic strategies may be transformative in which interstitial communities and institutions are built on the justification of solving the socio-economic problems of capitalism. Symbiotic strategies can then open space for them, with further enhancement by periodic ruptural strategies (ibid.).

Consistent with this, Peck & Tickell (2002) take the view that a ruptural strategy is required as direct forms of resistance would fail without changes to the macroenvironment around trade, finance, environmental, antipoverty, education and labour policy.

Hahnel & Wright (2016) disagree regarding the effectiveness of purely interstitial strategies. For instance, Hahnel argues that a sole focus on building alternatives would be too isolating due to exposure to the competitive pressures and culture of capitalism. Hahnel goes on to explain that, due to being where the livelihoods of most people are, a focus must also be on winning reforms in the capitalist sector as this is where most people will become engaged.

3.9. Conclusions

Therefore, from their formation in the 19th Century, local authorities in the UK have a difficult relationship with Central Government which has seen their role adapt as they look to solve the problems of urban development. Accordingly, there has seen a varying relationship with not only their own citizens, but both the third and private sectors. Urban governance in the present day is largely defined by the changes associated with the Conservative Party from 2010-onwards. This has seen the reduced budgets of local authorities associated with austerity in addition to the partial retention of business rates, increased privatisation of services, devolution and the establishment of Local Enterprise Partnerships. Despite this, the narrative around local authorities in the literature is one of resilience and intervening in their respective locales to provide welfare for their citizens. Unlike for the US, the literature does not engage significantly with urban entrepreneurialism in the UK. Those that do identify both 'managerial' and 'entrepreneurial' tendencies to urban governance, largely due to strong central local control. This literature, however, is frequently not recent and the changes from 2010 have since introduced greater entrepreneurial elements to urban governance in the UK.

Given the limited resources and powers available to cities their ability to become sustainable is, at best, questionable. Consequently, cities frequently engage with sustainability on a shallow level. Harbouring support from organisations within their locale, however, may aid in enacting more fundamental changes. As identified by Hawkes (2001), culture has a significant impact upon sustainability; for instance, in providing support for related policies or a willingness for citizens to engage fully with recycling. Despite this, how sustainability cultures may be encouraged is ambiguous. Similarly, there is a dearth of literature around how built heritage may affect such cultures. The literature does engage with other characteristics

relating to built heritage and cities. Notably, that the related tourism has increased significantly in the recent past, that built heritage tends to attract older, wealthier people from dominant ethno-backgrounds, and that it may occupy a prevalent role within urban entrepreneurialism as cities turn towards the cultural economy in search of economic welfare.

While urban planning has been identified as an area that has been deeply affected by shifts toward neoliberalism, planners remain able to intervene in the market in favour of greater societal outcomes. In planning the physical environment for sustainability, scholars argue that urban areas should be compact with high density, and be of mixed-use with work, recreation and living in the same area, and a mixture of green spaces. Housing and transport are also key areas of sustainability related to the physical environment, with there being significant constraints and opportunities within these.

Meanwhile, with a greater number of highly-paid professional jobs contrasting with increased low-paid service jobs, in addition to the gains from automation mainly going to the owners of capital, more contemporary economies are more unequal economies. Largely resulting from the job market, in addition to changes in the wider political-economy, social deprivation and inequality have reached unprecedented levels. Many of the consequences and assumptions, however, are based upon the dominance of corporations. Other business models, such as social enterprises and co-operatives, have superior sustainability outputs. Such models require support to become more prevalent which, if accomplished, would also encompass shifts from capitalism and the interests of capital. With the literature relating to urban governance and sustainability in the UK having been established, the next chapter details the methodology through which the aim and objectives of this study were achieved.

4. Methodology

While the literature reviews presented existing knowledge around factors identified in the conversations of interviewees, this chapter sets forth the methodology used in this study to understand how cities may resolve the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing, and transition towards sustainability. To briefly recap, the need for urban sustainability is two-fold. Firstly, the environment is under increasing pressure from human activities (IPCC, 2018a). While all aspects of the environment are being affected (ibid.), climate change is perhaps the most pressing problem. Secondly, with increasing highly-paid professional jobs contrasting with a greater number of low-paid service jobs, and the reduction of middling jobs in addition to the majority of gains from automation going to the owners of capital, our economy is ever more unequal (Goodhart, 2017; OECD, 2020; Schwab, 2017). Therefore, given that cities are the sites of greatest intensity and the world's population is becoming increasingly urban (UN DESA, 2018), understanding how cities may transition towards sustainability is integral.

4.1. Aim and Objectives

Consequent to the need for urban sustainability transitions and the challenges that must be overcome to achieve this, the aim of this study is to:

1. Explore how the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing within contemporary urban governance processes may be resolved, and their relation to sustainability transitions.

This aim will be achieved through two objectives:

1. Develop theory and concepts around urban sustainability transitions.
2. Explore how the application of grounded theory may be used to address issues of urban sustainability transitions.

4.2. Overall Approach

With the observation that cities are in no way sustainable, this study began with an inductive inquiry. The initial research question was to understand, "what makes cities more environmentally sustainable?" The aim and objectives were arrived at through an iterative process. Due to the non-linear developmental nature, to provide context for the methodology described in the remainder of this chapter, the avenues of research that were pursued as they presented themselves are set forth in this section.

Overall, there were two significant phases to the study. In Phase 1 a comparative study was conducted between York and Bristol in which an understanding of each city was constructed. Initial coding then took place in which these understandings were openly coded by segmenting the data into individual elements and describing these in a word or short sequence of words. In subsequent thematic analysis of these codes, a consistency of the same four groupings emerged: the culture of residents as the, "social production and transmission of values and meaning" (Hawkes, 2001, p.1); public goods, as commodities and services that are available to all society such as the air we breathe or a social service, and the ability of local authorities to provide them; the means through which economic welfare, as the ways in which the wages and profits resulting from the production of goods and services, in addition to any intervention from government, meet people's economic needs, is provided, and the factors affecting this; and the ways in which elements such as equality, social cohesion and deprivation dictate social wellbeing.

There were several implications from these findings. Firstly, it was observed that environmental sustainability could not be viewed in isolation from the other aspects of a city. For instance, many elements of social wellbeing, such as housing, were a greater priority than many elements of environmental sustainability, such as renewable energy generation, in each city. Consequently, the aim of this study changed to sustainability in general.

Secondly, the understandings constructed of each city was thought to offer a fundamental understanding of sustainability within that locale. Moreover, the consistency of the same thematic groupings was thought may afford the chance for fundamental understanding of sustainability in all cities.

Thirdly, it was found that respective codes were able to be identified within each case study that had strong and negative relationships to other codes that were thought to be elements of sustainability. Therefore, these were thought to be barriers to that respective city becoming more sustainable. Adopting York as the primary case study, these barriers were identified as: a political fluctuation in the local authority that reduces its ability to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies; the lack of a social economy (co-operatives, social enterprises etc.) that may bring wider sustainability benefits; and an economic and cultural conservatism stemming from the built heritage. Five related elements of sustainability that may benefit from overcoming these barriers were identified as: a lack of

renewable energy production, income inequality, inadequate sustainable transport, a lack of 'affordable housing', and poor recycling provisioning. Therefore, by identifying individual elements within the understandings constructed of a case study, this 'barriers methodology' was thought may create a pathway for urban sustainability shifts that both focusses on a specific city and offers different understanding to the one that was found from the thematic groupings.

Consequently, in Phase 2 case studies were sought in Bath, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston with a dual purpose. Firstly, through constructing an understanding of these case studies, and subsequently initially coding and analysing these codes thematically, this would add to the findings around the thematic groupings established in the York and Bristol case studies. Secondly, to provide insight into how to overcome the barriers to sustainability in York, with Bath being rich in built heritage and with a political fluctuation; Edinburgh being rich in built heritage, with a political fluctuation and with a prevalence of social economy models; Plymouth having a political fluctuation and a prevalence of social economy models; and Preston enacting an innovative local economic strategy around the encouragement of social economy models.

4.3. Methodology Structure

Having established the background to the ways in which this study arrived at its final manifestation, the remainder of this chapter sets out the methodology through which the aim and objectives were achieved. Firstly, the philosophical stance is set forth, beginning with a statement of ontology and how this study relates to realism. Then, having identified the knowledge, the epistemology, that is, what this knowledge is and the means through which it is known, are presented, detailing how this study encompasses both relativist and constructivist positions. After this, the methodology, as the way of thinking about and studying the phenomena under question, is established, specifically for why this study utilises the constructivist branch of grounded theory. Finally, the individual methods that were chosen from the grounded theory 'toolbox' through which data collection, sampling and analysis were conducted are presented.

4.4. Philosophical Position

This study adopted a realist ontological position. This is because this study treats the reasons for levels of urban sustainability, once defined, as being an external reality independent of human consciousness (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The epistemological stance is both relativist and constructivist. That is, the belief that a way of 'knowing' this reality is through the subjective experiences of those who encounter that phenomenon in addition to through objective measurement (Bryman, 2012). Increased quantity and quality around this understanding brings this reality closer to being 'known' (Charmaz, 2006). Due to the data collected primarily being subjective, a qualitative approach was adopted as this allows for an in-depth understanding of complex, and often contradictory subjects (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Mason, 2002). Given the ontological and epistemological stances, the philosophical position of this study is critical realism, as defined here by Fryer (2020, p.19): "[Critical realism] acknowledges that the world is real, and that knowledge production is fallible and theory-dependent but not theory-determined. It's also happy to say that meaning and discourse are important, but they're not the only things that exist."

4.5. Methodology

Due to the inductive inquiry nature, this study identifies with grounded theory methodology in which theory is generated through data collected in a pre-determined area. According to the progenitors of grounded theory, Glaser & Strauss (1967), a primary reason for its use is when there is insufficient theoretical understanding of a social phenomenon. Therefore, this is consistent with the rationale for using grounded theory in this study with the observation that cities are in no way sustainable.

Although they share inductive inquiry elements, there are notable differences between grounded theory and both 'adaptive theory' and 'middle-range theory'. Grounded theory primarily remains inductive, while middle-range theory (Merton, 1968) deductively constructs possible explanations for the phenomenon from the closest existing hypothesis, and adaptive theory (Layder, 1998) proposes an active dialogue between induction and deduction throughout.

As an extension of the subjective epistemology, this study most closely identifies with the constructivist branch of grounded theory, as developed by Charmaz (2006). Here, the subjective nature of the relationships between both the researcher and data collection, and

the phenomenon and those who experience it is acknowledged (ibid.). Accordingly, the resulting theory is considered to be a 'construction' between those involved (ibid.).

Despite identifying with the methodology, this research diverges from elements of grounded theory in numerous ways. There are arguments that the philosophical position of a study creates a 'straitjacket' of methodology and methods. Notably, commentators assert that grounded theory based upon critical realism leads to 'abduction' or 'retroduction' as opposed to induction, in which existing hypotheses are explored for their best explanatory power (Belfrage & Hauf, 2017; Hoddy, 2019) – therefore, sharing a fundamental similarity with middle-range theory – which has not been adopted in this study. Indeed, other commentators have extolled the need for flexibility in grounded theory and for the use of the 'toolbox' of related methods to be driven by insight as opposed to rigid adherence to an individual methodology (Charmaz, 2006, Thornberg, 2012).

Grounded theory methods include constant comparative analysis (purposive sampling with concurrent initial coding, analysis and subsequent theoretical sampling); memo-writing (informal analytic notes); presenting a 'chain of evidence' around data collection and analysis; and theoretical sensitivity (the extent to which the researcher engages with the literature around the study) prior to data collection; and reflexivity (the researcher scrutinising the way in which they may influence data collection to reduce the effect of this) during data collection (Charmaz, 2006; Urquhart, 2012).

4.6. Methods

In this section, the methods through which the aim and objectives were achieved are discussed. Data collection will be set out, followed by sampling and finally, analysis.

4.6.1. Data Collection

Here, the prospective ways through which the data were collected are set forth. This begins with a discussion of how the case study approach may benefit the study. After this, the potential data collection methods for the study are expanded upon and chosen. Lastly, the process around data collection will be described, notably around the interview method and how this study engages with the literature.

4.6.1.1. Case Studies

During Phase 1 of the study, given that the reasons for urban environmental sustainability were thought to reside in other aspects of a city, there was a need for an in-depth understanding of the main factors influencing the development of both York and Bristol. Similarly, while for Phase 2 this varied slightly, with the aim being sustainability in general in addition to the barriers to sustainability identified in York, there remained a need for in-depth understanding. Therefore, in all these instances, the case study approach was considered.

According to Yin (2014), there are a list of circumstances in which case studies are appropriate. These are: when the question is 'how' or 'why' as opposed to 'what', 'when' or 'where' (ibid.); when it is not possible to adjust the subject of the study in the ways in which one would like (ibid.); and when the context of the phenomenon is relevant to the study, or that the boundaries between context and phenomenon are unclear (ibid.).

Both Beveridge (1951) and Walton (1992) draw attention to the potential research benefits that can be brought about from intense observation as opposed to a shallower understanding of more groups for theoretical development. Such thoughts are shared by Harvey (2006, p.86) specifically around cities with the assertion that, "I stand, in short, to learn far more about the urban process under capitalism by detailed reconstruction of how a particular city has evolved than I would from collection of empirical data sets from a sample of one hundred cities".

Drawing wider applicability from individual cases does have its detractors, such as Stake (1995) who asserts that the first obligation in case study research is to the one case itself and not primarily to understand other cases. This study aligns more closely with other commentators, however, such as Flyvbjerg (2006) and Hague & Harrop (2004) who highlight the value of example and the broader significance that may emanate from case studies.

In both phases of the research the comparative case study approach was considered as the contrast was thought would enhance understanding. Such reasoning is consistent with Yin (2014) who identifies that comparative studies may be used to predict either similar results or contrasting results but for predictable reasons. Certainly, in-depth understanding, therefore requiring knowledge of two or more causal effects, must be based on more than one observation (King et al., 1994). Indeed, Bonnett (2001) highlights that, should context be understood, there is in-depth understanding to be gained from comparative studies.

Perhaps for these reasons, comparative urbanism is itself a widely explored area of academia (for example, see Di Gaetano & Strom, 2003; John & Cole, 1999; Roy & Ong, 2011; Pierre, 2005). McFarlane & Robinson (2012) assert that such research is increasing globally, partially due to greater levels of urbanisation in addition to the globalisation of urban processes and ideas, and that there is an appropriate need for new methodologies. McFarlane & Robinson (ibid.) go on to observe, however, that existing comparative urbanism tends to focus on more similar cases when, with the appropriate research design, they argue greater understanding is to be found in comparing more different cases. Kantor & Savitch (2005) claim such comparative urbanism is often confounded methodologically in four areas: that there are sufficient case studies while still providing in-depth analysis; context, particularly cultural, is accounted for; conceptual tools are developed that account for the same problem in different places; and that the research takes place across multiple jurisdictions.

Therefore, this study meets the prerequisites for the use of case studies. Furthermore, the requirements are consistent with the in-depth understanding and potential wider applicability from case studies. Consequently, case study methodology was selected for both phases of this study. However, the assertions of Stake (1995) were heeded and the initial onus was on the case studies themselves prior to considerations being given to wider applicability. Additionally, due to the potential for greater understanding, particularly with the ability to isolate individual variables, the comparative method was selected.

4.6.1.2. Means of Data Collection

Due to the versatility in allowing for the exploration of the experiences of individuals, grounded theory studies typically employ interviews (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Galleta, 2013). Semi-structured questionnaires were considered for Phase 1 of the study as it was thought that these would consume less time than interviews, enabling a larger sample size. Given that in-depth understanding was required in both phases, however, the interview method was selected as the primary form of data collection. Furthermore, as opposed to a rigid structure of questions, semi-structured interviews were used to maintain relevance and yet allow for exploration of relevant topics as they presented themselves. This reasoning is consistent with the frequent use of semi-structured interviews in grounded theory studies (for example, see Belfrage & Hauf, 2017; Hoddy, 2019; Knott et al, 2012; Sbaraini et al., 2011).

So that data may be triangulated from various perspectives, numerous scholars recommend a multiple-strategy approach to understand a phenomenon (Gillham, 2000; Layder, 1998; Patton, 1990; Swanborn, 2010; Yin, 2014). Potential secondary data sources include documentation, archival records, physical artifacts, direct observations, and participant-observation (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Secondary data are not without drawbacks. As highlighted by Vartanian (2011), secondary data have been collected for a purpose other than one's own study. Therefore, in addition to the lack of control that may be exerted over such data, context must be accounted for (ibid.). Studies that most resemble this one – orientated towards aspects of urban sustainability and involving case studies – generally use multiple sources, with interviews being supplemented by various combinations of policy documents, secondary texts, documentary analysis and semi-structured questionnaires (Davies & Blanco, 2017; Geng et al., 2014; While et al., 2004). Therefore, in this study, while the primary form of data collection were semi-structured interviews, where appropriate these were supplemented by secondary forms of data.

4.6.1.3. Data Collection Process

The theoretical sensitivity was considered prior to data collection. Within constructivist grounded theory, it is considered unrealistic to assume no pre-knowledge of the study area (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012; Thornberg & Dunne, 2019). Indeed, such knowledge may be a prerequisite to exploration (ibid.). Accordingly, in constructivist grounded theory a preliminary literature review is conducted: to the extent that a researcher will be able to engage in data collection, but not so that creativity is stifled or existing knowledge is imposed upon the data (ibid.). To minimise any biases or pre-knowledge from influencing data collection a 'reflexivity' is maintained throughout (ibid.). Therefore, given that this study identifies with the latter form of grounded theory, a level of pre-knowledge was gained to the extent that it would enable a dialogue with interviewees. In this instance, consideration was not one of the existing literature but of the cities being studied. Furthermore, a reflexivity spanned the entirety of data collection.

Data collection was completed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. All interviews in York were conducted face-to-face while all other interviews were either over the telephone or on video call. It was felt that conducting face-to-face interviews was favourable due to being able to read body language while potentially fostering greater engagement with the interviewee.

There are potential drawbacks to face-to-face interviews, as interviewees may be more affected by the characteristics of the interviewer (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, with the high number of interviews and practical considerations of travel, it was decided to conduct telephone or video call interviews for those not in York.

Prior to data collection, ethical approval was sought from the University Ethics Committee. Before individual interviews commenced participants were allowed time to peruse the consent form, shown in Appendix 2. This provided the opportunity to understand the purpose, risks, and expectations of the research. Interviewees could select their level of anonymity: from name and institutional affiliation, through just institutional affiliation, to full anonymity. The option was also given to see any extracts from their interviews as written output and withdraw the information if they wished. Interviewees were free to wait until after the interview to fill out the form and therefore decide on their level of anonymity. This helped to create an atmosphere in which participants felt they could express themselves more freely, with the option to anonymise themselves later. All interviewees who have been identified have given their permission to do so and are detailed in Appendix 1. Interviews were recorded using a digital recording device and transcribed in Microsoft Word. Though Roulston (2014) proposes that naturally occurring utterances such as 'um' be retained in transcriptions to help provide context in analysis, this level of context was not required for understanding the reasons for levels of urban sustainability. Consequently, these were omitted when transcribing. Completed transcriptions were uploaded into NVivo 12 qualitative analysis software.

With interviews being semi-structured, set-generative questions were used to facilitate conversations. The direction of these discussions was largely dependent on the responses of the interviewee, with the role of the interviewer mainly to keep the focus on the subject matter and ask probing questions when relevant avenues of information presented themselves. After several interviews during Phase 1, reflexivity around the questions employed led to the removal of a question around general sustainability as this was found to be too broad to engage with, while questions around individual aspects of sustainability were found to be effective in encouraging a dialogue and were retained. Questions were altered slightly for Phase 2, with the addition of questions related specifically to the reasons for the case study and an appropriate reduction in general questions. Interview questions for both

phases of the study, in addition to reminders and follow up question techniques used during interviews are detailed in Appendix 4.

4.6.2. Sampling

In this section, decisions taken over which case studies to use for both phases of the research are expanded upon. Following this, the sampling of the data collection within these case studies will be detailed. Finally, aspects related to sample sizes are set forth.

4.6.2.1. Case Studies

York was chosen as the primary case study due to the city possessing several notable characteristics that were thought worthy of investigation. York is rich in built heritage. The city has a significant and continued relationship to both the church; as the seat of the Archbishop of York and head of the Northern England diocese, and government; being the former capital of the North of England during the Anglican, Viking and Medieval periods and now home to many civil service departments, such as being a main office for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. During the 19th Century, York did not experience the exponential growth of other cities which were based on heavy manufacturing, instead being based on industries in confectionary, mainly related to a prevalence of Quakers in the city, and the railways. Primarily due to its built heritage, the city now attracts 8.4 million tourists annually which contributes £765 million to the local economy (Visit York, 2018). Accordingly, with tourism supporting 24,400 jobs in the city (ibid.), the economy has transformed from the 1970s onwards with the traditional industries being replaced by the service economy in addition to a substantial number of professional jobs.

Consequent to the initial research question, an environmental exemplar was identified as a comparative city in Phase 1. Bristol was selected due to being renowned for its green culture; notably around cycling, recycling, and renewable energy, in addition to a large third sector associated with environmental sustainability. Bristol is the only UK city to have won the European Green Capital Award, which was achieved in 2015. Away from Bristol's environmental achievements there are several additional characteristics that make the city an interesting case study. Bristol was a major slave-port in the 18th century, goods such as sugar and tobacco were transported through the city, and were the basis upon which Bristol's traditional industries were built. The city has successfully reorientated its economy in the

contemporary period. Bristol has expanded beyond its city boundaries, mainly into South Gloucestershire, and the Bristol Urban Area has a total population of 617,280.

In Phase 2, case studies were sought in Bath, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston to both add to the findings around the thematic groupings established in the York and Bristol case studies, and provide insight into how to overcome the barriers to sustainability identified in York. The processes through which these case studies were selected are presented in Sections 4.6.2.2. to 4.6.2.5. Away from the barriers in York, these cities had notable characteristics that made them interesting case studies from which to gain an understanding around urban sustainability. For these cities, populations, key industries and characteristics are presented in Table 4.1. in addition to city populations and key industries for York and Bristol.

Table 4.1. Background Information for the Case Studies

	Population	Key Industries and Characteristics
York	198,000	Tourism and the knowledge-based industries including healthcare, insurance, creative industries, and biosciences.
Bath	89,000	Primarily tourism due to its built heritage, which resonates with the experience of York, with annual spend in Bath at £458.7 million (Visit West, 2022). Bath also has some software and publishing industries.
Bristol	428,200	Knowledge, high-tech manufacturing, and creative industries, which echo York's recent economic strategy in this area.
Edinburgh	518,500	Scotland's capital and seat of government, Edinburgh is also the centre of education, tourism, and finance for the devolved nation. Edinburgh is home to the Fringe – the world's largest annual international festival – and the Edinburgh International Festival. Like York, Edinburgh is highly invested in tourism as an economic strategy and annual tourism spend is £1.3 billion in the city (ETAG, 2016, p.3).

Plymouth	263,100	Throughout the Industrial Revolution, Plymouth grew as a commercial shipping port and became significant for both shipbuilding and its dockyard for the Royal Navy. Due to this, Plymouth was heavily targeted for bombing during World War II. To this day, Plymouth's economy remains strongly influenced as a port and by shipbuilding, though more recently has been orienting towards a service-based economy, which echoes York's own shift to these industries.
Preston	313,000	Due to its central location in Lancashire, much like York in relation to its rural North Yorkshire hinterland, Preston is an administrative and transport hub for the region. The city rapidly expanded with the textile manufacturing of the Industrial Revolution. However, this industry fell into decline from the mid-20th century and Preston has subsequently faced significant problems with deindustrialisation.

4.6.2.2. Political Fluctuation Case Studies

To identify case studies in which there were political fluctuations, local authority websites were explored for frequent changes in overall control. The selected case studies along with the characteristic of their political fluctuation, in addition to that for York to provide context, are presented in Table 4.2. Notably, the local authority that includes Bath also encompasses rural North-East Somerset. In City of Edinburgh Council, as with all Scottish local authorities since 2004, councillors are elected every five years through the Single Transferrable Vote System: a form of proportional representation. Elections for Bath & North-East Somerset Council and Plymouth City Council are held each year by thirds, with no elections held in the fourth year.

Table 4.2. Political Fluctuation Case Studies

Local Authority	Nature of the Political Fluctuation
City of York Council	With a coalition between Liberal Democrats and the Green Party since May 2019, for the previous four years there was also no overall control of the council with a joint Conservative and Liberal Democrat administration. Between 2011 and 2015 Labour controlled the council, prior to which there were Liberal Democrat administrations – as a minority between 2007 and 2011, and a majority between 2003 and 2007. From 1995, and inception as a unitary authority, to 2003 there was Labour control.
Bath and North-East Somerset Council	Controlled by Liberal Democrats since 2019. Previously controlled by Conservatives from 2015, before which there has been no overall control from inception in 1999.
City of Edinburgh Council	Labour controlled the council from 1995, in which there was the first-past-the-post voting system. From 2007 onwards, in which there has been proportional representation, no party has controlled the council and there have been various Scottish National Party, Labour and Liberal Democratic joint administrations.
Plymouth City Council	For the first 5 years since inception as a unitary authority in 1997, the council was controlled by Labour. However, in the proceeding period control has fluctuated between Labour and Conservatives, changing every 2 years, aside from no overall control 2015-17. Since 2021 the council is controlled by Conservatives.

4.6.2.3. Social Economy Case Studies

To identify case studies in which there is a prevalence of social economy models, the *Co-operatives UK* (2021a) and *Social Enterprise UK* (2021b) websites were consulted. Both of these are the websites for the umbrella organisations for their respective business models. Therefore, while there is an onus on individual businesses to register with these organisations, there is a likelihood that significant numbers would do so. There was found to be no such websites for other social economy models, such as publicly owned enterprises or charities. Consequently, co-operatives and social enterprises were used as proxies for the density of social economy models within an urban area. The selected social economy case studies, in addition to York to provide context, and details of co-operatives and relevant information on

social enterprises within their locale are presented in Table 4.3. Preston was also identified as a case study due to a progressive procurement strategy that was taking place in the city to encourage co-operatives and, to an extent, small- and medium-sized enterprises.

Table 4.3. Social Economy Case Studies

Urban Area	Co-operatives: Turnover; Numbers; Membership	Details
York	£20m; 25; 8.914K	£19.3m of this comes from Best Western Hotels being headquartered in York.
City of Edinburgh	£560m; 64; 161K	£385m of this is due to the Scotmid Co-operative which, although headquartered in Edinburgh, accounts for all their activities, much of which is outside Edinburgh. Similar logic applies to United Farmers (£99.2m), Scotlean Pigs (£58.3m) and the Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative (£7.1m). There are numerous housing co-operatives.
Lancashire (including Preston)	£60m; 101; 19.63K	£28.6m from the Community Gateway Association, based in Preston.
Plymouth	£13m; 25; 8.776K	The majority of this is from education with Lipson Co-operative Academy Trust (£7m) and Plymouth Learning Partnership (£3m). As a *Social Enterprise City*, Plymouth is said to be a, "real leader in social enterprises", the environment for which has been, "created by strong support from across sectors including higher education, the local authority, housing associations, healthcare providers and the local media" (Social Enterprise UK, 2021a).

4.6.2.4. Built Heritage Case Studies

In order to identify case studies with a cultural impact from built heritage, firstly, cities that were thought to be rich in built heritage were identified. Then, as built heritage is a major source of tourism, due to being the only impartial data available on tourism across all UK cities 'staying visits by inbound visitors' was used as a proxy for the prevalence of tourism within a city from *Visit Britain* (2018), as the British Tourist Authority. The selected cities, the

consideration around these and, to understand the relative importance of this to a city, the size of the local populations are detailed in Table 4.4. To provide context, York is also included in this table.

Table 4.4. Built Heritage Case Studies

City	Staying Visits by Inbound Visitors (000s)	Population	Details
York	296	198,000	Home to the second largest Gothic Church in Northern Europe: the Minster. York's historic core also includes York Castle and is enclosed by the city's medieval walls.
Bath	401	89,000	The site of Roman-built baths in addition to 18th Century Georgian architecture that makes up much of the city; Bath has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site in its entirety since 1987.
Edinburgh	2,206	518,500	The medieval Old Town and Georgian New Town have had UNESCO World Heritage designations since 1999. Further historic sites include Edinburgh Castle, the Palace of Holyroodhouse, the churches of St. Giles, Greyfriars and the Canongate.

4.6.2.5. Selected Phase 2 Case Studies

Some case studies were able to provide insight into how to overcome more than one 'barrier' to sustainability in York. Edinburgh was also selected as a case study so that understanding may be gained for how the city was able to create a tram-line – as being what may be seen to be a difficult to implement, yet sustainable form of transport – in 2014, which is currently being expanded. A further reason why Edinburgh was selected was due to the city being in Scotland: a 'devolved' nation. Therefore, in accordance with the reasoning of both McFarlane & Robinson (2012) and Kantor & Savitch (2005), it was thought that Edinburgh may provide insight into how variations in aspects such as legislation may impact upon urban sustainability.

4.6.2.6. Data Collection Sampling

Interviewees were identified based on expertise, of people who thought holistically about their city and would be knowledgeable on sustainability-related issues. As highlighted by

Bogner et al. (2009), such 'expert' interviews are a concentrated and efficient form of knowledge. In York, due to being the residence of the researcher, interviewees were also identified through personal networks and contacts. Across all case studies there was occasional 'snowballing' as interviewees introduced the researcher to other prospective interviewees. Interview requests were directed towards key stakeholders and policymakers from a range of notable organisations across a case study. Organisations included environmental groups, local authorities (officers and councillors), social regeneration projects, economic development agencies, small- and medium-sized enterprises, and university staff (researchers, professors, lecturers etc.). Despite frequently being significant stakeholders in an area due to the number of people they employed, it was difficult to find interviewees from corporations. This was found to be because corporations operate across numerous locations and, accordingly, their employees do not think holistically about their city, while similarly sustainability is considered across the entire organisation. As such, there was no data collected with interviewees from the perspective of a corporation. Therefore, while there may have been some limiting factors in the choice of interviewee, there was still representation from a broad range of organisations and interests across each case study.

In the secondary case studies, there was a minor divergence in which prospective interviewees were also considered based on the specific reason(s) for that case study. Related to political fluctuations this was council officers and councillors; for social economy models this was those who worked for such models or related umbrella organisations; for built heritage this was those who worked in civic society groups and tourism related institutions. Meanwhile, in Bristol, interview requests were directed towards members of their umbrella environmental organisation: Bristol Green Capital Partnership; and in Preston, interview requests were directed towards those involved in the city's procurement strategy.

There were set means through which prospective interviewees were identified and their contact details obtained. For councillors, local authority websites were used in which there was an emphasis placed on higher ranking councillors; for instance, should they hold a portfolio. Regarding interviewees for social economy models, the *Co-operatives UK* (2021a) and *Social Enterprise UK* (2021b) websites were used to identify organisations. As membership numbers and turnover of the organisation by local authority was available on the *Co-operatives UK* (2022) website at the time of study, though not now, there was a focus

towards the larger co-operatives as it was thought these were more likely to have members of staff who thought holistically about sustainability in their city. For council officers, the professional networking website, LinkedIn, was used to identify prospective interviewees as this was the only platform in which job titles and names of such employees could be obtained. Therefore, while there may have been response biases in terms of council officers that were registered to the LinkedIn website, through the absence of any other means this was the best method for identification. The email that was used to request an interview in the case studies is shown in Appendix 3.

In all case studies data collection was open to secondary forms, either through suggestions from interviewees or in searching for official statistics or policy documents. For instance, in Bristol, interviewees suggested the book *Bristol's Green Roots* (2011) to aid in understanding the environmental culture in the city. In Edinburgh an interviewee suggested a Master's (by Research) thesis around transport in the city; *Why is car use lower in Edinburgh than in other UK cities? A geographical analysis of lived and travelled environments* (Miner, 2018), and email correspondence ensued with follow up questions to the author.

4.6.2.7. Sampling Sizes

Consistent with grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), this study employed constant comparative analysis. Due to data being able to corroborate, as well as contradict itself (ibid.), theoretical saturation was reached when little new understanding emerged from further collection. This differed in each case study. In York, interview numbers were determined by the need to construct an in-depth understanding of the city given its role as the primary case study. In hindsight, this theoretical saturation was 25 interviews. In the secondary case studies theoretical saturation was determined by both the need to construct an understanding of that city, in addition to gaining an understanding around the 'barrier(s)' and/or additional reasons for which that case study was selected. Approximately 10 interviews were found to be appropriate for this. Therefore, despite there being a relatively large sample size of six, the understanding gained in these case studies are what Denters & Mossberger (2006) term 'focused comparisons'. Furthermore, consistent with the insight of Denters & Mossberger (ibid.), such cases are qualitative and have employed purposive sampling, unlike larger samples which are more likely to employ random sampling and are more driven by quantitative means and statistical analysis. In total 86 semi-structured interviews (lasting on

average 45 minutes) were conducted between June 2017 and January 2020 in York (36), Bath (9), Bristol (8), Edinburgh (12), Plymouth (10) and Preston (11).

4.6.3. Analysis

Following the completion of data collection for both phases of the study, as per Charmaz (2006), at this stage the codes that were originally developed through initial coding were revisited to make them more stringent. In grounded theory as set out by Charmaz (ibid.), focused coding then takes place whereby an onus is placed on analysing the most significant or recurring codes followed by theoretical coding in which the relationships between the subsequent categories are specified. In this study, however, this was not appropriate and axial coding was employed in which the relationships between the codes were defined (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As a visual representation, as per Corbin & Strauss (ibid.), conceptual maps, such as Figure 4.1. regarding York, were drawn at this stage to depict and understand these relationships, establish thematic groupings, and understand the relationships between these thematic groupings. Throughout this analytical process, as set out by Charmaz (2006), memos were written in which the data was reflected upon in an informal manner.
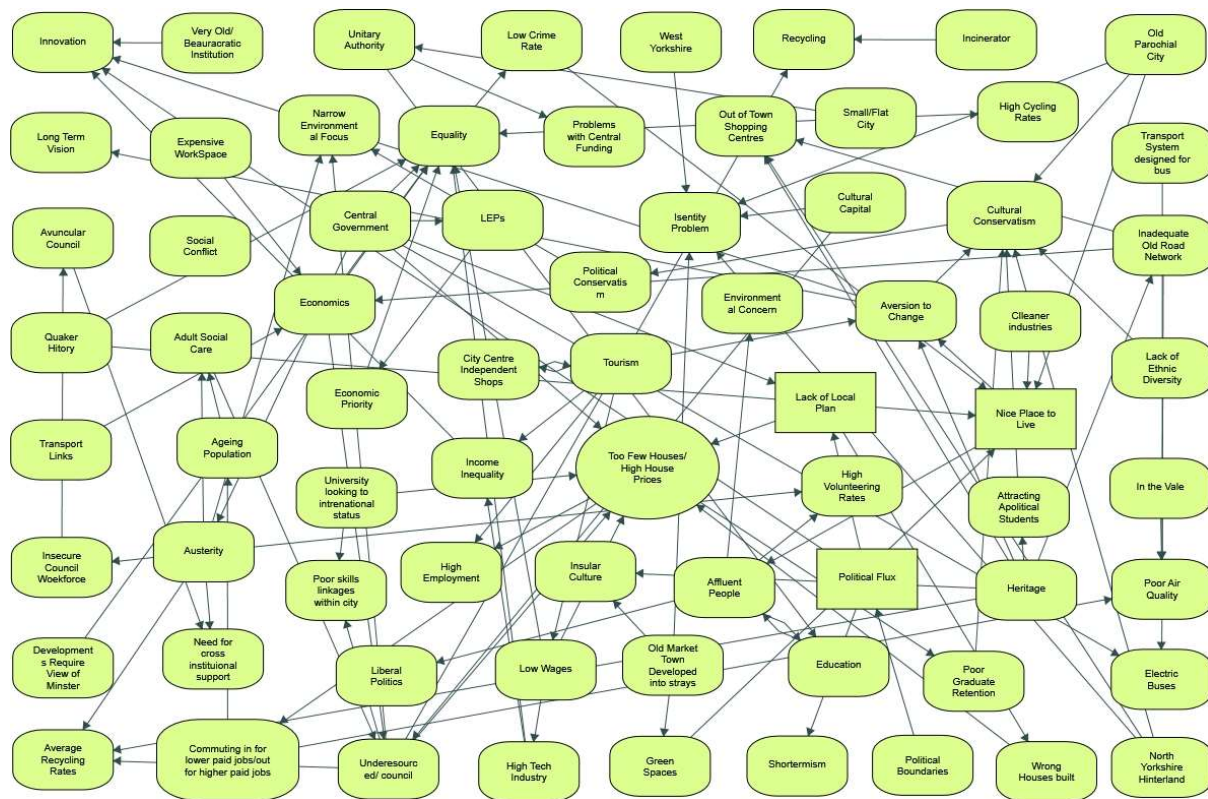
Figure 4.1. Mind Map Depicting Relationships Between Codes in York

The original intention was to analyse the understandings constructed of each city against their respective performances in 'sustainability indicators' to account for outcomes and deepen understanding. The *Vibrant Economy Index* created by the professional services company; Grant Thornton (2018), was selected due to being up-to-date, their encompassing a wide range of sustainability phenomena, and their use by City of York Council as sustainability indicators (CYC, 2017). In analysis, however, it was found that the use of indicators did not deepen understanding – the reasons for sustainability in each city were found to be individual and the extent to which a city is relatively sustainable was found not to inform this knowledge. These findings support the work of both Kitchin et al. (2015) and Stiglitz et al. (2009) who argue that assigning a numeric value to sustainability performance can decontextualize a city from its circumstances and wider connections while only showing the existence of a problem, as opposed to the cause(s). Perhaps for these reasons, numerous commentators are sceptical towards the validity of indicators in reaching policy goals (Boyko et al., 2012; Cohen, 2017; McManus, 2012; Moreno Pires et al., 2014; Munier, 2011).

Consistent with constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), when all data had been collected and analysed, the write-up stage commenced, being initially based upon the memos that had been generated. As per grounded theory (Ibid.), the literature was only fully engaged with once ideas had been developed. The literature was used to confirm, explain, and contextualise the findings, while the findings were used to highlight areas in which the literature is lacking and generate new questions. It was through this process that, relating to the case study's needs to attract capital, urban entrepreneurial literature was discovered and engaged with, whereby this was used to confirm and add understanding to the phenomenon uncovered, while the empirical evidence from this study expanded and added a contemporary UK understanding to this literature. Similarly, having identified a means through which to overcome the entrepreneurial need from the Preston case study, relevant literature was uncovered and engaged with, being used to confirm and add understanding, while adding empirical evidence to this literature. As per Charmaz (2006), the subsequent write-up process formed an essential, and final part of analysis. In accordance with Corbin & Strauss (2008) regarding the write-up of grounded theory research, while the structure of the thesis was dictated by conventional academic practices in requiring an introduction and conclusion, the structure of middle chapters was developed in the write-up process and

decided on the basis of the best way in which to present the findings in conjunction with conversations with academic literatures.

The resulting theory was embedded within the relationships between codes, themes and the wider phenomenon, accounting for variation in these from different case studies. This is consistent with theory generation described by various scholars (Galletta, 2013; Gregor, 2006; Layder, 1998) in which understanding moves from the concrete to the abstract. This is also consistent with the critical realist philosophical position (see Fryer, 2020) in which an external reality implies wider applicability. However, the primarily subjective means through which this reality has been accessed, in addition to the changing landscape of the subject matter, as per Layder's (1998) adaptive theory, renders such theorising permanently imperfect and incomplete, and subject to improvement and more accurate research.

4.6.3.1. 'Chain of Evidence'

In the interests of transparency and academic rigour, as highlighted by various scholars (Layder, 1998; Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Urquhart, 2012), a 'chain of evidence' is presented in this section around the analytic process. In initial coding, the understandings constructed of each case study were openly coded by segmenting the data into individual elements and describing these in a word or short sequence of words. Examples of codes for Bristol are presented in Table 4.5. in which there is the name, a brief explanation of content and an example of coded data.

Table 4.5. Bristol Case Study Example Codes

Code Name	Description	Example Coded Content
Austerity	The ways in which reduced budgets from austerity have affected the city.	"We have an aim of spending a much higher figure. Before the latest rounds of austerity we were aiming, don't quote me on this I can find out if you need to, it might be £16 per head on cycling and walking, and that's very significant. But I think that has been a victim of the cuts, unfortunately."

Transport	When any aspect or mode of transport is discussed.	"We are in a valley and a motorway that comes right into the centre of the city; the M32, and so the traffic is some of the worst in the country and the air quality is exceptionally bad and I think there's worse, somebody told me we go over the legal limit at certain times of the year, and not just over it, but double or triple it."
High House Prices	Issues relating to high house prices.	"Bristol used to have average house prices but with a lot of people coming to Bristol from London, more than anywhere else I think, that's really pushed house prices up."

The number and type of codes varied in each case study. Table 4.6. details the number of codes in each case study in addition to the respective number of references (number of coded content) and, for context, the number of interviews conducted. Codes ranged from being widespread to only being present in one or two interviews.

Table 4.6. Primary Data Collection in the Case Studies

Case Study	No. Interviews	No. Codes	No. References
York	36	79	668
Bath	9	24	106
Bristol	8	28	225
Edinburgh	12	31	149
Plymouth	10	24	118
Preston	11	35	168

The coded data for all the case studies was found to reside in a consistency of the same four thematic groupings. Each grouping had their own separate and distinct traits. These thematic groupings and their content, in addition to examples of codes that reside within them, are detailed in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Thematic Groupings and their Content for all Case Studies in Addition to Examples of Individual Codes

Theme	Content	Example Code
Culture	What the culture of residents is	Conservative
	How culture of residents affects sustainability in the city	Lack of Ambition
	What affects the culture of residents	Edge of City Campus Reducing Student Cultural Impact
Local Authorities and Public Goods	The provisioning of public goods	Poor Recycling Provisioning
	Factors affecting the ability of local authorities to provide public goods	Political Fluctuation
Economic Welfare	Means through which economic welfare is provided	The Presence of the Creative Industries
	What affects the provisioning of economic welfare	Lack of Grade 'A' Office Space
Social Wellbeing	The wellbeing of citizens	Social Cohesion
	Factors affecting the wellbeing of citizens	Tensions Between Residents and Students

4.4. Summary of Methodology

Consequent to the need for cities to resolve the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing, and transition towards sustainability, the aim and objectives of this study have been developed in an iterative process through inductive inquiry involving two phases of data collection. Due to this process and the critical realist philosophical position, the methodology identifies with constructivist grounded theory, as developed by Charmaz (2006). In other ways, however, this study diverges. Due to the in-depth understanding required, case studies were employed. A multiple-strategy approach was adopted to data collection in which semi-structured interviews were supplemented by secondary data. Resulting from the inductive inquiry nature of the study, initial analysis formed part of data collection. Once complete, this analysis became more stringent, with subsequent theory development to achieve the aim of this study. With the methodology through which the aim and objectives were achieved being set forth in this chapter, in the next, as the first of four chapters in which the research findings are presented and discussed in the context of the literature, the findings from the case studies around culture are presented and discussed for its role in urban sustainability transitions.

5. Culture

While the previous chapter established the methodology used to understand how cities may transition towards sustainability, in this chapter the findings from the case studies around culture are set forth and discussed, where appropriate, in the context of the literature. Here, the word 'culture' is being used to describe the values of a city's population or sub-populations and how, when expressed, these impact upon sustainability related factors, as identified in the conversations of interviewees. In this context, the use of culture is consistent with Hawkes (2001, p.1) who denotes the word to mean, "the social production and transmission of values and meaning." Firstly, the findings for York, as the primary case study, are presented, followed by the secondary case studies in which the factors that shape each city's culture are set forth. Then, the findings are discussed in the context of each other. From these, overriding themes are drawn out, such as how an economic emphasis on built heritage related tourism leads to the development of more conservative cultures, and how these are incompatible with sustainability. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of how more sustainability focussed cultures emerge from the economic wellbeing associated with students and professionals, in addition to the role of culture in urban sustainability transitions through dictating aspects such as how residents engage with sustainability related behaviours and (do not)provide for the sustainability policies of a local authority.

5.1. York

In York, it was felt that the culture was predominantly conservative in nature and averse to change. This was primarily attributed to the built heritage which, though providing the basis upon which York was thought to be a pleasant place in which to live, was also said to create a cultural lack of drive for innovation, here discussed by Anna Bialkowska, Chair, Tang Hall Big Local:

> "York is a tourist city and they tend to have more of a relaxed attitude. [Because of the Industrial Revolution] there's a lot more entrepreneurs as a percentage of the population in West Yorkshire than there is here: because they've had to survive. Here was a government town or church town for a long, long time, and because of tourism they haven't had to develop a degree of entrepreneurs that they had to there."

Similar sentiments were echoed by Heather Niven, Head of Science City York:

> "It's a secure and happy place for people to come and not feel intimidated. But the flip side is that lack of diversity and lack of edge, which is often what you need to drive innovation and drive that impetus to change and constantly revisit things and try and improve them."

Such claims are substantiated by the data; York's business formation rate per annum is 40.50, compared to the national rate of 57.29, per 10,000 population (Centre for Cities, 2022f).

York was said to attract significant numbers of tourists due to the built heritage. Heritage tourism within the city was thought by interviewees to be increasing in popularity consistently, especially in the last decade. Kirsty Mitchell, Collections Engagement Manager, York Minster, expands on the reasons for this in York here, with insight that has implications for elsewhere:

> "Part of the reason relates to terrorism. It's not the only reason, but one of the things that has possibly pushed numbers up in York is that people are less happy to visit London in the same way."

However, tourism in York was found to be an industry that was particularly lacking in resilience in the Covid-19 pandemic (Halliday, 2020).

5.1.1. Conservative Influences

York was thought to attract older people to live, who were said to be more able to afford the housing – York has some of the highest average house prices in the North of England (Land Registry, 2022) – and desired more conservative cultural offerings, such as the theatre and opera, and wanted the city to remain the same. Claims around York's identity are substantiated at a policy level to a certain extent with City of York Council's (CYC) *Cultural Strategy* being based around what may be perceived as very conservative cultural offerings, such as the museums, built heritage and theatres (CYC, 2019a).

Interviewees repeatedly mentioned that York lacked a youthful vibrancy, as expressed here by Councillor Johnny Hayes, Independent, CYC:

> "York's very much dominated by older people and, [due to] that, it's not got the vitality that you maybe have in other cities".

Therefore, this was thought to make it difficult for younger people to have an impact in the city. That York had attracted a youthful project such as Spark (for details see Spark:York, 2021), in which up-cycled shipping containers are being used as a street-food and start-up

business hub, was generally thought of as being a refreshing change for the culture of the city.

The high house prices and lack of more vibrant cultural offerings found in larger, non-built heritage cities such as Leeds or Manchester were thought to be primary contributors towards low levels of York's students remaining in the city after graduating. At 19 per cent, the graduate retention rate is below the average for a small city which is 23 per cent – with the general national trend being that retention is higher in larger cities (Magrini, 2018; Swinney & Williams, 2016). There are other causal factors to these statistics such as York's largest university; University of York (UoY), being in the Russell Group – often regarded as the best universities in the country and with a focus on research – with the resulting attraction of students from further afield who are less likely to remain (Magrini, 2018). Indeed, Goodhart (2017, p.160) observed that, "Some universities have become so focused on their internationalised business plans that they have lost sight of their role in the British economy and society."

UoY being on its own campus, and on the edge of the city, was thought by interviewees to contribute towards students in York not having a large cultural impact on the city. However, with the more centrally located York St. John's University expanding and new youthful attractions, such as Spark, said to be drawing UoY students more into the city centre, this impact was thought to be increasing. Furthermore, with a new Vice-Chancellor instilled in 2019, UoY's policy towards the city has also changed to one of greater local engagement; for instance, with, "Public good in city and region" and, "To work effectively with other organisations and stakeholder" being objectives of the university's current Draft Strategic Vision (UoY, 2020).

While the overall culture of York was thought to be conservative, there were observed by interviewees to be distinct broadly defined groupings within the city based on geographical concentric circles. These areas were expanded upon by Anthony May, Emeritus Professor of Transport Engineering, University of Leeds, and York Civic Trust, in the context of the local election political make-up of the city prior to the 2019 local election:

> "[...] the inner city; in the main environmentalists who see the benefits of living in a high-density area, where walking is easy and where you can enjoy the heritage of the city: that's Labour and the Green Party. There is the less affluent middle

city, who feel overlooked and forgotten about and just I guess, don't feel that whatever particularly is being provided is being provided for them: they're Liberal Democrats. And then you'll have the outer city residents, who I think in the main to be looking to the suburban village existence and not necessarily to York as the centre of their activities: Conservatives."

In a further discussion following the 2019 election, Anthony May noted that:

"In the middle zone, there is now quite a mixed political allegiance for those who do vote, and in 2019 many of these resulted in Labour councillors. Conversely, in the outer ring In practice there was a competition between Lib Dem and Conservative."

Primarily in the inner city there were thought by interviewees to be pockets of strong environmental cultures that had provided support for policies, such as the creation of cycling routes and the Park-and-Ride bus services. The cultures of the middle and outer city were said by interviewees to be somewhat insular and parochial, which they attributed to a historical lack of heavy industry in York resulting in less immigration to the city in addition to being isolated in the culturally conservative rural hinterland of North Yorkshire. There were concerns among interviewees that such cultures opposed environmental policies; for instance, in supporting overt car-use throughout the city.

5.1.2. Culture and City 'Visions'

The role of culture in providing support for sustainability policies in York was demonstrated in the varying outcomes from public engagement that interviewees identified in two 'visions' that had been created for at least a part of the city: *My York Central* (2022) and *York: New City Beautiful* (Yorkshire Forward, 2010). While the former is an on-going public engagement process to create a vision for the 45 hectare brownfield site; York Central, located adjacent to the city centre, the latter is a 117 page booklet that aimed to be a, "vision for York for the next 5, 10, 20 years" (Yorkshire Forward, 2010, p.115). According to interviewees, the public engagement involved in *My York Central* is comprehensive and inclusive, involving events such as guided walks around the site and workshops on key topics that are used to facilitate conversations and encourage comment. This process is discussed here by Andy Kerr, Head of Regeneration, CYC:

"It's about starting from the very start. 'What do you want to do here? What do you want to do in the future?' And then, start to ask questions from that point, and then that provides a brief that goes to the consultants or the designers and they base a response on the brief the public have given."

The inclusion of the culture of York's citizens was thought by interviewees to lead to their long-term 'buy-in' and ensure its implementation. These findings are consistent with the work of Jennings & Newman (2008) who claim that visions must reflect local cultures to be applicable and that public engagement is integral in this process.

Conversely, the public engagement process as part of the designing of *York: New City Beautiful* was thought by interviewees to be piecemeal, as expanded upon here by Helen Graham, Lecturer, University of Leeds:

"*New City Beautiful* just got a consultant in to do a top-down report. Which isn't to say it isn't filled with loads of fantastic ideas, but it's not meeting the ground is it of people and what they want for the city. It's just a collection of ideas from an expert, and there are some very good ideas, but it's not a democratic process in any way."

Certainly, John et al. (2015) observe that the processes behind many visions employ a 'top-down' approach to their creation. While the lack of genuine public engagement was cited as one of the major reasons why, almost a decade after having been published, many of the ideas in *York: New City Beautiful* were thought to have not been implemented.

5.2. Bath

Much like in York, in Bath interviewees discussed how, due to providing the basis for being a nice place in which to visit and live, the built heritage creates a culture that was mainly conservative in their city. However, this attraction has not always been so, and there were contrasting elements to Bath's culture – in previous decades the Georgian architecture in Bath was said to have been cheap to live in, with the cultural consequences to this day discussed here by Dr Bryn Jones, Senior Lecturer, University of Bath:

"Bath was a minor centre for a hippy culture in the 60s and 70s, and it attracted what you might call bohemian type people or certainly helped to develop a sort of alternative culture. That contained pro-environmental elements. And that not only flourished but it expanded later in more recent decades."

There were also thought to be an environmental focus from the affluent elements that are attracted to live in the city, as is discussed here by Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services, Liberal Democrats, Bath and North-East Somerset Council (BathNES):

> "I guess awareness of climate emergency is probably higher up amongst graduates. And Bath being expensive and attractive does attract more of that sort of people. So, I suppose those sort of people and their children are very aware of the climate emergency and are not afraid to go out on school strike or whatever it is and speak. So, I suppose that's where it originates."

Current students, however, were said not to have a cultural impact in Bath due to being on a campus on the edge of the city in addition to being unable to remain in the city after graduating because of high house prices and a lack of suitable jobs.

5.3. Bristol

In Bristol, interviewees frequently commented on what they felt was a particularly vibrant culture within their city. This was said to have a strong environmental sustainability element in addition to a significant and related third sector, particularly around cycling, recycling, and renewable energy, both of which were thought to provide support for related policies in the city. Interviewees could not attribute the culture to anything specific. Ian Townsend, when Chief Executive of Bristol Green Capital Partnership, speculated that Bristol is a little bit, "different", further commenting that there is, "a long history of partnership-working and environmental sustainability going back decades, and a great deal of energy today". James Cleeton, England Director South, Sustrans, referred to the culture as, "bohemian" further commenting that, "what Bristol does well, is what its people do: there's still that culture, that socio-cultural drive behind a desire for a really sustainable and green city". Mark Leach, Project Manager, Bristol City Council (BCC), speculated that the environmental sustainability culture may have reached a tipping point after which it gathered its own momentum. The 50,000 students from Bristol's two universities were thought to make a large contribution to the environmental sustainability agenda. Meanwhile, according to *Bristol's Green Roots* (Brownlee, 2011), as the Capital of the West Country, Bristol drew people that were more open to new ideas. Furthermore, awareness around the environment and energy increased

with the oil crisis of the 1970s and protests in the South-West over the expansion of the nuclear power station; Hinkley Point, in nearby Somerset (ibid.).

Despite the culture, interviewees drew attention to high car ownership rates and opposition to environmental sustainability policies notably around cycling and speed limits in the city. Indeed, interviewees felt that the environmental sustainability culture was not the norm, just more significant than elsewhere, here expressed by Mark Leach: "If you talk to the majority of people in Bristol you'll probably find that [they aren't part of the environmental sustainability culture], it's just that there's a very sizable minority here".

5.4. Edinburgh

In Edinburgh, there were several narratives among the discussions of respective interviewees around the culture of the city. There was said to be a 'conservative wealth' element. Residents were thought to be a bit 'stuck up' and 'snobby'. There was said to be an affluent middle-class who engaged in sustainability actions and projects. Additionally, given the jobs and quality of life the city afforded, Edinburgh was thought to be 'international' and therefore vibrant in nature due to the types of people who are attracted to live there. At 20 per cent, students were noted to make up a large proportion of the population and were thought to be having a cultural impact in engaging with sustainability issues. Such cultures, however, student and more widely, were acknowledged not to be the norm.

5.5. Plymouth

In Plymouth, although there was noted by respective interviewees to be a cosmopolitan element to the culture that was mainly located within the South, coastal area of the city, there was also said to be a strong working-class aspect that was based upon the primarily Ministry of Defence (Navy) traditional employment. While working-classes in the UK were mainly thought to vote Labour, due to the public sector nature of this work, here this grouping was said to primarily vote Conservatives. This employment being in the public sector was also thought to create the circumstances for what was said to be the lack of an innovative culture in Plymouth. Similar sentiments were echoed regarding the city's hinterland of Devon and Cornwall, in this instance, due to an economic reliance on EU grants. Interviewees discussed an insularity to the culture due to a feeling among the population that Plymouth was isolated.

While the sustainability culture was not thought to be as prevalent in Plymouth compared to a city such as Bristol due to their being more immediate problems around the need for

economic welfare, there was still thought to be a presence, illustrated here by Justin Bear, Project Manager, Plymouth Energy Community:

"I think there is a kind of an undercurrent of support and interest in sustainability issues in Plymouth. There's a group of people who are active in trying to do something towards it which kind of enables the wider population to be slightly more positive about sustainability issues."

Interviewees attributed the particularly attractive natural surroundings of Plymouth Sound to the South, and Dartmoor to the North, as reasons for a potentially increased awareness and concern for the environment in the city. Despite this logic, there is little research around the links between exposure to nature and pro-environmental values. However, some studies have found that greater environmental awareness is related to completing learning in natural settings (Dillon et al., 2006; Hattie et al., 1997; Lugg, 2007; Sandell & Öhman, 2013; Turtle et al., 2015).

5.6. Preston

In Preston, due to an industrial past and levels of immigration, interviewees discussed a culture of embracing change, described here by Shirah Bamber, Communications and Marketing Manager, Preston City Council:

"The city has been an innovator in the past; we were the first city outside of London to have gas lighting; we're quite known to be movers and shakers during the Industrial Revolution and things like that."

Indeed, many interviewees felt that the people of Preston have a strong sense of identity, as is expanded upon here by Derek Whyte, Assistant Chief Executive, Preston City Council:

"I worked for a number of years in London before I came here and one of the first things that did strike me was the sense of local identity, local pride, and the fact that people really did articulate their identity; whether it's as an individual citizen, business, or a public sector institution as being Preston based."

While, with the University of Central Lancashire being based in the centre of the city, students were thought to add vibrancy to the city's culture.

5.7. Discussion

Therefore, culture was found to be prevalent in the discussions of interviewees in the case studies. Consistent with the insight of both Hawkes (2001) and Packalén (2010), in these

conversations culture is of relative importance to science or technology to sustainability. Indeed, across the case studies there is a clear relationship between the culture of residents and the policies of the local authority in that city, with the former influencing the latter, thus demonstrating democratic influence at the city-scale, as argued by Barber (2017). Culture also influences the extent to which each case-study's populations or sub-populations engage in sustainability related behaviours.

The terminology that was used in presenting the findings to describe respective cultures were those used by the interviewees themselves. As set out in Appendix 4, the semi-structured interview questions refer to 'culture' and 'sustainability'. Despite these, the terms that interviewees used were either 'sustainability-', 'environmental-' or 'environmental sustainability-', 'culture'.

5.7.1. Sustainability Cultures

Overall, discussions around culture in all the case studies referred either to the extent to which a culture did(not) have a drive for innovation, the extent to which a culture did(not) support environmental policies, or the extent to which a culture did(not) engage with sustainability related behaviours. Therefore, going forward, in the interests of consistency and given that sustainability encompasses such wider aspects, these three factors all in their positive forms will be referred to as 'sustainability cultures'.

Although there were other factors; for example, proximity to the natural environment in Plymouth, sustainability cultures were often associated with a middle-class level of affluence and higher education (students and professionals), but not those who were considered to be 'wealthy'. The only case study in which interviewees did not directly state the correlation between sustainability cultures and affluence was Bristol – a city in which there is reported to be both a relatively prevalent sustainability culture and high levels of affluence. Consistent with this insight, in the case studies that are more economically deprived (Plymouth and Preston), culture was less prevalent in the conversations of interviewees than in the more wealthy cities (York, Bath, Bristol and Edinburgh).

This may also be about priorities, as was discussed by Justin Bear in Plymouth, regarding the city of his residence, though with a point that has wider applicability:

> "We've delivered over one thousand home visits in three or four [more deprived]
> areas of Plymouth. These are definitely areas where you would think that

sustainability's maybe not on the highest priority list for a lot of the people we visit because a lot of them are people who are struggling to meet their bills on a month-to-month basis really. We didn't see huge number of people who would class themselves as people who would advocate for the environment and would go on a protest, anything like that, but there was quite a strong sense that this is an important issue and we need something done with it, and it's engaged with."

A similar argument was made by Mark Leach in Bristol around the residents of his city that also resonates more broadly:

"There's a stereotype that's peddled a lot that the green movement is for the middle-classes, which I think is dangerous, misleading and inaccurate. The difference is when you look at people's priorities. So, when you look at deprived communities there are often other things that are a higher priority to them like crime, anti-social behaviour, even paying for bills. But it doesn't mean that climate change isn't an issue for them, as borne out by conversations in those communities over the last couple of decades."

Indeed, quality of life surveys that were undertaken by BCC (2016) found no significant differences between the more and less wealthy areas of the city regarding environmental attitudes.

Another recurring theme across the case studies was around the positive impact of students on sustainability cultures. There may be a response bias around the type of student that would be attracted to a specific city. For instance, it may be inferred that the high house prices and more conservative cultural offerings in York that contribute towards a relatively low graduate retention rate may also shape the type of student who would choose to study there. Certainly, though this response bias was not discussed, there was a discourse around students in Bristol and their sustainability sensibilities which may be a reflection on the vibrancy and environmental awareness in that city. However, the only variable discussed explicitly by interviewees regarding students and their cultural impact was around universities located in more central locations within their respective city having a greater impact, and universities located on the edge of their respective city having less impact.

Overall, the findings indicate that the ability to influence local policy resides in the student and professional groupings most greatly. The findings also demonstrate that, while there is a

causal link between higher socio-economic groups and sustainability cultures, it may be economic wellbeing, as the financial security that citizens require to ensure their basic needs are met, and not education that enables this. This insight somewhat contradicts the literature in which it is argued that socio-economic status is linked to environmental concern due to having developed such values through economic and physical security, greater levels of education and knowledge (Franzen & Mayer, 2010; Gelissen, 2007; Givens & Jorgenson, 2011; Inglehart, 1995; Pampel, 2014; van Heuvelen & Summers, 2019). Similarly, while the literature claims that these traits are also linked to pro-environmental consumer decisions (ibid.), it may be inferred from the findings that it is economic wellbeing and not higher education that enables this.

Mark Leach raised another point regarding the link between wealth and environmental impact:

> "If you look at the Core Cities there is a bit of a correlation between wealth and carbon footprint: wealthier people use more carbon."

Indeed, this insight is consistent with the work of Gore (2020) which establishes a causal link between wealth and carbon footprint. Therefore, while sustainability cultures may be more able to provide impetus for environmental policies locally and encourage sustainability related behaviours, this may be offset at least in part by the less visible impact of more consumptive lifestyles. A significant distinction regarding the link between wealth and carbon emissions compared to the link between wealth and sustainability cultures is that, while the former is limitless (more wealth results in greater carbon emissions), in the findings the latter appears to be binary and is when economic wellbeing has been achieved. Beyond this, sustainability cultures will not increase; on the contrary, the findings indicate that they may decrease.

5.7.2. The Relationship Between Built Heritage, Culture and a City's Economy

In Bath, Edinburgh and York, meanwhile, what constituted built heritage was consistent with the definition set forth by Smith (2006) in being comprised of monuments or historically significant buildings that tourists do not directly interact with, and these commonly reflected a homogenized, White, Christian, elitist notion of the past. In these case studies there was found to be a strong relationship between built heritage and, not only culture, but a city's economy.

As built heritage, culture and a city's economy are intertwined, this relationship will be discussed here. Built heritage attracts both tourists and residents. Tourism provides an economic base, though the related employment is low-paid. Due to the attraction, residents tend to be more affluent and educated. Greater numbers of professional industries, therefore, locate there. Culturally, there is a conservatism to the residents that are attracted based on built heritage. Consistent with this, Smith (2021) identifies that across the literature there is a consensus that heritage tourists, which may also be applicable to 'heritage residents', tend to be well educated, middle-class, older and from the dominant ethnic background. Residents, however, are also indirectly attracted to a city in which there is built heritage as it provides the basis for offering a good quality of life. A notable distinction here is that such residents may not have a cultural response bias. While the higher house prices resulting from this attraction repels younger people who may add cultural vibrancy, it creates a barrier to entry that only the more affluent, who may be more in a position to consider the environment, can overcome. Adding to this argument, Hewison (1987) contends that conservative cultures also arise from built heritage due to an emphasis being placed upon what is a marginalised view of the past for economic gains in the present. Given that heritage tourism, particularly away from London, is ever more popular, this economic emphasis and the resulting cultural conservatism may also be increasing. Overall, due to being the foundation of a relatively successful local economy that is easy to maintain, though difficult to innovate, based on the tourists and residents who are attracted, exacerbated by the attracting of older and repelling of younger people, built heritage creates a cultural and economic conservatism. Therefore, while populations in built heritage cities are more likely to be affluent, the associated sustainability cultures are offset somewhat by a conservative response bias.

The extent of this effect is proportionate to a city's economic reliance upon the built heritage. Therefore, the size of a city in relation to the extent of its built heritage is an important factor. Bath is an extreme in this regard, as described by Tony Crouch, World Heritage Manager, BathNES:

> "It's the only city, apart from Venice, in the whole of Europe which is decreed in its entirety as a World Heritage site. So, that brings about the need to balance between being an international heritage centre and a living, working city."

In York, conversely, respective interviewees observed that the built heritage was largely in and around the city centre. Whereas in Edinburgh, interviewees commented that their built heritage was mostly contained within two neighbourhoods in the centre of the city.

Triangulating this relationship identified in the voices of participants, the extent to which economic reliance upon built heritage dictates how culturally and economically conservative each case study is may also be expressed in their respective tourist strategies: BathNES's (2017) *Destination Management Plan* has a clear focus on increasing tourism as opposed to any wider sustainability considerations; similarly in York, although in CYC's (2019a) *Cultural Strategy* public engagement and equality of access to cultural offerings are mentioned, in Make It York's *Annual Review* (2019) and Visit York's (2019) *Annual Review* they are not, while the environment is not discussed in any; Edinburgh's current tourist, and proposed future strategies, in contrast, are designed with greater sustainability in mind and encompass social and environmental considerations throughout (CEC, 2020b; ETAG, 2020).

Further insight into the relationship between the case studies and their respective built heritage resides in an international example. Much like York, Bath and Edinburgh, Freiburg in South-West Germany is considered to be rich in built heritage (Historic Germany, 2021). Despite this, there are stark contrasts between the built heritage of Freiburg and the UK case studies. Notably, aside from the Cathedral, Freiburg was overwhelmingly destroyed by bombing during World War II (Gregory, 2011). Although rebuilt much in the manner of its previous medieval street pattern and style, roads were widened only enough to accommodate a tram system and not cars; this was due to a belief that car movement is detrimental to neighbourhoods and that cars being in the city centre was leading to people moving into suburbs which was thought would destroy the social fabric of the city centre and lead to urban sprawl (City of Freiburg, 2016; Fastenrath & Braun, 2018; Gregory, 2011; Kronsell, 2013). While there are many reasons why Freiburg may have responded in a progressive way to the rebuilding of its built heritage, this potentially sheds light on a cultural view of built heritage in UK cities that differs to those elsewhere, as discussed here by Smith (2006, p.39) in reference to England, though more widely applicable to the UK:

> "England takes a certain pride in the degree to which it perceives itself to have greater continuity in cultural traditions, institutions and expressions than other

European nations, which have more frequently and directly been subject to wars and revolutions."

Therefore, although the preserved built heritage in UK cities may provide numerous benefits, Freiburg demonstrates that this rooting in the past may reduce focus on a more progressive future.

5.8. Conclusions

Overall, the findings in this chapter demonstrate that the culture of residents shape the extent and nature of urban sustainability transitions through influencing sustainability related behaviours, and its roles in supporting the environmental policies of local authorities and in creating a drive for innovation that is frequently required for sustainability. When there are more immediate concerns around deprivation, the priority of a city's population or sub-populations and local authority is the provisioning of economic welfare in behaviours and policies respectively, and not those related to sustainability. Though nuanced, an 'affluent' level of economic welfare associated with students and professionals that achieves economic wellbeing was found to be optimal in harbouring 'sustainability cultures' – cultures that provide support for environmental policies, are innovative, and engage with sustainability related behaviours. While this chapter has presented the findings around culture from the case studies, in the next chapter the findings that relate to local authorities and the public goods that they provide are set forth.

6. Local Authorities and Public Goods

While the previous chapter presented the findings from the case studies around culture, this chapter sets out the second theme that emerged from conversations with interviewees around public goods, as commodities and services that are available to all society, such as transport and housing. Drawing on interviews with my participants, this chapter will discuss the local authorities that provide them. The findings for York are presented first, followed by for the secondary case-studies. Then, overriding themes are discussed, such as how local authorities remain the most relevant public institution within a locale or how a fluctuating political climate impacts on a local authority's ability to enact greater good policies and provide long-term vision. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of how, despite central constraints, local authorities inform urban sustainability transitions through the public goods that they provide, in addition to how these are influenced either by residents' need for economic welfare or, with economic wellbeing, their cultural yearnings for the long-term goals associated with sustainability.

6.1. York

A significant problem perceived by interviewees in York was what they termed a 'political fluctuation' in City of York Council (CYC) in which power frequently changes in election cycles. This was said to be due to a finely balanced political make-up in the city, the effects of which are discussed here by Richard Lane, York Community Energy:

> "[It's] a blessing and a curse because it means they work harder to support the local people, but it means they won't evolve enough to push through difficult, contentious things […] I'd love to see more political bravery; our politicians tend to fight like cats in a sack."

According to Rachael Maskell MP, Labour and Co-operative Party, York Central, the cultural and geographical groupings discussed in Section 5.1., and the associated political divides, leads to a situation whereby, "the party in control of the council may represent people who are very different to their electorate."

It was thought that the political fluctuation also makes it difficult for CYC to enact greater good policies and offer long-term vision. This problem was identified by interviewees as having a significant impact upon the (potential)implementation of the two 'visions' that were created for at least part of the city: *My York Central* (2022) and *York: New City Beautiful*

(Yorkshire Forward, 2010). Here, Phil Bixby, York Environment Forum, who is involved in the *My York Central* process, describes how the political fluctuation impacts upon the considerations that must be heeded to implement such a vision:

> "We get a lot of councillors come along to our workshops. So, [we've] had a whole load of councillors come along from different parties and all kind of engaging with it with their own agendas, but [we've maintained it so that] the overall agenda does not become solely theirs, it becomes broader. I think one of the things that it will be important to do with *My York Central* is to make sure that it does make cross-party debate and where there is no aspect of it where it becomes a single-party issue."

Therefore, having "lifted *My York Central* above party politics" (Phil Bixby), it was thought that the vision would transcend election cycles. Indeed, interviewees felt that one of the primary reasons why many of the ideas contained within *York: New City Beautiful* had not been realised was due to the political fluctuation. Specifically, it was commented that shortly before the document was completed there was a change in political power in CYC in 2011 and that it was seen as a 'vanity project' by the new administration who subsequently did not support its implementation.

There were said to be economic implications arising from the political fluctuation, discussed here by Dr Simon Parker, Lecturer, University of York (UoY):

> "There's a kind of schizophrenia because they don't know whether they should just stick with the bankable; we're a heritage city and a tourist destination, or whether we need to think beyond just selling your landscape to visitors. It's complicated and that's why you need an economic strategy that identifies with a very strong political leader who's prepared to go out on a limb and sell it."

The political fluctuation was also said to impact upon planning in the city, with there being a greater focus on more short-term goals such as cleaning and maintaining the streets as opposed to longer-term place-making ideas.

6.1.1. Poor Planning of the Built Environment

The political fluctuation was thought to be the primary reason why York was one of the few areas in the country not to have a Local Plan – a document that sets out the strategic priorities

for development in an area. A new Local Plan was acknowledged by Dave Merrett, Former Labour Councillor and CYC Leader, to be a, "political football" in which:

> "The parties in control of City of York Council were under pressure not to build on the draft green-belt and, to varying degrees, some had squeezed the housing numbers down and/or identified sites on which to build new houses outside of the areas they represented so as to not alienate their electorates."

There was a consistency among interviewees regarding the distinct policies of each party: Labour's policy was said to build higher numbers of houses with a mixture of building on the city's brownfield sites and green-belt land; on environmental grounds the Green Party were said to oppose the development of green-belt land; due to the Liberal Democrats and Conservatives seeking votes in the rural fringes, their policies were said to be to overdevelop existing brownfield sites so that this may protect the green-belt. There were also said to be some large landowners in the rural areas around the city that did not want to sell their land for housing. An example given of such was Halifax Estates (n.d.), though it was highlighted elsewhere that this landowner proposed significant development on at least part of their estate in a draft Local Plan in 2011-14.

At the time of writing, a draft Local Plan is in the process of examination by Independent Planning Inspectors following submission to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 25 May 2018 (CYC, 2022c). Created during a Conservative-led coalition with the Liberal Democrats, consistent with the identified party policy there was said to be disproportionately high provisioning of housing on brownfield sites, with the consequences discussed here by Rachael Maskell:

> "[...] it's not the right type of housing. So, it's kind of three bedroomed, luxury apartments, and we know there isn't a market for that, because people want family housing with a garden or single person accommodation which isn't quite like that. Therefore, what it will do will attract an external market to the city on housing but the jobs won't be here so we're not looking after our city: there isn't an economic, housing and structure plan that serves the needs of York."

Since this interview was conducted, CYC has committed to building 600 homes, 40 per cent of which will be 'affordable', across eight brownfield sites in the city (CYC, 2022b). Such housebuilding may be due to the legislative changes in 2012 that allows local authorities to

borrow against housing rental streams to finance house building, and additional changes in 2018 which removed the restriction on the amount that they can borrow (Hutchings, 2018).

Such housebuilding is perhaps a significant move for York as the political landscape and resulting current lack of a Local Plan were thought to be major contributors toward what was commented upon as being low housing stock growth in the city which, in 2019-2020, was the 47th highest out of the UK's 63 largest towns and cities (Centre for Cities, 2022f). Additionally, although a national issue, the National Planning Policy Framework was said to change frequently, further complicating planning. There was also thought to be a constrained housing supply due to York being an attractive place to live for wealthy retirees, professionals from a large radius and homeowners moving from the much more highly priced London. Furthermore, UoY was said to have undertaken a major expansion without matching on-site student housing provision, while university cities such as York were seen to be particularly good buy-to-let investment opportunities. These were all considered by interviewees to be contributing factors in what were thought to be York's relatively high average house prices which, at £303,000, is £32,000 above the national average and among the most expensive in the North of England (Land Registry, 2022).

Andrew Sharp, Head of Business, Make It York, referred to the lack of development on the outskirts of York as being due to the, "artificial boundary of the Outer Ring Road" which he felt was, "economically constraining" for the city. Due to the transport links, Andrew cites this as the area that high-tech industry – a potential growth industry for York – would like to be based. Despite the compact nature, should there be a population rise this was thought by Anthony May, Emeritus Professor of Transport Engineering, University of Leeds, and York Civic Trust, to present an opportunity for the city:

> "If you look at the 1970s, 1980s plan for Freiburg, there's already a commitment that something like 95 per cent of the population will be within 5 kilometres of the centre. And York could do that."

Indeed, it was identified by interviewees that a major expansion to the built environment contrasts with the way in which many within the city see York: as a small city based around a historic core with relatively large green spaces such as the 'strays' (800 acres of common land in the city that may not be built upon) and easy access to its rural hinterland.

The lack of spatial planning was said to be a major concern due to frequent problems with flooding in York which, according to interviewees, was not being taken seriously in the policies of the local authority, notably around a 'jobs at all costs' mentality within the *Economic Strategy* (CYC, 2016) in which there is little concern for the environment. Kate Lock, York Environment Forum, thought that the flooding presented an opportunity to increase engagement with the environment in the city:

> "In the York Environment Forum we talked about green walls, green roofs, green spaces, looking at how we manage flooding. The government's put money into the pumping station on the Foss but York really could have a thing in terms of sustainability about tackling flooding, our approach, and living with water, and making that part of its identity."

There were additional concerns from interviewees that with climate change York's flooding problems will increase.

6.1.2. Transport

Due to the historic nature of the built environment, York was also thought to have existing fundamental problems with transport, as is expanded upon here by Simon Parker:

> "As a medieval city, York has a particular problem managing traffic flows in and out of the city. You basically have a Roman city designed for chariots […] which is then further constrained by there being a limited number of river crossings. [In] larger cities, because they have a larger polynucleated central business district, they can absorb or there are ways around a blocked road in the centre."

Also commented upon by interviewees was the millions of tourists a year that used this transport network, while a large number of freight vehicles delivering to shops in the city centre were said to be troublesome and, accordingly, are only allowed access before 10am.

There were many other aspects around transport within the York findings that related to sustainability in the city. Transport was said by interviewees to be a major contributor to what were thought to be problems with air quality in York. Poor air quality was said to be exacerbated by natural problems that the city has in this regard: York sits within a vale, therefore there is less stirring of the air; and the medieval nature of many of the buildings is thought to create a canyon effect, further reducing stirring of the air. The city has seven Air Quality Management Areas – zones in which air pollution exceeds pre-defined standards and

the local authority must put together a plan to improve this – which are mostly on the Inner Ring Road (CYC, 2022g). Although only accounting for 3 per cent of traffic in the city centre, buses cause 27 per cent of the air pollution (Tobin, 2019). Consequently, CYC has proposed a Clean Air Zone – in which an area is targeted for improvement in air quality (DEFRA & DfT, 2020) – for 2020 specifically for buses that fail to meet minimum emission requirements in which £1.64 million was to be given to bus operators to upgrade their vehicles to the required standard (Tobin, 2019). Going forward, with traffic predicted to increase by 20 per cent in the city between 2018 and 2032 (CYC, 2018, p.237), York may face greater problems around air quality. York exceeded the Daily Air Quality Index – five different pollutants including nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter 2.5 – scale above 4 (out of 10) for 24 days in 2018 (Enenkel et al., 2020). By way of comparison, the average number of days for the UK's Core Cities was 27 (ibid.).

Interviewees felt that despite being the lowest ranking in CYC's *Hierarchy of Transport Users* (CYC, 2011), cars remain a priority. For instance, when asked why the decision had been taken to 'dual' the Northern section of York's Outer Ring Road, Katie Thomas, Low-Carbon & Circular Economy Lead – York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), commented:

> "Some of the big businesses in the area, such as McCain's and Rolls Royce, have some operations up there [...] I think it's just a case of jumping to the easiest, or the first solution most people think will ease congestion; they automatically jump to the need to build a new road or to expand existing roads rather than thinking of more sustainable options."

The failed trial closure of Lendal Bridge – one of three city centre bridges – to cars during daylight hours in 2013 was often cited by interviewees as an example of overt car-use in the city. The closure was said to have suffered from initial communication problems with residents but was thought to have achieved its overall aim of significantly reducing air pollution in the area. However, due to support for car-use in addition to the political fluctuation, the problems were said to have been utilised for political gains by opposing parties, and the bridge was subsequently reopened to traffic.

Despite this, interviewees felt there had been some positive moves towards more sustainable transport in the city. The six Park-and-Rides – each of which were said to take approximately 1 million passengers per year – was the notable example. CYC were said to have begun to

close roads off to cars in the city centre from the 1980s. This policy was said to have received opposition from city centre shopkeepers who it was thought wrongly assumed that such moves would have a negative impact on their businesses. The policy has continued into the present day, finally leading to the recent commitment from CYC to close the city centre to private car journeys by 2023 (Laversuch, 2019). Furthermore, given the increased interest in changes to how we travel and reductions in air pollution resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic, CYC may be bidding to become the first 'zero-emission city centre' in England as Central Government is looking for at least one city centre to be restricted to walking, cycling and electric vehicles only (Mehmet, 2020).

Cycling and walking rates in York were thought by interviewees to be relatively high for the UK which was said to be largely due to the small, flat nature of the city. As of the last Census in 2011 when the latest commuting data is available, York was 3rd for cycling and 2nd for walking, in addition to 30th for bus, train or metro and 36th for private vehicles out of the UK's 63 largest cities and towns (Centre for Cities, 2022f). Despite York's relatively high cycle rates, interviewees discussed the limited number of separate cycle paths within the city and felt that far more was required for cycling to be made accessible to the wider population. Regarding bus services in the city, meanwhile, Phil Bixby commented:

> "The idea of taking bendy-buses through the centre is absolutely nuts. We've designed a public transport system to pander to the operators to try and make the most money by shifting people around rather than using the most appropriate vehicles – if you had a small shuttle going out more people would use it, but you'd have four times as many drivers."

There was also thought to be the lack of a joined-up strategy across the varying forms of sustainable transport in the city: walking, cycling, buses and trains. CYC, however, is currently trialling electric bikes and scooters for a year (Laversuch, 2021). Furthermore, despite there being numerous bus operators across the city, there is a ticket available that allows for travel on any local bus (iTravel York, 2021). The ability for York and North Yorkshire to franchise the bus services was said to be currently being negotiated in the devolution deal for the region.

Interviewees readily made suggestions for how to improve transport in the city, such as utilising the river for transport in a, "park & sail" (Kate Lock), a transhipment depot to resolve the delivery van problem in the city, prioritising the cycle network and building new local

stations into the rail network. Meanwhile, Dr Steve Cinderby, Senior Researcher, Stockholm Environment Institute, UoY, commented:

> "I've heard about making a one-way system around the Inner Ring Road and running a tram around that with spokes for public transport to take people into the city. Not even really on the radar because it's quite radical and would mean cars would have to go one way around the Inner Ring Road. Whereas in other cities they might consider doing it a bit more actively."

However, it was pointed out that with the reduced budgets resulting from austerity, CYC was more limited in the actions that it could take to enact such projects. Indeed, relatively early into austerity in 2010 reduced budgets were thought by interviewees to be one of the main reasons for the lack of implementation of the ideas contained within *York: New City Beautiful*, namely that the 'Renaissance Team' created to implement the vision was reduced to one-third of the proposed size.

6.1.3. City of York Council and Austerity

With the divesting of functions – such as York Museum Trust, which is responsible for the Castle Museum, York Art Gallery, and the Yorkshire Museum – due to budgetary pressures, austerity was more generally said by interviewees to be changing the way in which CYC was operating. A notable example was the company responsible for the commercial activities of the city; Make It York, being made a Private Limited Company solely owned by CYC in 2015 as opposed to this function sitting within the local authority. This arrangement was said to create an impetus to sweat the assets of the city while not allowing budgets from elsewhere to interfere. Accordingly, and consistent with the policies of Make It York (2019), interviewees observed increased activities around festivals, events and tourism, and positioning York as a conference destination: all to increase spend in the city.

Also due to austerity, the divesting of functions was said to have taken place with York's libraries and archives, in this instance as a Community Benefit Society with charitable status. According to Lewis (2019), this would allow them to, "tap into donations, grants and sources of funding not available to a council-run body". The resulting change to services is discussed here by Carl Wain, Commissioning Manager – Adult Social Care, CYC:

> "My view is that libraries were internal with a remit to provide books, audio and access to IT etc. When the libraries were spun-out, the social enterprise was

commissioned to provide a wider community focused provision with the use of libraries as hubs in the community and responding to community need. The simple answer is that there was no remit to do this before. Also, the conventional use of loaning physical books is reducing, so for libraries to remain in the community they needed to diversify."

Therefore, changes to the model have allowed for services to be more responsive to the community.

Discussing why provisioning by local authorities may lead to inferior outcomes, interviewees speculated that standardisation makes it easier to run services across whole areas, with the trade-off being that a distinctiveness may be lost should this be provided by a small community group, for example. This insight is consistent with Bland (2009) regarding the third sector being more responsive to the needs of customers and avoiding the 'one-size-fits-all' approach of the public sector. Furthermore, the standardisation and lack of responsiveness is consistent with the work of Cumbers (2012) around the ways in which public ownership is frequently inadequate. However, as pointed out by Schumacher (1973), there is no reason why this should be so as publicly owned enterprises (POEs) may be given any mandate. Meanwhile, only being able to access certain funding by not being a council-run body may be a reflection on the political-economy with ideological opposition to the public sphere (Barber, 2017; Bennett, 1995; Gane, 2012; Marqusee, 2013; Newman, 2014).

6.1.4. The Culture of City of York Council

Through involvement in a project to innovate CYC, Heather Niven, Head of Science City York, had insight into the culture of the local authority. On tackling what Heather referred to as the, "benevolent paternalism" that local authorities demonstrate towards their residents, regarding CYC Heather commented:

"You've got 200,000 brains. You've got four big educational institutions in the city [and] you're struggling with these big-wicked problems like an ageing population, transport and infrastructure. Why don't you just ask your residents and your businesses and your academics to come in and co-create solutions to problems? The most frightening thing for those in the council is to turn around to those paying their council tax and say, 'I don't have the answer to this'."

While the literature does not get to the heart of Heather's comments around why those in local authorities may feel this way, such insight is consistent with Wainwright & Little (2009) that local authorities are unresponsive towards their citizens and stuck in their ways. It may be that, as highlighted by Wollman (2006), due to their relatively large sizes and fewer numbers with their being based upon administrative efficiency and central control, local authorities in the UK are above the scale of communities and feel as though they are remote institutions to their residents. For these reasons, as emphasized by commentators (Copus, 2014; Headlam & Hepburn, 2015), residents may feel inconsequential to the democratic process and see their relationship to their local authority as being functional.

Although, as was highlighted by interviewees, CYC is not one homogenous entity, the broad culture is discussed here by Johnny Hayes, Independent Councillor, CYC:

> "I think York City Council is generally a good council [...] I think it's been good with social policy, vis-a-vis transport and other issues they've been quite thoughtful [...] But conservative with a small 'c' essentially. It doesn't want to rock the boat too much. It doesn't have any major ambitions I would say. I think that's its weak point."

This complacency was said to reside in the natural economic advantages that York has as a built heritage city.

In contrasting tones, specifically from an Adult Social Care perspective within CYC, Carl Wain asserted:

> "Through delivering against the *Care Act 2014* we are considering the requirements of all citizens in York and taking a prevention approach [...] The council culture has changed. There has been a need to make that change: one, from a financial perspective; you can't avoid that really. Two, from a demographic perspective. And three, and more importantly, because it's the right way of working. It's far better for somebody to feel as though they're empowered to be able to find their own solutions and be able to be as independent as they possibly can".

Such comments are consistent with the literature that local authorities have proven to be resilient in the face of budget reductions in addition to being proactive with service provision (Lowndes & Gardner, 2016; Lowndes & McCaughie, 2014; Taylor-Gooby & Stoker, 2011).

Whereas Carl's words contradict the work of Streeck (2014) who claims that reduced budgets have led to a priority on statutory spending when, in York at least, this has led to a shift towards more discretionary forms of spending so that it may reduce a reliance upon statutory services in the future. Interviewees speculated that such long-term thinking in York may be due to there being relatively few problems with deprivation in the city.

6.1.5. City of York Council and Environmental Policies

Given budgetary constraints, however, interviewees did express concerns over CYC's capacity to engage with carbon reduction policies. Specifically from a council officer perspective, according to Paul McCabe reduced council budgets have had impact on core capacity to develop environmental policies at pace:

> "We really do need to think about a carbon strategy to get us to our targets around 2050, and I know that's one thing in the inbox. We did have a Carbon Reduction Strategy, but it ran out last year and needs refreshing for the next phase of our targets."

It should be noted that interviews in York were conducted prior to a Climate Emergency being declared by CYC in March 2019 in which there is a target for the city to become carbon neutral by 2030 (CYC, 2019b). Additionally, three carbon reduction officer roles have since been created.

The lack of consideration for the environment more broadly by CYC is demonstrated by a report by the York based charity, International Service (2018). Here, a selection of 20 CYC corporate strategies were examined against the United Nation's 17 Sustainable Development Goals in which it was found that, while 70 per cent of the Global Goals were captured, there was a strategic gap around environmental sustainability (International Service, 2018, p.4).

In 2016, Paul McCabe was the council officer responsible for creating the CYC umbrella organisation; One Planet York (OPY), to be a network for organisations within the city that would take a 'pledge' towards the One Planet Living framework: ten principles that cover, "all aspects of sustainability" (Bioregional, n.d.; OPY, 2021). CYC decisions are also taken through this framework (CYC, 2022d). The idea was said by interviewees to have come from seeing other UK cities create similar umbrella organisations, in particular Bristol Green Capital Partnership (BGCP) for what was thought to be a strong environmental sustainability focused third sector and business community in Bristol. Currently, OPY has pledges from, "over 60

organisations" mainly from York's voluntary and community sector (OPY, 2021). By creating an umbrella sustainability organisation, CYC's aim is to galvanise the sustainability cultures of such organisations within York. However, since its inception, OPY was thought by interviewees to have lost momentum and the framework was commented upon as not being prevalent within CYC.

While OPY was not discussed by interviewees as having a political affiliation in the city, there were claims that the extent to which CYC were effective in driving environmental policies was dependent to a large extent on the political leadership at the time. Several interviewees indicated that when Labour has been in control of CYC there had been quite progressive environmental policies, such as the country's first *Low Emissions Strategy* (CYC, 2010) or the attempted closure of Lendal Bridge to cars to help alleviate air quality problems. The CYC *Corporate Peer Challenges* were cited as proof of the shifting political dynamics within the city. For example, regarding leadership within the council, the 2013 *Corporate Peer Challenge*, of which Labour were the subject, states that, "The Leader and Chief Executive provide visible leadership and lead from the front, and their ambition for York is clearly recognised by partners and staff" (LGA, 2013, p.3). Conversely, the 2016 *Corporate Peer Challenge*, of which Conservatives/Liberal Democrats were the subject, states that, "Those holding leadership positions are not consistently and widely visible enough across the organisation and sometimes outside of it too" (LGA, 2016, p.2). As of 2nd May 2019, there is a Liberal Democrat-led coalition with the Green Party in control of CYC.

Also thought by interviewees to be important was how the culture of York's residents as set out in the previous section affected the extent to which there were more strategically political moves towards greater innovation, discussed here by Simon Parker:

> "[…] a lot of people are retirement age who are very invested in keeping things as they are. And it's hard to persuade them to vote for diverting a lot of money into making York Central, for instance, into a new media hub and so on, because they think, 'how is it going to benefit me? I'm much more concerned with getting the dog-crap cleaned off the pavements'."

Although there were observed to be enclaves in York that identified the environment as a priority within the city and elected Green Party councillors, these were said to be small in comparison to cities such as Bristol or Brighton.

There was thought by interviewees to be a lack of renewable energy production in York, the reasons for which are speculated upon by here by Richard Lane:

> "[It's] cultural inertia I would say. I mean people have to either demand change or have it sold to them. Renewable energy is very popular. In which case, actually, it's political inertia."

Richard went on to discuss how cultural and political influences affected the erection of a wind turbine as part of a newly developed CYC waste 'eco depot':

> "There were loads of people saying 'oh, it will interfere with my telly', with no basis whatsoever. Rather than saying, 'we'll do it, and if we're wrong then we'll do something about it', [they] actually dropped it by about 15-20 feet, then took it down because it was pointless. Quite a pertinent symbol there; it would not have caused problems for anyone; there's lots of people who imagine wind turbines are gonna cause them problems, but you can't pander to everyone who imagines a problem."

Certainly, at an installed capacity of 20.3 MW for an estimated 84,212 households, renewable energy generation in the City of York Council area is small relative to energy use (BEIS, 2020c). By way of comparison, the local authority areas for the UK's Core Cities, excluding Belfast, have an average installed renewable energy capacity of 63.5 MW for an average estimated 226,764 households (ibid.). Therefore, generation per head in York is similar to such cities.

Interviewees also thought that CYC should be doing more to encourage recycling, which was said to have stagnated in the recent decade. There were concerns that CYC had tied themselves into a contract with a waste incinerator during a Liberal Democrat administration in 2010 and that this creates an ambiguity around the recycling of food waste and plastics from the city. With a rate of 48.4 per cent in the city, and a ranking of 102nd out of 341 English local authorities, though not sustainable, recycling is above national average (DEFRA, 2022).

6.2. Bath

In Bath, there was an overriding consensus among respective interviewees that there was a political fluctuation in the local authority; Bath and North-East Somerset Council (BathNES). This was said to stem from the differing cultures of the people within the city and the surrounding rural area of North-East Somerset, and is expanded upon here by Dr Bryn Jones, Senior Lecturer, University of Bath (UoB):

> "The surrounding areas are this odd mix of old former mining towns and villages, with almost kind of Northern, working-class character about them and a more Conservative, rural, affluent kind of populations […] And so, you've got this strange situation of, while the culture of the city was becoming more cosmopolitan and liberal, it was often run by Conservative majorities whose power base was in the rural areas."

These different groups were said to result in a fine balance between Liberal Democrats and Conservatives, with elements of Labour.

This narrative is based upon interviews conducted prior to January 2020. Speaking in April 2022, Bryn described the current political landscape in Bath and North-East Somerset thusly:

> "Buoyed by their Remainer credentials, the LibDems have pretty much swamped the Tories, with Labour holding on in their enclaves. Being such a large governing party the Lib-Dems are experiencing the usual tensions between their component perspectives. A greener, more 'woke' (sic) faction being subdued by the managerial orthodox moderates."

Therefore, political dynamics in the local authority are being impacted upon by national issues that, in the short-term at least, are reducing the extent of the fluctuation, though are creating fresh tensions.

6.2.1. Transport Problems

Back to the previous narrative, the consequences for the political fluctuation are discussed here by Dr Emma Carmel, Senior Lecturer, UoB:

> "The council is not a confident political actor and doesn't have a strong sense of its own identity. Without the possibility of a long-term perspective it is certainly difficult for the council to take unpopular or tricky decisions [and] they find it hard to assert policies which have specific costs to particular parts of the city."

Meanwhile, Councillor Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services, Liberal Democrats, BathNES, commented:

> "One officer told me she gets whiplash from the change in direction [laughs]. Certainly, among the Liberal Democrat group we're often being reminded that we need to get any difficult changes over and done with in the first two years because after that it's potentially more difficult electorally."

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Indeed, interviewees generally believed that the political fluctuation made it difficult to enact greater good policies and provide long-term vision.

The political fluctuation was said by interviewees to result in an inability to resolve problems around transport in the city, towards which there was also thought to be several other factors: high levels of commuting into Bath due to the many people who work within the city not being able to afford to live there; high tourist numbers; a large number of private schools in the city that do not 'map on' to the location of residents; and the heritage nature of the built environment not lending itself to car-use. Bath was said to be a 'walkable city' but that, due to the hilly topography, it was less amenable for cycling. While there are three Park-and-Rides, more were said to be needed. Due to bus services being provided by private providers, these were said to be poor quality and expensive, with the consequential lack of use, as discussed here by Molly Conisbee, Research Development Manager, UoB:

> "I've got a friend who is a kind of statistician and he's slightly obsessed with this. He says there is only ever about 40-50 per cent capacity in the middle of the working day."

Consequently, the bus service was thought not to provide a viable alternative to car-use. Drawing upon data from the 2011 Census positions this insight in relative terms: specifically for Bath, and not including North-East Somerset, 3.3, 20.3, 13.4 and 57.1 per cent of the population commute to work via cycle, walking and bus, train or metro and private vehicle respectively (ONS, 2011); for York, 2.6, 14.12, 11.66 and 64.03 per cent of the population commute to work via cycle, walking and bus, train or metro and private vehicle respectively (Centre for Cities, 2022f). Therefore, Bath fairs favourably compared to York in terms of the use of more sustainable forms of transport.

Issues around transport were said to exacerbate existing problems with air quality in Bath due to the city being in a 'bowl' of hills at the bottom of a river valley. BathNES were said by Tony Crouch, World Heritage Manager, BathNES, in an interview notably conducted in May 2019, to be trying to establish a Clean Air Zone by 2021:

> "That is a requirement from government. So the local authority's having to go through the painful process of wondering how to do that, and that would include HGV bans and potentially charging zones for polluting cars. That would be a difficult one to get through with the local population."

The Clean Air Zone that has subsequently been implemented notably does not include charges for private cars or motorbikes, regardless of emissions (BathNES, 2022). Unlike in the other case studies, data around the Daily Air Quality Index is not available for Bath.

6.2.2. Unaffordable Housing

Lower- and middle-income earners were the groupings identified by interviewees as being those who were unable to live in Bath and, pushed out into the surrounding villages, were commuting into the city. At £378,000, the average house price in Bath and North-East Somerset is far greater than the national average (Land Registry, 2022). House prices specifically in Bath were identified by interviewees as being significantly higher than is reasonable for the local economy. Despite this, there was little discussion around interventions from public institutions to overcome this, with the resulting problems discussed here by Molly Conisbee:

> "When rich people can buy up properties and don't use them, it is to such a detriment. That is where the state requires intervention […] This is just a free for all. This is just one of the many problems of deregulation that many people were predicting in the 70s and 80s."

Certainly, Bath was said to be particularly attractive to second-homeowners, rent-seekers (especially with Airbnb becoming more prevalent), people moving from London and as an investment from people not only in the UK, but also abroad. Meanwhile, an increase in supply was thought to be difficult as land around Bath was said to be owned by the National Trust and could not be built upon. Although there were said to be development of some of the city's remaining green spaces, this was observed to be market driven and not the 'affordable housing' that was thought to be required for the people who work in Bath.

6.2.3. Bath and North-East Somerset Council and Sustainability

Interviewees commended BathNES for maintaining the core of their 'sustainability team' amid changing administrations and reduced budgets from austerity when other local authorities were thought to, at best, only retain individual officers or, at worst, have no such officers. This was attributed to cultural support among the population for sustainability policies. The team were said to have identified three key areas that Bath and North-East Somerset may improve upon in this regard: energy efficiency, transport, and renewable energy. It was acknowledged, however, that BathNES had limited resources to make

significant changes across these areas. BathNES were said to support community groups in renewable energy generation. This was thought to be with the primary aim of reducing carbon emissions, and was said to mostly involve affluent groups. The BathNES area has an installed capacity of 22.5 MW of renewable energy for an estimated 71,743 households (BEIS, 2020c). Though not commented upon by interviewees, BathNES had a relatively high recycle rate of 56.2 per cent, ranking 34th out of 341 local authorities in England (DEFRA, 2022).

6.3. Bristol

In Bristol, there was speculation among respective interviewees that relative political continuity in the local authority has aided in pursuing longer-term goals, culminating in winning the European Green Capital Award in 2015. In 2012, however, the political landscape changed with the city electing to use the mayoral system. Consequent to this, as alluded to by interviewees, in 2016 George Ferguson, who was said to have enacted progressive environmental sustainability policies, lost re-election to Marvin Rees who claimed, to gain support from disaffected people within the city, that the strong environmental sustainability culture in Bristol was socially excluding.

6.3.1. 'Progressive' Local Authority

Interviewees discussed Bristol City Council (BCC) as generally being progressive. For instance, in 2008, BCC was said to be the first local authority in the UK to commission a 'peak oil report' that looked to understand what Bristol may look like in a post fossil-fuel world. Additionally, the local authority has established its own energy and waste companies. The former, Bristol Energy, which was created in 2015, engages with both renewable energy production and reducing fuel poverty. The company, however, since suffered financial problems and was sold in 2020 (BBC News, 2020; Pittam, 2020). Despite Bristol culturally identifying with renewable energy, and even being home to organisations such as the Centre for Sustainable Energy, as commented upon by Professor Jim Longhurst, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Environment and Sustainability, University of the West of England:

> "Although increasingly there's a higher fraction of renewables in the Bristol supply
> mix, it's still small in comparison to fossil-fuel for electricity supplied."

Indeed, with an installed capacity of 129 MW for an estimated 178,195 households for the City of Bristol local authority area, renewable energy generation is over three greater per

estimated number of households than for the average Core City, excluding Belfast (BEIS, 2020c). Though this remains far below the energy use for the city.

Another area in which BCC was said to be progressive is through the establishment and continued support for BGCP, the umbrella organisation for the city's third sector and private businesses, the role for which in Bristol is described here by the then Chief Executive of BGCP, Ian Townsend:

> "800 organizations have taken a pledge, within that some of them are more active than others. In the central team there's only three people. If people are expecting me or us to answer all the problems, that's not realistic. So it's very much a partnership affair. It's about involving them 800 members in everything we're trying to achieve, and helping them achieve their goals towards the same vision, which is a sustainable city with a high quality of life for all."

According to Jane Stephenson, Business Development Director, Resource Futures, this network is unique to Bristol and was a major factor in the city winning the European Green Capital Award in 2015:

> "There wasn't any other European Green Capital that had anything like that level of coordination and there was nothing like the Partnership (BGCP) in other cities. They'd often done much more in terms of what [their] local authority had been able to achieve, but that's largely a function of, in many countries, cities' municipalities having much greater powers and much greater budgets."

Bristol's organisational culture is perhaps reflected in the BCC's (2022) *Corporate Strategy*, which is considerate of the wider sustainability related benefits that businesses may bring.

6.3.2. Central Constraints

While BCC was thought to be progressive, Central Government was frequently discussed by interviewees as being a constraining factor in their ability to invest in environmental sustainability related infrastructure. Such frustrations are expressed here by James Cleeton, England Director South, Sustrans:

> "I don't hear or see anything coming out of the city that's inspiring environmentally wise, but I'm sure it's the same everywhere, this whole drive for austerity is just strangling it. I mean, for example, a load of the parks aren't going to be maintained anymore, and some of the cycle routes aren't going to be

maintained. It's not about deciding what we don't invest in that we want: the city's losing the capability to invest in what it's already got."

An anonymous interviewee described the nature of infrastructure investment with the Conservative Central Government thusly:

"If you think about Local Enterprise Partnerships, they're unelected people who are actually driving where we spend the Government's money. THAT IS DISGUSTING because if you've got a private company saying where the roads are going, where the houses are going to be built, they're not going to be putting them where they need to be and where the jobs are going to be for the greater good, they're going to be putting them in the places for the greater profit."

Although itself suffering from under-funding, it was believed that Bristol joining the West of England Combined Authority with Bath & North-East Somerset and South Gloucestershire would lead to more funds for infrastructure. Additionally, interviewees thought this would lead to a more joined-up strategy for Bristol's travel-to-work area.

6.3.3. Housing

Interviewees commented that the house prices are high in the centre of Bristol, which were thought to be exacerbated by wealthy people relocating from London. However, at £327,000, even the average house price across the city is £56,000 higher than the average for the UK (Land Registry, 2022). It was also said that Bristol was unable to control its own new house builds, the urban area having expanded beyond its boundaries.

6.3.4. Transport

Walking and cycling rates were thought by interviewees to be high, particularly for a large, hilly city, due to the environmental sustainability culture in addition to cycling being facilitated by BCC. Despite this, Bristol was thought to have particular problems around high car ownership rates, with the resulting air quality problems. This was said to be exacerbated by a motorway; the M32, coming far into the city. These findings are, to an extent, consistent with the data and as of the last Census in 2011 Bristol was ranked 11th, 7th, 44th and 44th out the UK's 63 largest cities and towns for commuting via walking, cycling, bus, train or metro, and private vehicle respectively (Centre for Cities, 2022b). Perhaps due to Bristol's identified problems with car-use, the city exceeded the Daily Air Quality Index on 46 days in 2018 (Enenkel et al., 2020).

6.3.5. Recycling

Recycling in Bristol was said to be good for a large UK city. Although rates were said to have been hit by budgetary reductions from austerity, the third sector was thought to be aiding in this regard. At a recycle rate of 47.1 per cent, while fairly average for English local authorities with a ranking of 117th, this was the best performing Core City and significantly higher than the average of 28 per cent for such cities (DEFRA, 2022). As pointed out by interviewees, however, such rates refer to domestic as opposed to commercial recycling, and the latter was thought to be constrained by Central Government in terms of both transparency and requirements. Therefore, despite such waste being produced locally, it was not able to be controlled and reduced at the local level.

6.4. Edinburgh

In Edinburgh, there were said by respective interviewees to have been various combinations of ruling parties in the local authority, generally involving Labour, Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party. Despite there being a political fluctuation there was consensus among interviewees that City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) was successful to an extent in providing long-term vision and enacting greater good policies. This was largely attributed to the Single Transferable Vote system as a form of proportional representation that is used in Scottish local government elections in which the number of councillors who are elected from a political party are proportional to the number of votes the party receives. This stands in contrast to the first-past-the-post system used in England.

Although interviewees felt proportional representation made it difficult for any one party to have long-term control, this was said to lead to consensual politics in CEC whereby parties work together in the interests of the city, while larger parties had to allow for the policies of smaller parties to gain their support. There were no discussions that compared the effectiveness of proportional representation with the first-past-the-post system prior to this in 2007. The Green Party were cited as an example of a beneficiary of the consensual politics, as discussed here by Kyle Drummond, Senior Economic Development Officer, CEC:

> "Probably the Greens are slightly more influential now than they were a decade ago, just because of the way the seats have landed, and they've sort of been 'king makers' sometimes. So that's enabled them to put stuff on the agenda which I

know otherwise might not have been. I think generally most of the things that have been proposed are to enhance public transport, improve council housing."

Such findings are consistent with the work of both Carter (2007) and Goodhart (2017) that proportional representation may allow for the inclusion of the voices of smaller parties, Carter specifically discussing green parties as being recipients of this.

Although the private sector in Edinburgh was observed to not contribute significantly to the sustainability agenda, the Edinburgh Partnership – consisting of 15 public bodies in the city – was thought to provide strategic 'buy-in' from the other public bodies, such as the universities in the city.

6.4.1. Expanding City

Edinburgh was noted by interviewees to be expanding relatively quickly. With an increase in population by 15 per cent in the preceding decade, the city was said to be projected to be bigger than Glasgow by 2030. David Somervell, Convener, Transition Edinburgh and former Sustainability Adviser, University of Edinburgh, referred to, "the death of the green-belt" West of the city and felt that Edinburgh was not able to control its own new builds as the city expanded into the surrounding Lothian regions:

> "Up to the city by-pass, to the South and then Mid-Lothian, which is poor – was coal mining, Labour, former industrial council. They're desperate to get any income, any – so, they're allowing all their fields to be built on and then the traffic constraints and so, it's really, really challenging. And this is to do with unplanned growth."

In contrast, Cammy Day, Labour Group Leader and Deputy Head of Council, CEC, commented:

> "We have some substantial developments happening. We've purchased a National Grid site to build 4,000 homes, some cultural offerings, shops, new schools. To the West of the city, by the airport where we've got a green-belt, it's always sensitive but there've been plans to expand the city out that side. And to the South of the city by the by-pass is where we've got one of the big expansions in housing."

Therefore, while Edinburgh is identified as growing rapidly, there is ambiguity around how it is growing. At £317,000, the average house price in Edinburgh is £46,000 above the UK average (Land Registry, 2022).

6.4.2. Devolved Powers

There was said to be a policy agenda within the city around inclusive growth to spread the benefits of increased economic activity more equally, elaborated upon here by Kyle Drummond:

> "Although Edinburgh's good at creating jobs, often those benefits are taken up by, for example, people who move to the city to take up a job, or people who commute in. Whereas people who live in Edinburgh all their lives and have family going back a while can be left behind from that success. So, there's some initiatives underway just now to try and engage with those people and a big theme in our current *Economic Strategy* is inclusive growth".

Within this *Economic Strategy* (CEC, 2018, p.7) such policies discuss, "ensuring public sector procurement spend is accessible to local businesses and social enterprises" and, "ensuring that core enabling infrastructure – including housing, transport, and the built environment – continues to meet the needs of a changing economy". There is scepticism among commentators towards the validity of an inclusive growth discourse in achieving policy aims in which it is felt that there is a lack of any fundamental changes to the unequal provisioning of markets (CLES, 2019; McInroy, 2017). Despite this, the policies set forth by CEC are consistent with many of the factors discussed by the OECD (2016) as being integral to an inclusive labour market, such as those around housing and transport.

Inclusive growth was said by interviewees to be part of a wider strategy by the Scottish Government (Statham & Gunson, 2019). This was thought to include aspects such as the *Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015* which requires local authorities in Scotland to plan services with communities to elevate social considerations which, according to David Somervell means, "we're moving away from the hegemony of servicing capital, development, economic growth at any cost." It was also said that aspects relating to the environment, such as waste, had been devolved to the Scottish Government who through creating the organisation; Zero Waste Scotland, were more progressive around waste and resource use than in England. Despite such claims, at 38.6 per cent (HPS, 2020), recycle rates in Edinburgh were low compared to the English case studies. Aside from the possibility of CEC creating an energy service company and efforts by the University of Edinburgh, there was no discussion

around renewable energy in the city. The City of Edinburgh Council area has an installed capacity of 19.1 MW and an estimated 234,091 households (BEIS, 2020c).

6.4.3. Transport Exemplar

Edinburgh was partly identified as a case study due to the recent creation of a tram-line – often seen as a difficult to implement, yet more sustainable form of transport – in 2014. However, interviewees primarily discussed other modes of transport in their city in the context of sustainability. Interviewees considered their city to have particularly low car-use while public transport patronage was said to be the highest in the UK outside of London, while walking and cycling rates were also thought to be particularly high. Indeed, for commuting journeys, as of the 2011 Census Edinburgh is ranked 14th by cycling, 2nd by bus, train or metro, 5th by foot, and 60th by private vehicle for the UK's 63 largest cities and towns (Centre for Cities, 2022c). It is perhaps due to a prevalence of these more sustainable forms of transport and a dearth of car-use that Edinburgh exceeded the Daily Air Quality Index scale above 4 on a relatively low 7 days in 2018 (Enenkel et al., 2020).

Interviewees attributed the low car-use in Edinburgh to the built heritage nature of the centre not lending itself to such a mode of transport. Additionally, high density within parts of the city due to flats and a mixed-use approach to the built environment in which people live, work, and buy goods was thought to encourage a walking culture. Although the built heritage centre was not designed with sustainability in mind, this insight is consistent with the literature in which one of several benefits from mixed-use developments is a reduced need to travel great distances, with the appropriate reduction in car-use and increase in walking and cycling (Montgomery, 2013; Sager, 2015). Consequent to these factors, according to Gareth Barwell, Head of Place Management, CEC, more than 33 per cent of households in Edinburgh do not own a car, which was thought to be relatively low for the UK.

The pervasiveness of public transport in Edinburgh was also thought to be why the city's bus company; Lothian Buses, is publicly owned in the face of high levels of bus privatisation in the UK, the occurrence and effect of which was commented upon by Patrick Miner, Master's (by Research) Student, University of Edinburgh:

> "Since the *Transport Act 1985* which led to the privatisation of most bus services outside of London, bus patronage has been falling outside the capital. There is

little competition between bus operators, and fares have increased above inflation since the 1990s."

With ownership of the buses and trams by CEC along with the other Lothian Councils this was said to have allowed for shared ticketing across both in addition to an unlimited monthly pass that at approximately £50 a month was thought to be, "very reasonably priced" (Gareth Barwell).

Regarding the sustainability related benefits of public ownership of the bus company, Gareth Barwell went on to comment:

"[…] public transport cost for a lot of places is a barrier, but not for us and the fact that it's publicly owned means that we then can make more strategic decisions. If you've got a privately-owned bus company then it's going to be more driven by commercial aims, i.e., 'I'm not going to operate that route because it's not going to make me money.' We can take bigger factors into consideration of whether a route is worthwhile because then you can take economic, social and environmental return on investment as opposed to the profit motive."

Lothian Buses was generally thought by interviewees to be successful with what was said to be one of the youngest fleets in the UK for among the cheapest fares, while paying CEC a dividend every year.

Therefore, from the conversations of interviewees it appears that public as opposed to private ownership of Edinburgh's buses has brought numerous benefits. Firstly, unlike charges that may be levelled at public ownership of economic inefficiency in comparison to private ownership (Aharoni, 2000; Megginson & Netter, 2001; Mühlenkamp, 2015; Rutgers & van der Meer, 2010), public ownership appears to have led to greater economic efficiency. Secondly, consistent with the findings of Fiorio & Florio (2013), public ownership may have led to lower prices for services. Finally, consistent with the insight of scholars, public ownership has allowed for wider sustainability benefits and quality of service to be considered in service provision as opposed to purely profit (Andrews & Entwistle, 2014; Hall & Weghmann, 2019). Such findings are why the World Bank recommends smaller, local POEs (DTT, n.d.).

Edinburgh was said to be tackling air pollution problems within the city from traffic by implementing a Low Emission Zone which has subsequently been approved in which more

heavily polluting vehicles are made to pay a charge for entering the central city region, discussed here by Gareth Barwell:

> "You've got, particularly, concern from businesses and couriers around the impact on fleet replacement costs. All the way down to some people saying it doesn't go far enough […] Air quality issues are a big problem in certain parts of Edinburgh, so we've spent a lot of time teeing up the need for the business case so there's a fair amount of sympathy for it – I think [the problem with implementation is] more around amnesty periods for fleet replacement for a taxi driver or a white van driver or a private vehicle owner."

There was also said to be a city centre consultation taking place regarding reductions in traffic in which increased pedestrianisation was being considered.

Traffic and air quality problems within the city centre, in addition to increasing Edinburgh's attractiveness as a tourist and conference destination, were said to be the primary motivators behind the recent decision to create an additional tram-line. The result of these competing interests on the city centre are described here by Councillor Steve Burgess, Green Party, CEC:

> "[…] there's a kind of feeling of some respects an older city that's under a bit of siege from population increase and economic development. The pressures are just getting more and more in many respects, especially traffic."

The new tram-line will be in addition to the line that runs from the airport to the city, the work for which commenced in 2008.

The implementation of the initial tram-line was said to be a long process, the culture for which is discussed here by David Somervell:

> "Edinburgh always goes for things slowly and steadily […] the city fathers are very conservative, even whatever party they are […] Edinburgh has always, maybe it's because of the Cockburn Association[*]; which is 144 years old, it has always said, 'Oh, hold on.' [...] Edinburgh has somehow always seen itself as slightly a cut above and slightly better. And so, we are very slow at bringing forward major infrastructure projects."

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[*] Also known as the Edinburgh Civic Trust, the Cockburn Association is a charity that aims to, "protect and enhance Edinburgh." (The Cockburn Association, n.d.).

Interviewees frequently commented on how the implementation required strong political leadership and that there was a very active campaign against the tram-line that also involved smear campaigns; for instance, with the claim that the tram-line would not reach the airport. Interviewees identified several problems with the project. Notably, that it was overbudget; that there were problems regarding contractors; and that it is not a pervasive form of transport within the city. Attention was also drawn to the paradox of a sustainable form of transport going to the airport, given flying was considered to be an unsustainable form of transport. Interviewees did not consider the built heritage to be an obstacle, with numerous interviewees pointing out that the vast majority of the tram-line is not within such areas. While notable thoroughfares such as Princes Street had been excavated, these were said to have since returned to their normal state. Overall, opinion was largely mixed among interviewees, with an erring on the side of the tram-line being seen in a positive light.

6.5. Plymouth

In the discussions of respective interviewees, Plymouth's local authority, meanwhile, was surrounded by narratives of being active in providing much needed economic welfare within its locale, as is expanded upon here by Councillor Sue Dann, Labour, Plymouth City Council (PICC):

> "Because of the council, the city has moved forward as being an aspirational city and just doesn't want to sit there and just be what we were. Which could easily have been a city in decline as public services declined, as the major employers pulled out of the city in terms of the dock work which reduced its number of employees. And I think we've diversified in our economic offer and that's changing the culture of Plymouth."

In addition to the loss of the city's traditional employment mentioned by Sue here, interviewees also believed there was a need to provide economic welfare due to austerity having a particularly marked effect on Plymouth and an enduring lack of Central Government funding due to the city's geographic distance from London.

6.5.1. Political Fluctuation

Interviewees described a geographical divide in the city. Here, the more working-class North was said to vote primarily Conservative while the more 'cosmopolitan' South voted primarily Labour. Marc Gardiner, Director, Zebra Collective, commented on the public sector nature of

much of the working-class employment in Plymouth and why there wasn't the voting for Labour that may conventionally be found among such groupings:

> "There's a kind of state military thing. It's rather different. There haven't been strong unions in the dockyard, for example, in the way there have been in commercial dockyards elsewhere."

Accordingly, due to a fine balance between these two groupings in the city, control of PlCC was said to fluctuate back and forth between Labour and Conservative.

This political fluctuation and its negative impacts were observed to be accelerated by the election of one-third of the councillors every year, with a fallow year, the political effect of which is discussed here anonymously by a Plymouth interviewee:

> "We used to do every four years […] so as a council if you're in for four years you can get a lot of work done without worrying about looking behind your back just with what the opposition are doing. Now if you hit the fallow year you could get quite a bit done in two years, [but generally] it makes it hard work to actually get your policies through."

As detailed in Table 4.2., this fluctuation is particularly marked in Plymouth since inception in 1997 with, aside from no overall control between 2015-17, control of PlCC having swung between the two main parties every two years, from Labour during the period in which interviews were conducted, to Conservatives in the current period from May 2021.

There was ambiguity as to the effect of this political fluctuation on the day-to-day operations of PlCC. Some interviewees believed this resulted in a positive influence; for instance, with the words of Paul Elliot, Low-Carbon City Officer, PlCC, here:

> "New administrations provide new ideas. Whether they work or not is another matter. There's no shortage of enthusiasm for change, put it that way."

Other interviewees thought projects are often stopped to assess them during a change in power, and that some projects from the previous party are terminated entirely.

Although some interviewees felt there was an unspoken agreement between Labour and Conservatives in the interests of the city, other interviewees felt that there were stark differences in policies between the parties and that even when there was co-operation it required a great deal of politicking. When there was said to be long-term consistency in policy a notable cause was attributed to the leadership of the Labour Group on PlCC since 1998, and

leader of the council at the time that interviews were conducted; Tudor Evans MBE, expanded upon here by Marc Gardiner:

> "Tudor Evans is the Labour lead and has been now for probably twenty years and I think he does play a long game. He knows he's going to be in and out, but he kind of does what he can when he's in and then looks to, 'we'll be back in again and we can do this'. So, I think, and this is my slightly inexpert perspective, but there's a degree of strategic planning within that context that goes on within that party, I think more than the others."

This political consistency from Labour was said to have a stabilising effect on Conservative's policies when in power, leading to PlCC being able to provide long-term vision.

6.5.2. Economic Reorientation

There were two notable strategies that PlCC were involved in to increase economic welfare within the city. Firstly, and perhaps demonstrating the ability to provide long-term vision, is the *Plymouth Plan* (PlCC, 2021) which, originally conceived in 2003, sets forth a strategy to grow the city by 20 per cent to a population of 300,000 by 2034. In doing so, the belief among interviewees was that Plymouth will be large enough to support its own activities, such as demand for public transport, and will receive sufficient levels of funding from Central Government and, therefore, will be able to sustain itself economically.

Secondly, while this study engages with social economy models for the wider sustainability benefits that they may bring, PlCC, in conjunction with the University of Plymouth, were said to be encouraging social enterprises purely to increase economic welfare within the city. Marc Gardiner, however, raised concerns regarding the relationship between social enterprises and austerity in the city:

> "There's something about the social enterprise culture which is a little well, 'everything's great' and, 'let's celebrate everything'. And we're always keen to say, 'well actually, no; things are not always great: austerity is a social injustice and we should be a little bit more humble about the context we're working in. We should be challenging inequality; we should be challenging government policy that is creating destitution'."

This observation is consistent with the literature. Due to a reliance on external funding and the resulting inability to be all pervasive, in addition to their positive externalities

compensating for the negative externalities of corporations, social enterprises may enable as opposed to challenge the neoliberal doctrine (Amin et al., 1999; Nicholls & Teasdale, 2017; Teasdale et al., 2012), and this may be unfolding in Plymouth. Hahnel & Wright (2016) refer to such divergence from capitalism in which new forms of social empowerment are built that do not pose an immediate threat to elites as 'interstitial', and they disagree over its effectiveness – Hahnel argues this to be isolating and enabling, while Wright asserts that such alternatives are the means through which a wider populace may become engaged.

According to Gareth Hart, Director, Iridescent Ideas CIC (Community Interest Company), "Plymouth Social Enterprise Network defines social enterprises in the city as co-operatives, community businesses, trading charities, CICs and other forms as well" are defined as social enterprises in the city. Marc Gardiner, however, thought that there was a proclivity for specific model types in the city under this term:

> "If you speak to a social enterprise consultant [in Plymouth], if you're thinking of setting up a social enterprise, in the last decade they'll talk about CICs or CIOs (Charitable Incorporated Organisations). They won't even mention co-operatives."

Although the term 'social enterprise' is ambiguous in the literature, the models described in Plymouth are consistent with the commonality to all definitions: that they are community based enterprises with social goals (Chell, 2007; Rahdari et al., 2016; Vickers & Lyon, 2014).

Although as part of the encouragement of social enterprises, Plymouth, along with another case study; Bristol, was accredited as a Social Enterprise City – a programme that recognizes hotspots for such models (see Social Enterprise UK, 2021a) – as is discussed here by Justin Bear, Project Manager, Plymouth Community Energy, the dynamics and suggested outcomes between the two cities may vary significantly:

> "The social enterprise sector of the city is quite strong, but the sustainability movement is not the same scale as you might get in other cities like Bristol. To me, there's just not as much money around historically for that kind of activity. I mean, the council's got the second largest low-carbon team in the South-West, but clearly there's not as much investment as there is in kind of a city like Bristol where there is more money in the private sector and in the public sector."

Despite this, there were also narratives of a successful social enterprise community in Plymouth. Prior to 2011, and the real onset of austerity, there were said to have been numerous social enterprises but that these were fragmented. In the proceeding period PlCC and University of Plymouth were thought to have actively supported Plymouth Social Enterprise Network – the umbrella organisation for social enterprises in the city. The newly elected Labour Party in 2012 were said to have added a particular drive. Social enterprises were thought to have reached a critical mass in which knowledge of their presence was said to encourage yet more. It was also highlighted that the social enterprise community now has a place on the Plymouth Growth Board – the body that oversees economic strategy for the city – therefore, implying the credence given to social enterprises in Plymouth.

According to Jane Hunt, Senior Economic Development Officer, PlCC, social enterprises are more substantial than previous methods of providing economic welfare:

> "Back in the funding day when Single Regeneration Budget[†] was around and money was no object they would sort of go into an area, bombard it with projects and then as soon as that project ended, that was it; the funding went; the staff went: and so all the good work went. So, I think the thinking is that a more social enterprise/co-operative, where residents and citizens that are involved in the decision making, will make them more invested."

Therefore, there has been a preference for social enterprises and co-operatives in a period, post-New Labour, in which there is less institutional support for the former with the Conservative Government (Mawson, 2010; Nicholls, 2010).

As part of the encouragement of social enterprises, PlCC were said by Justin Bear to work in collaboration with the local community to establish the co-operative; Plymouth Energy Community, which finances renewable energy projects through community shares offered to the public in addition to loans from the local authority. Notably, in the conversations of Justin, the benefits from renewable energy to the citizens of Plymouth revolved around relieving 'fuel-poverty' as opposed to reducing carbon emissions. Furthermore, the decentralised nature of renewable energy was said to create the opportunity for local ownership. The

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[†] A programme that ran between 1994 and 2000 and offered both support to individuals and improvements to infrastructure in more deprived areas (Gibbons et al., 2021).

Plymouth City Council has an installed capacity of 66.5 MW of renewable energy generation and an estimated 108,278 households (BEIS, 2020c). Meanwhile, at £207,000, house prices are below the UK average in Plymouth (Land Registry, 2022). At 34.1 per cent, the recycle rate ranks joint 270th out of 341 English local authorities (DEFRA, 2022). As of the 2011 Census, Plymouth ranks 27th, 12th, 36th and 30th for commuting via cycling, walking, private vehicle and bus, train or metro respectively for the UK's 63 largest cities and towns (Centre for Cities, 2022d). The Daily Air Quality Index scale above 4 in Plymouth was exceeded 25 days in 2018 (Enenkel et al., 2020).

Given that interviewees generally attributed the proliferation of social enterprises in Plymouth to a top-down approach, the political fluctuation was thought to have a large bearing on its success – when Labour was in power, PlCC were said to have been committed to encouraging the social enterprise economy. This took varying forms, as commented upon by Jane Hunt:

> "We're actually investing in organisations and buying equity. So, we've just bought into £60,000 of shares in a new South-West Mutual Bank […] But we also have a crowd fund project: the council will match up to £20,000 on the community projects. And that's funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy[‡]. When developers build a development within the city, they would have to contribute to the infrastructure of that, like a *Section 106* but this way it's equally distributed, and it's actually citizens are investing in projects that they're interested in."

Within the encouragement of social enterprises there was also said to be a particular focus on co-operatives by the Plymouth Labour Party, with the 2018 commitment to double the size of the local co-operative economy by 2025 (PlCC, 2018).

When Conservatives were in power there was ambiguity among interviewees as to whether they supported the proliferation of social enterprises. Mostly there was a belief that they did to a large extent, with projects such as the Social Enterprise Investment Fund and the establishment of the Inclusive Growth Group in their tenure. Conversely, other interviewees felt that Conservatives had not supported social enterprises. There was a claim, however, that

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[‡] A charge that may be levied by local authorities on new developments in their area (DLUHC & MHCLG, 2020).

while Conservatives did provide support for the Plymouth Social Enterprise Network, they did not interfere, whereas Labour were said to provide more support but required a degree of control. There were discussions around how to engage the two parties individually, with it believed that narratives around 'entrepreneurship', 'business' and 'job creation' resonated with Conservatives, while Labour were said to be more inclined to respond to 'social' and 'fair economy' issues.

6.6. Preston

Among interviewees in Preston, there was a narrative that austerity was significantly impacting their local authorities' effectiveness, discussed here by Tamar Reay, Economic Development Officer, Preston City Council (PrCC):

> "The problem we've had as a council with austerity and reduced resources is that we haven't been able to invest as much directly in communities as we were doing. So a lot of our work now is sort of focused on acting almost as an enabler and a broker in bringing people together where they can help them help themselves."

Interviewees also felt that the greater profile of Preston's two large neighbours, Liverpool and Manchester, resulted in reduced access to both Art's Council and social project funding for the city. For similar reasons it was felt that Preston was losing many of its graduates to these cities. In a further discussion in March 2022 regarding funding, however, Tamar Reay commented:

> "Things are now changing quite significantly due to successful bids for funding from both the City Council e.g. Town Deal[§], Heritage Lottery (The Harris Museum), and the County Council, e.g. Transforming Cities Fund[**]."

Preston, along with South Ribble and Lancashire was designated a City Deal area by Central Government in 2013 in which there is additional public funding available to build 17,000 new homes. At £147,000, the average house price in Preston is significantly below the UK average (Land Registry, 2022).

[§] The Towns Fund has been providing Town Deals of up to £25 million, or more in exceptional circumstances, to towns in order to foster economic regeneration, stimulate investment and deliver vital infrastructure.

[**] This fund, which closed to applications in 2018, aimed to improve productivity by investing in public and sustainable transport infrastructure in English cities.

6.6.1. The Preston Model

According to interviewees, stemming from the reduced ability to ensure the economic welfare of residents due to austerity in a struggling, post-industrial city in addition to the collapse of a £700 million proposed shopping development for the city in 2011 (BBC News, 2011a), a local economic strategy has been pursued in the city since 2013 that has been termed the 'Preston Model'. This strategy was said to utilise the *Public Services (Social Value) Act (2012)* for organisations that are anchored within Preston, seven of which are involved including the local authority and university, to consider more wider benefits in procurement of services than purely cost, such as social value. Most notably, however, models that retain greater wealth are favoured in procurement decisions to create a local economic 'multiplier' effect. In doing so, the strategy is said to favour co-operatives and, to a lesser extent, small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Consequent to this strategy, between 2012/13 and 2016/17 locally retained spend in Preston for the partaking anchor organisations increased from 5 per cent to 18.2 per cent (£112.3 million) and within Lancashire from 39 to 79.2 per cent (£488.7 million; CLES & PrCC, 2019, pp.11-12). Notably, Preston was the most improved city across a range of sustainability related measures in the UK in 2018 (PwC, 2018). However, regarding the extent to which the Preston Model has yet been applied across all anchor organisations in the city, according to Martyn Rawlinson, Labour Councillor, Deputy Head of PrCC, "that was the first real tranche of it".

Matthew Todd, Senior Researcher, Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), observes that the impetus was unconventional for a procurement strategy such as this:

> "For a lot of places it's specific opportunities that twig this agenda. So, if they've got a huge programme of physical regeneration coming and they've also got a lot of challenges within the place at the time, you can link that agenda and think we're gonna get this new shopping centre for example, but what else can we get from it, in terms of local employment, local ownership? […] Most of the times it's schemes that are going ahead. But theirs was when it collapsed."

The strategy was frequently commented upon by interviewees to have been championed by Matthew Brown who, while previously a councillor, has been the Leader of PrCC since 2018. It is said to have been Matthew's connections with the US think tank, the Democracy

Collaborative, and an interviewee for this study; Dr Julian Manley's (Social Innovation Manager, University of Central Lancashire and Chair, Preston Co-operative Development Network) connections with the Mondragon Cooperative Network in Basque Country, Spain, in addition to input from the think tank, CLES, that has driven the Preston Model from an ideological perspective.

According to Matthew Todd, previously procurement was only considered in functional terms:

> "It's not sexy. It's just a thing you have to do. You have to buy stuff and [traditionally] you [had] to do it as quickly and cheaply as possible."

Reduced budgets from austerity were also said to have created a need to find new means of providing economic welfare for citizens, as discussed here by Tamar Reay:

> "[It's] partly because it was something we could do without spending money. It was hugely [due to austerity]. I mean, we had no funding, and procurement in that sense doesn't require funding. It's because you're buying a good and a service. But it doesn't require something over and above that."

However, Martyn Rawlinson commented:

> "It's very difficult to expand your policy base when you're constantly cutting back. And we're desperately trying to keep hold of our economic development officers, our community engagement officers and we miss those officers that really progress a load of our Preston Model policies."

Therefore, while austerity was an impetus for the ideas associated with the Preston Model, it is also a limiting factor.

Interviewees believed Preston was particularly well placed for the implementation of such a strategy. The local economy was thought to be relatively isolated which, it was felt, helps to build a sense of identity among the anchor organisations within the city. At a population of 300,000, Preston being relatively small was thought to aid in collaboration across the city. From a cultural perspective, the strong sense of local identity and history of embracing change was said to help in facilitating such a local strategy. Meanwhile, Preston was commented upon as being the administrative centre for Lancashire, resulting in a disproportionately high number of larger anchor organisations in the city.

As part of the encouragement of co-operatives, the procurement strategy was also said to involve identifying gaps in the market or where current supply was poor, and commissioning local organisations to fill these. This was said to be the circumstance for the Preston Model's first co-operative; the Larder, which produces food for the anchor organisations involved in the strategy and was created from numerous smaller producers, the process around which is described here by Gareth Nash, Director, Co-op Development Network and Co-operative & Mutual Solutions:

> "So, in a way that's the starter for ten – the Larder, as it's the first time that a co-op has been able to go to the council and say, 'well look, you're talking about all this stuff, what about walking the walk?' But actually we need ten, we need twenty. And it goes back to my point, how are we gonna create awareness of co-ops? The things that I think have helped to transform, I mean Co-ops UK (the federation who provide support for co-operatives in the UK), yes, they're very good. I think pubs have really helped actually because there's fifty of them now."

As discussed by Gareth here, co-operative ownership may be an alien concept to many people. However, consistent with the literature, by there being more such models, even in this form purely as pubs, through greater visibility this legitimises and increases the likelihood that other co-operatives will be created (Arando et al., 2009; Co-operatives UK, 2017; Pérotin, 2006).

Despite this, the creation of co-operatives was acknowledged by interviewees to be a long, hard process – one that Derek Whyte, Assistant Chief Executive, PrCC, thought it best to avoid in favour of buying existing businesses and converting them to co-operatives:

> "I think our members here are very focused on the idea of start-up worker co-ops. You know, people have a new idea, they come together to form a new business and that new business is structured as a co-operative. My concern about that is; you know I've worked in economic development, city development for most of my career and 'new start' is the most hard aspect that they're supposed to do: you get much better results if you put additional money into an existing business that might have five to ten staff but might have the potential to grow and expand. Because, by that stage you've weeded out all the people with duff ideas or can't be bothered to get up on a Monday to come into work, or what have you. Start-

ups is a very high failure rate and then you're banging co-operative on top of that, which is another layer of complexity."

The literature is consistent with the insight given by Derek here with research identifying business succession as being the primary means of co-operative development (Lawrence et al., 2018; PMC, 2016). Furthermore, as alluded to by Derek here, by providing the support for co-operatives, the Preston Model seeks to overcome one of the major barriers to the creation and expansion of the model in which it makes greater sense for an entrepreneur or group of entrepreneurs to hire staff as opposed to make them co-owners (Aldrich & Stern, 1983; Schwartz, 2012).

PrCC were said by interviewees to be exploring the idea of setting up a Community Bank to support co-operatives, however, this was felt to be constrained financially by austerity. This is part of the 'community wealth building' movement across the UK looking to develop a network of 18 regional Community Banks which will take local savings and use them to create local loans for citizens, local community groups, and SMEs, the first of which will be Avon Mutual (Peck, 2019). Notably, both the Mondragon Co-operative Network in Northern Spain and the Lega Co-op in Northern Italy have their own banks to aid in the development of co-operatives by lending to these models while allowing them to retain their co-operative values (Ammirato, 1994; Lawrence et al., 2018; Malleson, 2014).

Much like in Plymouth, there were discussions in Preston regarding how political control of the local authority affected the proliferation of co-operatives. Despite this, according to Deborah Shannon, Director – Link Psychology Co-operative, support for co-operatives can transcend political ideologies:

"I was very much on the idea that it should be apolitical. And the reason for that is co-ops have always been apolitical; they've always been in this sort of middle ground [...] And I do think that that's important if you're trying to increase across the board, if you're not allying yourself to one party, because political parties come and go in terms of favour. So, to make it truly sustainable, then being apolitical is a good idea."

Deborah went on to discuss how to engage with different political ideologies:

"If I'm talking to someone who's a Tory, I'll be talking about the way the business is working and how much surplus we make and what we do with that surplus etc.

You can almost change the way you're selling the idea of a co-op depending on who you're talking to."

Such insight is consistent with the work of Kingdon (2014) who argues that for policymakers to believe in the legitimacy of a policy they must first be convinced that it is ideologically correct.

Matthew Todd contends that improving the procurement processes of anchor organisations to make them more accessible is also an apolitical move to encourage social economy models:

"I think that is sort of in many ways apolitical because there's arguments it can be applied across the spectrum as to why this is a good thing. So, in some areas where we go where there's sort of a political fluctuation, a lot of the procurement work focuses on allowing a wider group of organisations to get involved with local government procurement where before they might have been excluded, particularly around small businesses; because councils often have very clunky procurement portals and they have very detailed requirements, and this sort of thing. So, when you talk in those terms you can very quickly see that that is sort of a more Conservative point of view."

PrCC was said to be running workshops for local businesses on how to bid for tenders which, it was felt, traditionally favours corporations due to their greater capacity. The local authority was also said to be smoothing the procurement portal as to make it easier for smaller businesses to bid. Certainly, Cottam (2018) argues that the time, skills and data required to bid for public services is incredibly inefficient and therefore disproportionately favours corporations with greater resources.

Meanwhile, when asked how the lack of a culture of co-operatives in Preston may affect proliferation, Julian Manley commented:

"Other things don't necessarily matter if somebody comes along with a good idea, regardless of the culture, it can work […] From a human point of view, people like to participate. People like to be empowered […] People like the idea of improving their local area. It doesn't matter where you are, if you live in a place, you like those things."

Certainly, Julian's words resonate with the literature. Scholars recognize that co-operative ownership, participation and the chance to express their creativity are traits that humans

desire but are less afforded in capital owned enterprises with hierarchical structures in which managers are seen as the 'experts' (Bradley & Gelb, 1981; Chomsky, 2013; Freeman & Rogers, 2006; Malleson, 2014; Mason, 2015; Wistreich, 2014).

When asked why co-operatives were the primary business model to be supported as part of the Preston Model as opposed to, for instance, social enterprises, Julian commented:

> "It fits in with this whole idea of democratic participation and ownership. I've got nothing against social enterprises but, as far as the Model is concerned, we're talking about businesses that make money. So, a social enterprise won't necessarily be interested in profit-making, whereas worker owned co-operatives are businesses that are interested in making money. The question is, what do you do with the money once you've made it? That's the question, and that's why it's ethical to work in a co-operative fashion."

The distinction alluded to here by Julian and identified by scholars is that, while social enterprises fulfil a social purpose, co-operatives alone provide the chance for meaningful democratic participation and ownership over wealth creation by respective workers, thus highlighting that the economic element is intrinsic to democracy, despite this predominantly being in the private domain (Akbulut & Adaman, 2020; Booth, 1995; Doherty et al., 2020; Graeber, 2012; Hahnel & Wright, 2016; Malleson, 2014).

According to Martyn Rawlinson, co-operative philosophies of partnership building and providing opportunity transcend business models and are part of a wider agenda to provide social wellbeing within Preston:

> "[…] we do know that co-operative culture is more than about just making co-op businesses; it's a whole ethos; it's a lifestyle and you don't just go to work and that's it. You need to transfer that ethos across your whole life, across your social life and everything, for it really to work and benefit your wellbeing."

Indeed, as highlighted by scholars (Greenberg, 1981; Pateman, 1970), the practice of democracy resulting from co-operative principles may resonate more generally, leading to more meaningful participation in people's daily lives. The literature shows the sustainability related benefits, such as on lifestyles and social learning, that may be realised through co-operative principles of community and participation (DEFRA, 2011; Jackson, 2005; Middlemiss, 2011; Purtik et al., 2016; Vergragt et al., 2014). Being a member of a worker co-

operative has also shown to have individual benefits such as on satisfaction, health and well-being, in addition to on wider social benefits such as trust, social capital and social cohesion (Erdal, 2000; McQuaid et al., 2012; Pérotin, 2006; Sabatini et al., 2014). With a project such as Procure (URBACT, 2018), in which Preston are extolling the virtues of the Preston Model to other locales, the co-operative mentality also extends to an intercity scale.

The economic downturn in the post-2008 financial crash was also thought to be a factor in the choice of co-operatives for the strategy, discussed here by Deborah Shannon:

> "When there is a downturn in the economy, co-ops seem to perform quite well, and I think that's happened historically over a long time. If you think of the first co-ops that were set up, they were in a time of relative poverty for the people in the cotton industry. It wasn't paying very well [...] they were starting to experience actual poverty and they wanted to do things that were going to be sustainable for the people."

Certainly, the literature attests to co-operatives' superior economic resilience in lasting on average at least as long as corporations (WCMC, 2014), which may be partially explained by their lowering wages across the business as opposed to making redundancies (Bailly et al., 2017). Moreover, a greater proclivity for co-operatives to hire from the local labour market relative to corporations, a trait that is also identified by Clemente et al. (2012), was said by interviewees to be a further reason for their choice of model in Preston.

6.6.2. Sustainability Elements and Central Constraints

Although Preston was said to be a transport hub with particularly good rail and road links, in addition to the trains being, "expensive and unreliable" (Martyn Rawlinson) transport within the city was said to particularly poor, here expanded upon by Derek Whyte:

> "The bus system is crippled by the financial squeeze that people have got. We have got a lightweight viable tram model which would be much cheaper than a tram construction, but we can't get over the hump of getting the start-up funding for that. There are significant things we could do there. We've got a network of disused railway lines that could be adapted."

Regarding poor bus service, PrCC was said to have supported an employee buy-out of the local bus company: Preston Bus. However, according to Gareth Nash, "the competition commission didn't think that the employees and the management were... they weren't good

enough, so they sold it to somebody else." Cycling infrastructure in the city was said to be poor and there were thought to be high car ownership rates. Certainly, such claims around relatively poor transport in the city are substantiated by the data and as of the 2011 Census Preston was ranked 35th, 40th, 48th and 12th for commuting via cycle, foot, bus, train or metro and private vehicle respectively out of the UK's 63 largest cities and towns (Centre for Cities, 2022e). Preston exceeded the Daily Air Quality Index scale above 4 for 28 days in 2018 (Enenkel et al., 2020).

Discussions around reduced budgets from austerity were part of a narrative among interviewees in Preston regarding the limited powers that it was felt cities have to control aspects relating to sustainability in their locale, as expressed here by Derek Whyte:

> "I think that we're as sustainable as most UK cities. But I think that some of the things which are identified as ways of making the operation of the city, the lives of the citizens, city economic growth, more sustainable are very often things which are not readily available within the context of legal and financial powers available to cities."

Similar sentiments were echoed by Martyn Rawlinson specifically around renewable energy:

> "Almost all of the policy's entirely against you trying to do green energy and radical infrastructure […] in fact, there's one policy for the LEP's green energy initiatives, they're promoting fracking, so it's everything nationally is against us doing radical stuff […] Even if we had more resources and power to do it, national policy's against us."

Although there were said to have been discussions around creating a municipal energy company, interviewees felt this to be beyond the capacity of PrCC. There were discussions around wind energy generation on the River Ribble. However, there were said to be technical problems around a nearby Royal Air Force base and concerns from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds for the local bird population, making it unfeasible. Installed capacity is 16.4 MW of renewable energy generation and an estimated 59,712 households in the Preston City Council area (BEIS, 2020c). The recycle rate is 34.1 per cent for PrCC, with the city ranking jointly with Plymouth at 270th out of 341 local authorities in the UK (DEFRA, 2022). Overall, although there were environmental considerations among the interviewees of Preston, and many of these were said to form part of the Preston Model strategy, these were generally

with a mind of providing economic welfare as opposed to greater environmental outcomes per se. Indeed, given the need to provide economic welfare within the city, this was accepted as being the current priority of Preston.

6.7. Discussion

Therefore, there are several overarching themes emerging from the conversations with interviewees around local authorities and public goods that, to varying degrees, are consistent across the case studies. Local authorities were the public institution that was overwhelmingly discussed by interviewees as having the most significant impact in a locale. This is despite governance, particularly with LEPs and combined authorities, in addition to a range of Central Government actors such as the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Education, impacting decisions locally and regionally. To an extent this insight contradicts the work of Copus (2014) who argues for a changing role of councillors due to the privatisation of services towards one in which governance more concerns service provision. From the findings it appears that, despite centrally imposed changes to local authorities, their unique position in a locale ensures their continued relevance. Certainly, there was frequently observed to be intentions and interventions into wider society from local authorities in favour of wider societal outcomes.

Local authorities were thought by interviewees to be, to an extent, responsive to local cultures. This is an important point as, highlighted by Carter (2007), through allowing a wider range of voices, democracy is integral to sustainability by not only enforcing the common interest, but also in making better decisions around a complex matter such as the environment. Political parties at the local level are those from the national level. Given that the political make-up of a local authority reflected local cultures, these varied considerably in each case study. As there was significant, but also consistent, variety between each party, political control was found to be an important element in the policies of a respective local authority.

6.7.1. Political Fluctuation

For those case studies in which there is a political fluctuation there are varied outcomes to this. In York and Bath, their political fluctuations are barriers to their local authority's ability to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies. For the local authorities of both Plymouth and Edinburgh, their fluctuating political climates are not such a barrier. In

Plymouth, although a strong leader in a two-party system was said to aid in overcoming the problems associated with a political fluctuation, it may also be that the more urgent need to provide economic welfare in the city forces the different political parties to work together. Whereas in Edinburgh there is proportional representation and various economic and cultural foci. Therefore, it may be that in York and Bath the economic and cultural conservatism that stems from an emphasis on the built heritage is also partially responsible for what was attributed by respective interviewees to their political fluctuations.

6.7.2. Central Constraints

Across the majority of the case studies their respective relationship toward Central Government was significant. Plymouth and Preston, as the two most deprived cities, appeared most negatively affected by austerity, with their respective local authorities actively looking for new ways in which to provide economic welfare. In Bath, Edinburgh, and York, while there was a level of negative impact, due to an economic resilience that was (in)directly related to their built heritage (existing wealth in addition to resilient economies through tourism and more professional occupations), the negative effects of austerity were rarely discussed by respective interviewees. While similarly 'wealthy' Bristol was a city in which austerity was thought to be placing particular constraints, this was different. Here austerity was constraining the extent to which the city was able to engage with the environment as opposed to problems relating to the economic welfare of their citizens. Furthermore, in such discussions austerity was viewed as being merely one more way in which Central Government disrupted Bristol's pursuit of the environment.

The findings that more deprived cities have been more negatively impacted by austerity is logical. While there has been an overall decline in the budgets of local authorities by 18 per cent, a notable consideration is also the different way in which this funding is comprised, with reductions in Central Government grants and a greater retention of local business rates and council (Institute for Government, 2020). With the former being redistributive and the latter two being distributive, austerity was found to be having a disproportionately negative impact on the more deprived case studies. These findings are consistent with the literature (Bailey, 2017; Innes & Tetlow, 2015; Lowndes & Gardner, 2016).

In both Bristol and Preston, interviewees described how key aspects that affected their cities were taken away from their local authorities, who it was implied had the interests of people at their heart, and in the hands of centrally orchestrated organisations such as LEPs, who they thought did not. Indeed, although the LEPs are partly determined through a 'bottom-up' process that includes local authorities, they also comprise business interests and are funded based upon the encouragement of economic growth, which primarily benefits existing wealth and causes environmental destruction (Chambers, 2010; Deas et al., 2013; Jackson, 2009a; Malleson, 2014). Therefore, the LEPs allow for significant private interests to be represented over public spending.

Indeed, economic development budgets at a local and regional level not only reside within local authorities, with these also being with other public institutions such as LEPs and combined authorities. Another example of this was found in York in which UoY were delivering public research funding because CYC had insufficient budgets to facilitate this. Austerity was also shaping CYC's relationship with economic development that has been retained by the local authority, with the greater economic impetus being placed upon the commercial activities of the city due to the establishment of the Private Limited Company wholly owned by the local authority: Make It York.

While budgets around economic development were discussed in relation to public institutions more widely, the public goods within a locale were the domain of local authorities. Public goods that interviewees mentioned their local authorities provided were around housing, transport, energy, waste/recycling, building insulation, social and adult care. Notably, due to the public good nature, many aspects related to the environment also reside within these. Indeed, having declared a climate emergency, renewable energy, transport, building insulation and waste (reducing levels of waste, in addition to increasing re-use, recycling and composting) were identified as key areas of CYC's (2020) strategy to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Unlike those identified by interviewees, however, this strategy also recognizes the contribution that reforestation, which aims to draw down carbon out of the atmosphere by planting trees, and educating residents on such matters may make in reducing carbon emissions (ibid.). The latter may involve informational strategies to raise awareness of pro-environmental behaviours respectively (Steg & Vlek, 2009). Or, it may involve structural strategies to encourage pro-environmental behaviours (Bachman & Katzev, 1982;

Steg & Vlek, 2009). In so doing, this allows local authorities to achieve more positive environmental impacts from the consumer decisions of their residents.

The overall narrative from conversations with interviewees is that local authorities were limited in the extent to which they could provide public goods and were never able to provide these to satisfactory levels or make any fundamental changes. Indeed, unlike federal states such as Germany in which there is a written constitution that maintains equal power between local authorities and central government, the UK is a unitary state in which central government has absolute power (Bognetti & Schugart, 2020; Elazar, 1997; Institute for Government, 2019; Norton, 1994). The findings are consistent with the observations of commentators (Barber, 2017; Eckersley et al., 2014; Wollmann, 2006) that, given national governments have been co-opted by the interests of capital to open space for private interests, cities in unitary states in particular are less able to act commensurably with their responsibilities and needs.

Perhaps the disparity between what local authorities would like to achieve and what they have the resources to achieve is best demonstrated by the 'vision', *York: New City Beautiful* (Yorkshire Forward, 2010). This document contains numerous ideas, such as to make cycling all pervasive or for the development of a sizeable low-carbon sector, to which Guy Hanson, Design & Sustainability Manager, CYC, is referring here:

> "For me, you write a document like this, it's probably got several billion pounds worth of ideas. Who's going to implement that?"

Indeed, over a decade later interviewees felt that the overwhelming majority of ideas in the document had not been realized.

Overall, the findings are consistent with the literature that local authorities are limited in their ability to enact genuine sustainability due to this requiring shifts in markets, practices, policy and culture, while overcoming constraints around infrastructure lock-in (Frantzeskaki & Loorbach, 2010; Geels, 2010; Thacker et al., 2019). The consequences appear to be that, as per Brand (2007) and Hodson & Marvin (2017), urban governance revolves more around non-fundamental issues such as cycling, energy saving and healthy lifestyles. The extent to which local authorities engaged with each public good depended upon their respective need to provide economic welfare in addition to the way in which the culture of their citizens influenced them. Should there be a more urgent need to resolve problems around

deprivation, fostering economic welfare was more greatly prioritised. Should there be more significant portions of the population with economic wellbeing, as the financial security that citizens require to meet their basic needs, public goods relating to quality of life and the environment were more greatly prioritised.

In numerous case studies, local authorities were observed to go beyond providing public goods and the 'functional' relationship in their locales described by both Copus (2014) and Headlam & Hepburn (2015). In Plymouth and Preston this took the form of active strategies to fundamentally restructure the local economy. In Edinburgh, the local authority was using devolved powers to fundamentally reduce the inequality within their local economy. In York and Bristol with OPY and BGCP respectively, the local authorities were utilising their unique position to provide an umbrella organisation that galvanises (environmental)sustainability among business and the third sector. Such organisations may represent the decreased ability of local authorities, at least in part due to austerity, and the requirement of increased support from other actors to implement sustainability policies observed by various scholars (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2013; Bulkeley & Kern, 2006; Eckersley's, 2017; Park et al., 2012). Indeed, with research highlighting the link between the engagement of community and non-profit organisations and the sustainability policies of local authorities (Pitt, 2010; Portney, 2005; Portney & Berry, 2016; Portney & Cuttler, 2010), it is appropriate that umbrella organisation for business and the third sector has been created in York and Bristol. Meanwhile, social economy models have been shown to benefit greatly from networks and institutional support, such as through supply chains, access to finance and increased visibility (Ammirato, 1994; Doherty et al., 2020; Ecos, 2019; Lawrence et al., 2018; Malleson, 2014; Wahlund, 2019).

6.7.3. Transport
Regarding transport, aspects such as size, topography, and the built environment influenced the extent to which more sustainable forms; walking, cycling and public transport, were successful in the case studies. There was ambiguity around the relationship between built heritage and transport. The nature of the built heritage in York and Bath exacerbated problems with car-use and public transport. Whereas in Edinburgh cars were impeded to the extent that more sustainable forms of transport were adopted. This disparity is also accounted for by a range of other factors such as culture and politics.

All the case studies, to an extent, struggled to encourage more sustainable forms of transport and discourage car-use, and had the resulting air quality problems. In addition to different forms of transport, the greater size of a city may be positively linked to poor air quality, with the contrast between Bristol and Preston, despite more sustainable forms of transport being far more prevalent in conjunction with relatively poor air quality in the former, being a particularly noticeable example of this.

Transport was frequently politically contentious, reflected in the reduced ability of a local authority to implement more sustainable transport systems when there was a political fluctuation. These findings indicate that overt car-use persists to varying degrees in the culture. It may be that citizens fear losing the right to live and move as they have become accustomed, as observed by Montgomery (2013). Overt car-use may also be based upon the convenience and individual freedom in addition to an ideological association with economic growth, as observed by Carter (2007). Regardless of cause, despite car-use being recognized by interviewees as being a form of transport from which there emanated many negative aspects and local authorities had the consequential aims to reduce it, car-use was still found to be prevalent in the case studies.

Interviewees identified the negative aspects around car-use of air quality problems and congestion. However, through the danger and noise they create, cars also have large consequences for the places through which they travel; for instance, with a detrimental impact upon social activity on an affected street (Appleyard & Lintell, 1972; Freeman, 2001; Hart & Parkhurst, 2011).

Despite the negative externalities of car-use, due to being based upon convenience, people will drive just enough to congest the road (Montgomery, 2013). Consequent to the public good nature, to manage individual behaviours, as argued by Scanu et al. (2020), transport requires the intervention of public institutions. There are methods available to policymakers to curb car-use. Much like the gradual reduction in access to cars in York's city centre described by respective interviewees, congestion charges in Stockholm were originally resisted by the public (Eliasson, 2014). However, after an initial forced period public support increased – congestion and air pollution dropped while public transport improved – at which point a referendum was undertaken and the charges were made permanent (ibid.). In addition to congestion charges, cities may also reduce parking spaces and have one-off car

free days to show the benefits to residents of there being reduced car-use (Awareness Days, 2022; Badiozamani, 2003; Montgomery, 2013).

One common method to reduce the negative effects of cars is to slow them down (Department for Transport, 2013; Jones & Brunt, 2017). Indeed, as said by Montgomery (2013, p.174), "public life begins when we slow down." and this can be achieved by infusing a road with uncertainty for car-users such as by planting trees and street cafés. The effectiveness of this method is corroborated by the research of Hans Monderman, a traffic engineer in the Netherlands, who removed road markings and signs (PPS, 2008). In doing so, this forced people to think and communicate more with one another – the lack of feeling of safety led people to take actions that made them more safe, as opposed to cars having a priority (ibid.).

In making sustainable shifts it is not only that car-use must be discouraged, but more sustainable forms of transport must be supported. Such transport should separate pedestrians from cyclists (Barber, 2017; Thoem, 2022), while both must be connected conveniently to bus and rail links to create a sustainable transport network (Montgomery, 2013). The Edinburgh case study demonstrates how municipal ownership may improve the quality of public transport. Indeed, the literature shows the benefits of franchising – which may be considered to be a shallow form of public ownership – on routes, ticket prices, frequency and quality standards, and consequently, level of use (Department for Transport, 2016; Pidd, 2019a). Notably, the *Bus Services Act (2017)* for regions in England outside of London would, if included in individual devolution deals, give devolved regions the power to franchise bus services.

6.7.4. Housing

There were several overriding themes around housing across the case studies. First, consistent with the literature (Homes England, 2018; National Housing Federation, 2019; Shelter, 2019), there was a dearth of housing, in particular 'affordable' housing. Second, political fluctuations made it difficult for local authorities to enact longer-term, greater good policies around housebuilding. Third, and related to the second point, specifically observed in York that may apply elsewhere was how the problems associated with housebuilding that came with political fluctuations were exacerbated by politico-spatial relationships should they relate to areas of potential housebuilding. Fourth, in numerous case studies there was a

narrative around the attraction of people to a locale, particularly those from wealthier areas – London was mentioned in numerous case studies, and notably these were in various parts of the country in relation to this point – that would then displace locals.

With issues such as land ownership on their outskirts or legislative boundaries, many case studies were unable to control their own housebuilding. This was exacerbated by an inability to build significant numbers of 'affordable' homes or intervene in the market in favour of societal outcomes against second-homeownership and rent-seeking from existing housing stock, with particular consequences for the disruption to communities, as has been highlighted by various scholars (Gurran & Phibbs, 2017; Lee, 2016; Rae, 2019). Without such intervention, public goods may be appropriated by those with greater capital, especially in the rental market (Harvey, 2011; Montgomery, 2013). Local authority housebuilding was not discussed as being significant in the majority of case studies. The recent removal of the restrictions on English local authorities borrowing against housing rentals to finance housebuilding may stimulate a greater amount of housebuilding, some of which may be 'affordable' (Hutchings, 2018; Morphet, 2016). Overall, due to many of the factors around housing, it was frequently found that the residents of a city did not map on to the local economy.

The inability to intervene in favour of the public good also demonstrates a city's lack of capacity to plan for sustainability. The literature shows that cities should aim to utilise brownfield sites and be compact due to the benefits that this may bring around energy consumption, transport and the cost of public services (Eames et al., 2017; Gordon & Richardson, 1997; Hammer et al., 2011; Hassan & Lee, 2015; Montgomery, 2013). Green spaces, of varying sizes, should be included in such developments due to the benefits that this may bring to mental and physical health in addition to social wellbeing (Coley et al., 1997; de Vries et al., 2003; Joye & van den Berg, 2013; Kaplan, 1995; Maas et al., 2009; Montgomery, 2013; Nasar & Fishert, 1993; Weinstein et al., 2009). In planning, neighbourhoods should aim to be mixed-use communities in which people play, live and work within the same locale, reducing superfluous car-use, encouraging walking and cycling, and increasing social ties (Montgomery, 2013; Sager, 2015). The case studies demonstrate, however, that such planning for sustainability is not possible within UK cities.

6.7.5. Renewable Energy

The different ways in which renewable energy was engaged with in the case-studies depended upon their priorities. In Plymouth and Preston, though the related projects were not implemented in the latter, renewable energy was discussed in terms of providing economic welfare. Indeed, with an energy crisis that is seeing soaring energy prices and with 40 per cent of the British public 'worried' about paying energy bills (Ambrose, 2022; BEIS, 2021a, p.1), fuel-poverty is a large problem in the UK which, in more deprived cities such as these, may be especially so. In the other, more wealthy cities, if renewable energy was discussed at all it was in the context of carbon reduction. Notably, even in Bristol as a city that is strongly associated with renewable energy, its generation still constitutes a small percentage of energy usage. However, at 77 per cent for onshore wind and 86 per cent for solar, support nationally is significantly higher than for other forms of energy, such as nuclear and shale gas at 32 and eight per cent respectively (BEIS, 2020a, pp.4-5). Therefore, although urban areas consist of relatively small amounts of land and some residents may dislike the close proximity, renewable energy generation within cities may have far greater potential. To make a meaningful contribution to the energy supply, this may require Central Government subsidies, which are currently being reduced (Ofgem, 2021). Though not discussed by interviewees, waste and home insulation as two other significant areas around the environment similarly suffer from inadequate Central Government policy (Bees & Williams, 2017; DECC, 2014; Gustafsson, 2018; Harvey, 2017; Oldfield, 2015; Rosenow et al., 2018).

6.8. Conclusions

The findings in this chapter show that through the public goods they provide, local authorities are vital to urban sustainability transitions. Despite financial and legislative constraints, local authorities are overwhelmingly the most relevant public institution within a city. However, other public institutions were also described as dictating budgets relating to economic development at the local scale. The public goods that local authorities deliver vary between those that provide economic welfare and those that focus on quality of life and the environment. Priorities within these depend upon levels of economic welfare within a city. Should there be significant issues with deprivation, providing economic welfare is more greatly prioritised. Should there be economic wellbeing, quality of life and the environment is prioritised. Furthermore, local authorities are responsive to the 'sustainability cultures' that

arise when there is economic wellbeing in providing public goods around quality of life and the environment. While this chapter has presented the findings around local authorities and public goods from the case studies, in the next chapter the findings around economic welfare are set forth.

7. Economic Welfare

While the previous chapter presented the findings that relate to local authorities and the ways in which they provide public goods, this chapter sets forth the findings around economic welfare. Emerging from conversations with interviewees, 'economic welfare' refers to the ways in which the wages and profits from the production of goods and services, as economic processes, meets the economic needs of a city's residents. This includes any intervention from government, such as through taxes and social welfare programmes. In this chapter, the findings for York are presented followed by Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston, as the secondary case-studies. After this, the findings across the case-studies will be discussed in which encompassing themes, such as the ways in which the case-studies are 'entrepreneurial' in their need to attract capital and the inequality resulting from more contemporary economies, will be explored. The final part of the chapter summarizes the relationship between economic welfare and urban sustainability transitions: notably, how economic welfare relates to sustainability through how it meets the economic needs of residents; economic welfare is defined by spatial-fixity and equality; and, to minimise the need to use resources in the attraction of the more mobile and unequal forms of economic welfare, cities may encourage more spatially-fixed and egalitarian forms.

7.1. York

According to interviewees, York's broader conservative culture was said to be reflected in the business element of the city's organisational culture, which was thought does not provide economic welfare in an effective way, discussed here by Richard Lane, York Community Energy:

> "The chamber of commerce is very growth oriented. A bit traditional kind of stuff. It's not that progressive. You very rarely hear an association of traders taking a socially positive, progressive position. There are some traders; I've met them; I'm a local businessman [as a director of a web development company]; I know there are some people in York who are very progressive, and some who are deeply believe we depend on the motorcar and need access: people for whom recycling is nonsense."

Such sentiments are evidenced by City of York Council's (CYC) *Economic Strategy*, developed in 2016, which is focused on job creation as opposed to any wider sustainability benefits that businesses may bring (CYC, 2016).

7.1.1. Evolving Economy

The loss of many of York's historically large employers in the confectionary and rail sectors in the recent past was frequently commented upon as having a negative effect on the city's economy. As was pointed out by interviewees, although a city such as York that is rich in built heritage may not frequently be associated with a heavy industrial past in the way in which cities such as Bradford or Barnsley may be, the city has gone through a process of economic transformation. Indeed, in 1971 there were 17,000 people employed in the confectionary and rail sectors, while by 2015 this number had dropped to 6,500 (Tempest, 2015, p.117). As a percentage of employment, at 4.1 per cent, manufacturing in York is less than half the national average of 8.8 per cent. According to interviewees, a major contributor to the low levels of manufacturing is high land prices in York reducing the financial viability of such low GVA per unit of area economic activity.

In the 1960s and prior to the economic transformation, York was thought by interviewees to primarily attract school trips and people from the Yorkshire region, with few overnight visitors, as described here by Councillor Peter Dew, Conservative, CYC:

> "People would go out to the cinema or the theatre or the pubs and that was pretty much it. There weren't a lot of restaurants then, certainly not open on a Sunday."

In *Planning for Tourism: Towards a Sustainable Future* CYC officer, Tempest (2015) writes extensively on this period and claims the built heritage was viewed more as an encumbrance to traffic as opposed to being appreciated as a source of tourism. Furthermore, Tempest (ibid.) observes that particularly from the 1980s, York began to place more emphasis on tourism and adapted the tourist experience with investment in museums, the art gallery, theatre and the racecourse. This demonstrates a gradual process through which, as observed by Nasser (2003), the commercial value of built heritage leads to it becoming more central to the local economy, in turn potentially receiving more attention and resources than other parts of a city.

York has since become increasingly marketed; for instance, with the establishment by CYC in 2008 of Visit York (Tempest, 2015) – the leisure tourism brand previously of CYC, now known

as Make It York. Interviewees commented that, unlike in the previous period, there is now a more vibrant evening economy of restaurants, cafés, bars and hotels. Accordingly, tourism has steadily grown to the present day and in 2018 there were 8.4 million visitors, with 289,000 of these being international, spending £765 million in the city (Visit York, 2018). Notably, employment in tourism is inversely correlated with that in manufacturing, with 2,200 jobs in the tourist related industries in 1971 increasing to 20,200 by 2015 (Tempest, 2015, p.117).

7.1.2. The Contemporary Economic Landscape

The built heritage shapes York from an economic perspective through the tourists and residents that it is said to attract. The latter grouping was also thought by interviewees to be attracted by the small nature of the city with easy access to the countryside, and large green spaces. Residents thought to be attracted to the city were professionals and wealthier retirees. Due to relatively high house prices acting as a barrier to entry, the consequential upward spiral resulting from this initial attraction therefore fundamentally resides within the built heritage. Acknowledging the role that built heritage plays in the way in which the city functions, Phil Bixby, York Environment Forum commented:

> "It's a gifted city. We've got this stuff without having to think about it or maintain
> it. All we've got to do is not f*ck it up."

Also observed within the conversations of interviewees, consequential to the wealth and professional expertise of the residents who are attracted to York, is inward investment into property and business.

According to interviewees, tourism was prioritised in the economic policies of the city due to both the previously established lack of innovative culture in York and the political fluctuation making it more difficult for CYC to provide long-term vision, with the local authority resorting to the 'easy' economic option as a result. Such policies were said to have detrimental consequences, as discussed here by Rachael Maskell MP, Labour and Co-operative Party, York Central:

> "There isn't a framework for trying to drive in business which require high-value
> jobs. I was reflecting to the Chief Executive of the council the other day and that
> Make It York has got that responsibility, together with tourism, and yet we're
> seeing tourism being more and more at the centre of the economic plan. And I
> think to the detriment of other sectors of the economy."

In addition to a disproportionate focus on tourism related economic activity, as alluded to by Rachel here, interviewees also discussed how they felt such jobs were low-value and a source of inequality within the city. Despite this, Visit York aims to utilise the tourist industry to deliver, "high-value" and, "quality jobs" and to, "double the size of tourism within York" (Visit York, n.d., p.2).

Much of the tourism related employment was said to be in the small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that were thought to benefit from the small units available due to the historic architecture in York's core. These were part of what was said to be a disproportionate prevalence of SMEs in the city, such as artisanal breweries and niche chocolate manufacturers, who were thought to add resilience to the local economy while reducing an overreliance on individual, large employers. Many of these SMEs were said to be 'lifestyle businesses' in which their ultimate goal was for the related people to sustain themselves in York as a nice place to live. Although such observations were intended as a criticism due to the resulting lack of economic growth and job creation, social economy models, such as co-operatives, social enterprises and publicly owned enterprises (POEs), are favoured in the literature specifically due to this lack of need to grow, with the reduced environmental impact, in addition to more sustainable employment (Booth, 1995; Johanisova et al., 2013; WCMC, 2014; Zovanyi, 2012). There are further environmental benefits to such models that may not be accounted for when only economic growth and job creation are considered. These are detailed extensively in Section 3.8. and include a greater inclination to pursue renewable energy (Hillman et al, 2018) and workers sharing in profits motivating greater efficiency in resource use (Booth, 1995; Bowles & Gintis, 1993).

There were said to be more than 450 SMEs in York in the creative industries (games designers, graphic designers, filmmakers, visual artists etc.) who provided the basis for York to become one of only seven cities globally to be designated a UNESCO City for Media Arts. The presence of these businesses is discussed here by Councillor Johnny Hayes, Independent, CYC:

> "It's got a high level of very skilled media people in the city already, almost accidentally come together [...] a media company would be the perfect people to use a city like this because you've got good schools, you've got a good environment, clearly you've got all the advantages of attracting these high professionals. I think York's very much at a turning point, I think it needs a focus

on how does it attract new industries? And I'm not sure it's got a vision of that at the moment."

In addition to those described by Johnny, further reasons why there were thought by interviewees to be a prevalence of the creative industries in York include the presence of Ultrafast Broadband, related infrastructure and courses at both of York's universities and York College, in addition to a collaborative culture more common to Northern areas of the UK as opposed to, for instance, London.

According to Heather Niven, Head of Science City York, the small nature of the businesses that constitute the creative industries result in their being overlooked by policymakers:

"It's something that's not particularly overt. At the moment [funding from the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) is focused on] agri-food for North Yorkshire, but it needs to be agri-food *and* creative digital […] I can tell you that we've got twice as many creative businesses on our books as we've got IT; digital three times to four times as many as biosciences (agri-food). But if you ask any LEP or local authority, they don't know that's the case."

The presence of these businesses was particularly welcomed by interviewees perhaps because, while already contributing £165 million annually to York's economy (Niven & Cooper, 2018, p.9), nationally the creative industries are growing at twice the average rate of the economy (DCMS, 2017a). Additionally, due to the intellectual nature of much of this employment, such jobs are at low risk of automation (DCMS, 2017b).

Consequent to such reasons, in a draft *Creative Industries Strategy for York 2018-2023* (Niven & Cooper, 2018, p.5) Heather co-authored a document in which it was commented:

"With the right effort and investment, York could easily become a vibrant 'Magnet City' attracting investors and start-ups alike to relocate and develop here and make a significant economic contribution to the city. This would also future-proof York by diversifying its economic portfolio, utilising a fast-growing sector that can produce a high level of GVA."

Indeed, at £23,109 per head, York's GVA is currently below the £27,108 national average (ONS, 2017). However, support for the creative industries by policymakers was also said to be limited due to the economic conservatism resulting from the lack of innovative culture in the city and the political fluctuation. Perhaps accordingly, in 2019 Heather's role, that sits within

Make It York to promote the biosciences and creative industries, was made redundant (York Mix, 2019).

Meanwhile, Paul McCabe, Strategic Manager – Sustainability and Transformation, CYC, discussed the potential benefits that social economy models may bring to York:

> "Encouraging a growth in social enterprise, mutuals or co-operatives could be a way of building in local economic resilience. Economies that rely on a small number of large employers can be vulnerable should something happen in the global economy that gives them the wobble or they make business decisions to relocate for cheaper emissions or labour markets; Terry's chocolate factory production went to eastern Europe and I think Nestle moved some of their production at one point too"

Paul's observations are consistent with the literature around co-operatives – though with logic that may be applied to other social economy models – that, unlike corporations, they are more rooted within a locale and their presence is not tentative based upon investment decisions, and they are therefore a more sustainable form of economic welfare (Klein, 2008; Malleson, 2014). Although there was said to be a strong charity and voluntary sector in York, social enterprises and co-operatives were rarely mentioned by interviewees in the city.

Issues associated with a lack of office-space constricting business growth were raised by interviewees, as discussed here by Paul McCabe:

> "One of our aims as a city is to attract higher value jobs, that's not easy. In our *Economic Strategy*, for example, it is recognized that we need more high-grade office-space to attract companies into York and to invest here."

Interviewees also felt that York was losing office-space to the conversion to residential and tourist property due to the high cost of housing and how lucrative the tourist industry is in the city, and Paul went on to say:

> "It's something we lack in the city centre, which is why when we lose office-space like the Aviva building, which is going to be a Malmaison hotel, the council expressed concerns as that was a building that could have been for a company that could bring higher-paid jobs."

The loss of office-space was thought to be aided by the Coalition Government removing the requirements to seek planning permission for the conversion between business and residential property (DCLG, 2011b).

The lack of office-space, in conjunction with the high house prices was felt could make it very difficult for businesses to recruit in York. High office prices were said to be exacerbated by an inability to build new office-space in the centre due to limited space within York's historic core, where it was felt that most employers would like to locate themselves. The large brownfield site near the city centre; York Central, was cited as a possible solution to this. With working from home becoming more prevalent with the Covid-19 pandemic (Bero, 2021), however, businesses may now require less office-space and this may no longer be an issue for the city.

York was said by interviewees to be transitioning towards a more high-tech and knowledge-based economy. This was thought to be mainly due to the increased size of University of York (UoY) in the last two decades, particularly in its specialist areas of biology and chemistry feeding into the bioeconomy of the city's rural hinterland. York was thought to benefit from being able to attract a good quality of professional due to offering a good quality of life, as discussed here by Dr Simon Parker, Lecturer, UoY, in relation to Leeds, 25 miles to the West of the city:

> "York's aspiration was to be the knowledge economy satellite of Leeds […] because we've got a big University here. Obviously, Leeds has got two very big universities, but actually York thought it would be a more attractive place to work."

Additionally, the Food and Environment Research Agency – a joint public/private partnership – being based on the outskirts of York was thought by interviewees to help in this transition.

7.2. Bath

In Bath, while the local economy was thought to be based primarily upon tourism, the city was said to be prosperous due to there being significant wealth among residents. It was felt that tourism in Bath was mainly 'fleeting coach visitors' who did not contribute in more economically substantial ways, such as through the use of restaurants and hotels. A 'tourist tax' was suggested as a means of levying tourists. Small, independent shops mostly related to tourism were thought to be well established in the city, though these were said to be

increasingly negatively affected by rising rents caused by property in Bath being lucrative. Recognizing the low-value of the jobs associated with tourism, Bath and North-East Somerset Council were said to be pushing the economy towards other areas such as the creative industries. Much like the independent shops, however, the creative industries, in addition to other professional jobs, were said to be negatively affected by the lack of office-space due to property in the city generally having greater value as housing. The negative impact upon professional jobs was also thought to be exacerbated by the heritage nature of much of the built environment and problems around transport. Despite these, two office developments were said to be under construction in the city.

7.2.1. Resident Attraction

Much like in York, through the tourists and residents who are attracted as a result, the built heritage permeates through the way in which Bath functions as an economic entity. There are, however, discrepancies between Bath and York in this regard. Although both attract significant numbers of tourists, those attracted to, and able to afford to live in York, are professionals and wealthy retirees. In Bath, incoming residents have significant wealth and being second-home owners, financiers from London and wealthy retirees, are less likely to be employed in the city. Indeed, many professionals were said to be unable to afford to live in Bath.

7.3. Bristol

Interviewees in Bristol, meanwhile, discussed the strength of their city's economy, exemplified by the claim that they were the most prosperous of the UK's Core Cities. This success was said to be built upon the knowledge, creative and high-tech industries. Much of the latter were thought to be outside of Bristol, but still within the Bristol Urban Area in South Gloucestershire. Graduate retention was said to be high in the city, contributing further economically. Despite Bristol's environmental reputation, there was not thought to be a particularly large low-carbon sector.

The transition towards the contemporary economy was said to have been more successful in Bristol due to the traditional economy having not been built upon the heavy manufacturing that was frequently found in other cities, here discussed by Professor Rich Pancost, Director of the Cabot Institute, University of Bristol:

"Perhaps in Bristol, because there was less manufacturing, although that was a big part of it, but it was also based on trade and a few of these other more soft industries, we were able to pivot to a more high-tech and a creative economy. As a consequence, we've done better economically than other cities. But that new economy is not egalitarian: you can't access that economy if you've not been to university."

Indeed, interviewees believed the economy, being particularly contemporary, was unequal roughly along the lines of those who have, and those who have not, received higher education.

7.3.1. Lack of Outward Identity

Despite the economic strength, interviewees in Bristol felt that the city lacks an outward identity through which to sell itself on a global stage such as a world-renowned football team or unlike the Northern or Midland Core Cities who identify themselves thusly. Due to this, Bristol was said to actively propagate the image of an environmental exemplar. Indeed, one of the primary motivations behind trying to achieve the European Green Capital Award was said to be to attract inward investment – as was also stated by Bristol City Council (BCC; Bundred, 2016) – and to benchmark itself against other cities, for pride, and to encourage tourism.

7.3.2. Strong Third Sector

In Bristol, the organisational culture was particularly striking for the number of third sector organisations that, according to Ian Townsend, when Chief Executive of Bristol Green Capital Partnership (BGCP), as of August 2017 constitutes almost two-fifths of BGCP's 836 members that have signed up to the city's environmental sustainability agenda. According to interviewees, these organisations have their roots in the city's environmental sustainability culture and a uniqueness of Bristol was the cultural ability to create and support these organisations. Furthermore, they were thought to create a feedback effect in that they would then attract more environmentally minded people who would in turn contribute to this (organisational)culture further still. However, as identified by Boyle (1985, p.9) over three decades ago, engagement with the environment in Bristol may also reside in the strength of the city's economy:

> "The fact that the Bristol climate seems particularly favourable to 'green' experimentation it is probably due in no small measure to the affluence produced by the less-than-green sectors of the city's economy."

Certainly, interviewees thought that in the present day the environmental sustainability culture and resulting third sector is only a priority because Bristol is already economically successful.

The organisational culture was said by Ian Townsend to have been in its embryonic stages in the 1980s. According to Brownlee (2011) in *Bristol's Green Roots*, areas such as Colston Street provided space and cultural support for third sector organisations in the city. In the 1990s, brownfield sites and buildings from Bristol's previous industries provided space for such organisations to expand into, for instance with the Create Centre (ibid.). Interviewees felt that BCC were active in providing support for third sector organisations by making such buildings available for their use. BCC was also commended by interviewees for the establishment and continued support for BGCP, the consequences of which are discussed here by Mark Leach, Project Manager, BCC:

> "I think the [Bristol Green Capital] Partnership galvanised a lot of what happened in Bristol. It's been going for over ten years now, and that period has been the time when perhaps the greatest change has happened."

These findings are consistent with the research of Palmer et al. (2020, p.12) that, in their embryonic stage, sustainability projects and activities need to be supported by an, "enabling infrastructure of training, facilitation and within an accessible, allowing and dignified space" to achieve 'transformative organisational effects' that enables them to contribute towards sustainability shifts. Many organisations that had their roots in Bristol notably later expanded nationally, such as Sustrans and the Soil Association, while maintaining their headquarters in the city (Brownlee, 2011).

When asked about the possible reasons for an organisational culture change in the 1980s towards thinking about their communities and the environment as opposed to being purely profit driven, Ian Townsend speculated:

> "The government of the time encouraged businesses to club together and think about investing in their communities. It was in the aftermath of the Brixton, Toxteth and Bristol riots – basically [they were] about exclusion and inequalities."

Furthermore, according to interviewees, organisations such as The West of England Initiative and Low-Carbon South-West in the city that were established by BCC were said to encourage and support more sustainability orientated models.

7.4. Edinburgh

In Edinburgh, respective interviewees commented upon their buoyant economy, which was said to be built on finance, education, tourism and being the seat of Scottish Government. There was also thought to be an emerging high-tech sector due to this being a key strength of the University of Edinburgh. Consequently, there was said to be a resilience to the local economy, as discussed here by Kyle Drummond, Senior Economic Development Officer, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), regarding the post-2008 recession:

> "During all the downturn periods, Edinburgh didn't particularly suffer. We took a hit, but it remained pretty static".

The city not having a strong traditional manufacturing industry was felt by interviewees to have made it easier to transition to a more contemporary economy unlike, as was the example used, in Glasgow, in which there were thought to be large socio-economic problems from deindustrialisation.

7.4.1. Strong Outward Identity

Unlike Bristol, interviewees in Edinburgh felt there were various means through which the city could identify itself, such as the built heritage and being home to world renowned festivals. Furthermore, Edinburgh was said to have particularly good international and national transport links and was thought to offer a good quality of life to residents. Conversations around what the city 'has' in this regard were invariably to do with how they attracted professionals, tourists, and inward investment, adding to economic processes. An example of this is in the words of Councillor Steve Burgess, Green Party, CEC, here:

> "There was just last week a couple of polls done by Arcadis, and Edinburgh actually came out top in terms of best places to live […] It's built on seven hills, it's got a lot of space, we've got big views, the architecture in the centre is very attractive. We've got a lot of parks and greenspace. You can get out of the city very quickly because it's a small city. We've got a coast, the sea. We've got a city beach down at Portobello. And then the culture, festivals. So, I think there's a lot

of people come here to study or to work on a short-term basis, and end up staying

because they like the place: it's just a pleasant place to live."

According to one Edinburgh interviewee, the attraction of these groupings is a very conscious decision within the city: "I think [Edinburgh's] been successful because it's marketed itself".

7.4.2. Social Economy Models

While Edinburgh was identified as a case study partly on the basis of the relatively significant presence of social economy models, these were not prevalent in the discussions of interviewees in the city. There was speculation that Edinburgh, and more widely Scotland, performed well in this regard. Concerning what was thought to be a strong co-operative culture in Scotland in the 1970s, Alan Nestor, Managing Director, Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative, speculated:

> "It was probably a particularly politically aware time and I would suspect that a number of the co-ops came from that time with quite a dynamic and useful view of society, of politics, of the workers' movement, of inclusion and all the rest of these things. Around the same time Robin Cook, John Smith (Labour politicians that would later lead the national party and hold ministerial office), all these people were working within the confines of the central belt of Scotland and congregating in Edinburgh. So, [there was] that awareness of the co-operative movement as being an option, particularly when it comes to worker ownership, worker empowerment."

Co-operatives were thought to have remained within the culture thereafter. Furthermore, social enterprises were said to be prevalent in Scotland – as of 2019 there were 6,025 social enterprises operating in Scotland, employing 88,318 full-time equivalent employees adding £2.3 GVA to the economy (Social Enterprise Census, 2019, p.3). There exists no comparative data with England to contextualise this data.

When interviewees discussed social economy models it was felt that they operated in areas that encouraged sustainability in the city, such as food waste and reuse. When in control of CEC, Labour was said to have encouraged co-operatives as part of UK party policy. The extent to which this had been successful was unknown. There was speculation that Edinburgh may have a prevalence of social economy models due to the affluent nature of the city and the high proportion of students. Despite this, several interviewees speculated that social

economy models in Edinburgh were no more prevalent than in other cities and did not make up a large portion of the economy.

7.5. Plymouth

Economically, Plymouth was said by respective interviewees to be struggling due to substantial reductions in the city's traditional employment in the naval industries, as is expanded upon here by Justin Bear, Project Manager, Plymouth Energy Community:

> "It's a city with an awful lot of debt, lower than average incomes, a lot of manufacturing. So, I guess it's quite an unusual city for the South of England. It would be far more similar economically to a lot more Northern cities, I would say."

Due to the loss of much of the traditional employment, the city was said to be reorientating itself economically, as is expanded upon here by Dr Paul Warwick, Centre for Sustainable Futures Lead and Lecturer, University of Plymouth:

> "The city has needed to reinvent really, and to think about where its economic viability, and also inclusive approaches to social issues actually exist. And so I think it has been things like, obviously the public sector, but crucially also SMEs and the voluntary sector that have been really driving this push towards a more sustainable approach to life in the city."

Although as part of this change of direction Plymouth were said to be identifying itself with the social enterprise model, there was disagreement among interviewees regarding the strength of this with some believing these to be prevalent and others thinking they are marginal.

Interviewees in Plymouth rarely discussed ways in which their city attracted inward investment. On one of the few occasions that this was discussed, Gareth Hart, Director, Iridescent Ideas Community Interest Company, reflected that:

> "Most businesses we talk to are very keen to help build a more inclusive, greener, fairer economy. [But] I think there is sometimes a tendency still to resort to that old fashioned inward investment approach where larger private corporations come in with big money. We've got a couple of big developments going on which, on one hand will help build a night-time economy and will be great in some respects, but the risk is that significant benefits will leak out of Plymouth. This is where the co-operative and social enterprise route offers a different model. We

want more money staying in Plymouth, owned by local people, benefiting local

people."

The local authority document, *The Plymouth Plan* (2018), frequently discusses means through which the city could encourage professionals, tourists, and businesses to locate there. These include raising the city's profile based on an identity around the sailing of the Mayflower Pilgrims, Sir Francis Drake and the Spanish Armada, in addition to presenting itself as 'The Ocean City' with the 'UK's first National Marine Park', Plymouth Sound, while also utilising its proximity to Dartmoor National Park and three Areas of Outstanding National Beauty.

7.6. Preston

In Preston, a broad overview of the economy was given by Derek Whyte, Assistant Chief Executive, Preston City Council, thusly:

"You don't have that high exposure to EU investment and single industry that the North-East does. We don't have that strong high-tech and EU workforce reliant characteristics that somewhere like Cambridge and Peterborough do. We've got a sort of middling economy in terms of there's a significant chunk of high-tech, there's business in personal service, but there's also some relatively modest metal bashing and warehousing. But all these businesses trade and, first-of-all, primarily roads all go to Preston, in Lancashire."

Therefore, Preston's economy is both resilient and provides economic welfare to different socio-economic groupings.

Due to Preston's central Lancashire location, and consequential strong transport links, there was thought by interviewees to be a high number of anchor organisations in the city, and many of these were said to be disproportionately large. Accordingly, there was thought to be a high degree of public sector employment in the city. Despite this, Preston was said by interviewees to be suffering from the same problems of many other post-industrial cities in trying to re-orientate to a more contemporary economy. Other than Cllr Daniel Duckworth, Conservative, Preston City Council, who felt that the local authority should be creating more "buzz" to promote the city and generally making more effort to attract business, there were no discussions from interviewees around attracting inward investment to Preston. Although attracting inward investment is not considered in Preston City Council policy relating to the

Preston Model (CLES and PrCC, 2019; PrCC, 2022b), consideration for this is set out in two broader strategies for the local authority (PrCC, 2022a; 2022c).

7.7. Discussion

There are several overriding themes around economic welfare within the case studies. All the case studies are transitioning to some extent towards contemporary economies based more upon the high-tech, creative, knowledge and service sectors, with reductions in traditional manufacturing industries. Notably, the case studies in which there had been a greater manufacturing base were struggling more with this transition. This is consistent with the insight of Glaeser (2011) who claims that, while post-industrial cities have suffered due to the reduction in their traditional economic base, cities that have been based on trade and transport have fared much better due to their continued relevance. Certainly, employment in manufacturing has declined from 21 to eight per cent between 1982 and 2018 (Rhodes, 2020). Glaeser (2011) observes that industrial activity tended to involve the less well educated. Consequently, in the contemporary economy in which 'ideas' are made as opposed to 'goods', this may be an additional barrier for affected cities (ibid.).

Among the case studies there is a consistency that those who are more easily transitioning have the traits that are the foundations for attracting both tourists and residents. In doing so, such cities have a tourist industry economic base in addition to a high degree of professional employment due to the human capital that resides there. Furthermore, such industries require less land, which is more suitable for these more economically successful cities in which land values are frequently higher.

7.7.1. The 'Entrepreneurialism' of the Case-Studies

Attracting capital or groupings that bring capital as part of economic processes is a theme within the conversations of interviewees across the case studies. Although all capital and social groupings are mobile to an extent, those that were identified on the basis of mobility were professionals, wealthy retirees and second-homeowners, tourists, and investment into both business and property. This is somewhat consistent with the literature which identifies how the need to provide economic welfare has seen cities become increasingly entrepreneurial in competing with each other for capital (Cox, 1993; Harvey, 1989; MacLeod, 2011; MacLeod et al., 2003; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Notably, such literature uses the blanket term 'capital' while the findings in this study highlight the inclusion of social

groupings as part of economic processes. These groupings are those that bring capital; be that in the form of money or, as with professionals, this may also be human capital. This capital is either existing economic welfare, or it adds to economic processes through which economic welfare is created. The findings around professionals are somewhat congruous with Florida's (2002) observation that cities look to attract such groupings. Though, unlike Florida (2002), who identifies that cities look to attract the 'educated 30-somethings' as part of this process, this was not specific around a particular demographic. The grouping in the findings is more what Goodhart (2017, p.4) refers as 'Anywheres' – footloose, often urban, socially liberal and university educated who account for 20 to 50 per cent of the population. Due to the inclusion of social-groupings, urban entrepreneurialism in this thesis has been carefully worded to make it clear that, as opposed to residents being the recipients, the city itself is the aim of economic welfare and, within this process, incoming residents are potentially included while outgoing residents are potentially excluded.

The reasons identified in the literature for enhanced intercity competition are: the increased mobility of capital, increased privatisation, reduced provisioning of social welfare programmes such as those around housing, in addition to social security to ensure that memebrs of society can meet their basic needs, and the decline of traditional manufacturing industries (Harvey, 1989). All of these changes have been created by the policies associated with neoliberal shifts in addition to technological advances (ibid.). Consequent to urban entrepreneurialism, as was identified within the case studies, the resources of a city are diverted towards attracting the mobile capital groupings, treating them as though a public good due to their role in economic processes despite the private gains (Defilippis, 2004; Harvey, 1989; 2006; Jonas et al., 2011). As observed within the majority of the case studies, such changes have also seen a shift towards image as a means of attracting these mobile capital groupings (Crilley, 1993; Miles, 2010).

The UK is a highly centralised country and the ability of cities to compete for the mobile capital groupings is not straightforward, both in terms of the relatively limited powers that are available locally, but also due to Central Government agencies that operate locally (Bassett, 1999; Harding, 1991; Kantor & Savitch, 2005; O'Brien & Pike, 2019). There are additional strong conservative central and local political and administrative cultures that negate the entrepreneurial mentality (O'Brien & Pike, 2019). However, with the inclusion of mayors in

devolution deals and LEPs competing for economic growth on a regional level in addition to reduced and less redistributive funding to local authorities (Institute for Government, 2020), this may heighten urban entrepreneurial sensibilities.

Scholars claim another trait of urban entrepreneurialism is business communities forming 'growth coalitions' to stimulate local economic development (Bulkeley & Betsill, 2013; Eckersley, 2017; Lowndes & Gardner, 2016; Peck, 1995). Despite this, in the case studies there was very little discussion from interviewees around business communities coming together in such ways. Economic development came from the public institutions themselves. It may be that due to the lack of interviews with employees from businesses an insight was not gained into such partnerships. The findings, however, are consistent with scholars such as Harding (1991) that in the UK such coalitions are more national, and Bassett (1999) who found, while there were elements, there was no such 'coalition' in Bristol. With the creation of the LEPs in 2011 in which local public and private actors coalesce to embark on strategies to create economic growth (BIS, 2010; Deas et al., 2013; Gonzalez & Oosterlynck, 2014) such partnerships may now exist, however, this may be more on a regional level.

7.7.2. Means Through Which to Attract Capital

Each case study varied in the extent to which they placed an emphasis on attracting the mobile capital groupings. Similar means of attraction yielded similar mobile capital groupings. These means are discussed in their respective groupings below.

York, Bath and Edinburgh, as the case studies that are rich in built heritage, attracted all of the mobile capital groupings identified. The implication within the conversations of interviewees that their respective built heritage was an effective means of attracting these mobile capital groupings is consistent with the work of Morgan & Pritchard (2004) that the unique nature of the majority of built heritage to a locale allows monopoly rents to be appropriated. Certainly, the rise of urban entrepreneurialism has seen shifts towards an increased focus on the cultural economy and tourism (Harvey, 1989; Hodson & Marvin, 2017). Also implicit was how the built heritage, at least in part, is viewed and promoted as an economic asset due to this attraction, findings which are congruous with the literature (Guzmán et al., 2017; Hewison, 1987). In these case studies, the magnitude of this attraction depends upon the extent of the built heritage in relation to the size of the city.

With Bristol being considered to be a UK environmental exemplar city, there are many parallels with Freiburg in South-West Germany: Freiburg identifies itself through the environment, specifically as a 'green city' supplemented by a good quality of life and being a nice place in which to visit (Mössner, 2016; Späth & Rohracher, 2010); Freiburg too has won environmental awards (City of Freiburg, 2011); Freiburg is also considered to be 'wealthy' (Kronsell, 2013; Mössner, 2016), with the implication being that there are various cultural, political, social and economic pre-requisites to a city identifying itself through the environment. Notable industries in Freiburg include higher education, tourism and high-tech manufacturing (City of Freiburg, 2011; 2016). For the latter two, Freiburg is more environment-centric than Bristol, attracting approximately 25,000 'green tourists' a year in addition to being home to significant high-tech manufacturing around 'green technologies' (ibid.). High-tech manufacturing is economically important to Freiburg, with the industry employing nearly 10,000 people throughout 1,500 businesses that generate €500 million per annum (Gregory, 2011).

As a federal state, urban entrepreneurialism may vary in Germany with there being more equal power between local authorities and central government (Bognetti & Schugart, 2020, Norton, 1994). Despite this, Freiburg exhibits many of the same entrepreneurial tendencies as was found in UK cities. Similar to Bristol, Freiburg identifies through the environment to attract tourists, the low-carbon sector and professionals to the city (Mössner, 2016; Späth & Rohracher, 2010). Cities identifying themselves through the environment to attract such groupings is consistent with the literature (Béal, 2012; Garcia-Lamarca et al., 2019; Hodson & Marvin, 2017).

Perhaps due to being the location of the high-tech manufacturing of green technologies, Swyngedouw (2009) found that debates around the environment in Freiburg only revolved around techno-fix solutions as opposed to addressing the fundamental drivers of environmental sustainability. While there is a narrative within Freiburg that there is a strong environmental culture that influences municipal policies (Hopwood, 2007; Späth & Rohracher, 2010), there is also a counternarrative that such claims are untrue and are used to gain legitimacy for environmental policies that are in fact more to do with economic growth (Kronsell, 2013; Mössner, 2015; 2016). Referred to as 'green boosterism', scholars have identified the use of the environment purely for economic ends in which, as was found in both

Bristol and Freiburg (Freytag et al., 2014; Kronsell, 2013; Medved, 2018; Mössner, 2015; 2016), social concerns are marginalised (Garcia-Lamarca et al., 2019; Jonas et al., 2011). The ultimate economic derivation in what may be perceived to be environmental policies was also observed in other case studies; for instance, with the implementation of a tram-line (as what is seen as being a more sustainable form of transport) in Edinburgh between the airport and city centre that was said to help with tourism and marketing the city as a conference destination.

Much like in Bristol, in Freiburg it is important to maintain an outward perception of an environmental exemplar, regardless of how thin the veneer is, in order to attract the mobile capital groupings (City of Freiburg, 2016; Gregory, 2011; Kronsell, 2013; Späth & Rohracher, 2010). Indeed, much like how Bristol has only achieved the most easily obtainable environmental goals, Freiburg is in no way environmentally sustainable in absolute terms. It only performs relatively well, and frequently marginally so compared to other cities. For instance, while recycling at 69 per cent is above average for Germany (City of Freiburg, 2016, p.19), carbon reduction targets of 25 per cent from 1990 levels by 2010 were said to be, "far from being met" (Späth & Rohracher, 2010, p.91) and, despite being branded the 'solar city', in 2011 solar energy production in Freiburg only accounted for 3.7 per cent of energy-use (Gregory, 2011). Indeed, commentators observe that Freiburg has been overtaken by other cities (Freytag et al., 2014; Kronsell, 2013; Mössner, 2015; 2016).

Therefore, while Bristol and Freiburg identify themselves through the environment, they are also constrained by this ultimately being economic in derivation. Consequently, while scholars such as Davidson & Gleeson (2014) identify sustainability as being incompatible with urban entrepreneurialism due to technocratic and market-based solutions, in addition to economic growth being environmentally and socially destructive, this insight around Bristol and Freiburg demonstrates a new, more fundamental level of incompatibility for cities in capitalist economies.

Meanwhile, in a city such as York that does not identify itself through the environment, as shown in the words of Professor Alistair Boxall, UoY, here regarding interactions with CYC officers, consideration for the environment is still largely dictated by the ways in which the city attracts the mobile capital groupings:

"I think they recognize the environment's important. But it's the obvious things, like flooding and air quality. And the less tangible positive things about the environment they can't relate to […] York has got other things it can sell: the culture and the heritage".

Indeed, the distinction between York and cities that identify themselves through the environment is that, in the latter consideration for the environment is more prevalent only due to being a larger part of this attraction.

Moving away from the case studies, this lack of fundamental consideration for the environment, or sustainability more widely due to an ultimately economic derivation is demonstrated by initiatives and projects that are taking place across UK cities. For instance, the Leeds Climate Commission is a partnership between Leeds City Council and University of Leeds with the key aim to demonstrate the financial benefits to organisations of investing in low-carbon technologies (Leeds Climate Commission, 2020). In Manchester, the Oxford Road Corridor is being used as a test bed for green technologies in which approximately £2.5 billion has been spent with the aim of developing an affordable and resilient low-carbon economy with spill-over effects into adjacent areas (Evans & Karvonen, 2013, pp.133-134). In 2013, Glasgow received funding to demonstrate how it may enact projects such as intelligent street lights and sensors on roads to adjust traffic lights according to traffic (Future City Glasgow, 2021). These initiatives and projects all share the common factor, as identified by various scholars (Ahvenniemi et al., 2017; Bibri, 2018; BIS, 2013; Davidson & Gleeson, 2014; Höjer & Wangel, 2015; Kunzmann, 2014; Taylor-Buck & While, 2017; Vanolo, 2014), that they look to address environmental problems with techno-fixes and marketable opportunities as opposed to engaging with structural causes.

Similarly, European cities that are considered to be environmental exemplars may not be so in any absolute way and only focus on individual elements of the environment. For example, Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia, has reduced its reliance on the car and focused on public transport, pedestrianisation and cycling in addition to enhancing green spaces across the city (European Green Capital, 2016). Nantes, in North-Western France, has a long-established integrated and sustainable transport policy focusing on cycling and public transport (CIVITAS, 2021). Copenhagen has reduced carbon emissions by 38 per cent between 2005 and 2016

through a range of sustainability initiatives such as a district heating system that supplies waste heat to buildings (City of Copenhagen, 2016, p.6).

In Plymouth and Preston, interviewees rarely discussed their cities actively attracting the mobile capital groupings. It may be that these cities have less means through which to form an attraction. There is also the response bias in their selection as case studies, however, that they are cities from which lessons may be learned around the social economy. Indeed, both Plymouth and Preston were looking to provide economic welfare through an encouragement of the social economy within their locales. Plymouth also looked to grow their population and achieve a critical mass of funding from Central Government. Although relatively deprived, a reorientation through encouraging the social economy is unconventional for such cities and it is unknown what the relationship between other more deprived cities and the mobile capital groupings may be.

A notable difference between identifying through built heritage and the environment as a means of attracting the mobile capital groupings is that the latter is an active pursuit while the former is an inactive, 'default' option. This disparity is reflected in the groupings that each attracts. Notably, unlike with built heritage, the reasons for which Bristol and Freiburg identify through the environment is not to attract wealthy retirees and second-homeowners. Indeed, while Bath functions as an economic entity due to attracting these groupings to live there, Bath and North-East Somerset Council still looks to support the conditions for a local economy. This may be policymakers recognizing that for the city to be a community the local economy must also function and that being reliant upon the wealth of residents may lack resilience and be unsustainable. However, the attraction of such groupings as part of identifying through built heritage may be accepted due to them bringing relatively few social problems with their wealth.

Meanwhile, the professionals that both identifying through built heritage and the environment were found to attract may differ. For instance, while interviewees in the built heritage cities in this regard only discussed professionals, interviewees in Bristol and, regarding Freiburg, Hopwood (2007) discusses the attraction of professionals who reinforce and add to their environmental cultures. Given that it may be a barrier to some groupings being able to live within a locale, house prices and, by extension, house building has a significant impact on the ways in which this effect shapes a city. For example, in York and

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Bath, according to respective interviewees, while wealthier retirees were more able to afford to live there, younger more vibrant people who bring human capital are less able to do so.

7.7.3. The Tensions Between Capital and Economic Wellbeing

The attraction of the mobile capital groupings was surrounded by narratives of inequality in the conversations of interviewees. This is understandable given that these groupings are professionals, wealthy retirees and second-homeowners, tourists, and investment into both business and property – groupings that are already wealthy or, as in tourist related employment, poorly paid. This inequality may at least in part be due to the constant need to (re)attract capital, leading to these groupings dominating the policies of a locale. Certainly, scholars have identified within the neoliberal period the budgets of a city being diverted from goods related to social reproduction and towards economic development (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox & Mair, 1988; Defilippis, 2004; While et al., 2010). The tensions between capital and providing economic welfare to achieve economic wellbeing, as the financial security that citizens require to meet their basic needs, are articulated here by Vicky Japes, Public Health Programme Manager, CYC:

> "As a local authority you're always balancing the needs of big businesses, who say they want to bring lots of highly skilled people to the city, with thinking we've got to make sure health visitors are going to visit sick babies. How are you saying that one of them is more important than another? And you'll get the people who are committed to social responsibility; so they're saying what we should just be doing is spending lots on adult social care, spending lots on looking after vulnerable young people. But then if you don't meet the needs of local businesses, do they pull out of the city?"

Due to the inequality that resides in these mobile capital groupings, however, even case studies that are considered to be 'wealthy' are lacking economic welfare across vast swathes of their population, and their pursuit remains active.

An example of one of the ways in which the attraction of the mobile capital groupings leads to inequality is given here by James Cleeton, England Director South, Sustrans, regarding the events surrounding the European Green Capital year in 2015 which, as has been established, was largely with the aim of attracting tourists and inward investment into both business and property:

"That was a massive waste of money and a massive waste of opportunity. That money could have been spent on some real ground breaking community work that would have massive impact on people's lives and the local environment, instead of spending it on art."

Indeed, there are many parallels with James' observations and the urban transformations that took place in Glasgow following being the European City of Culture in 1990 that Mooney (2004) found exacerbated existing inequalities through the attraction of inward investment into property as opposed to through public sector investment.

Resulting from this proclivity for residents that may bring human capital, as identified by Boyle (2011), these groupings may be facilitated for in policy too, for example in environmental amenities, cultural events or housing. Therefore, as highlighted by Peck (2005), while the one-third of the population may be accommodated for, the two-thirds of the population who are not are further marginalised. Indeed, Cox (1999) identifies that the people disregarded by such policies are those more rooted in a locale, the less educated 'Somewheres' to which Goodhart (2017) refers, and these are more likely to require public goods, notably those around the provisioning of social welfare.

Overall, through constantly diverting resources towards the attraction of mobile groupings cities look to provide economic welfare in a way that constrains their own budgets. This exacerbates existing centrally imposed budgetary constraints and accelerates what is the primary aim of this policy: the reduction of the public sphere in favour of private interests (Gane, 2012). There are large implications for cities. Relatively early in the neoliberal project Punter (1990) highlighted the pernicious effect that privatisation was having on the built public realm in cities, with the consequence that they were looking impoverished from an aesthetic, cultural and social perspective.

Though this study highlights the constraining relationship between the economy and all aspects of urban sustainability, the specific insight around the links between the economy and the environment are not new. Walker & Large (1975) highlighted many years ago that a city's relationship to the wider economic system must be understood for environmental considerations to be anything other than superficial. This observation being in the mid-1970s is notable for being during a time towards the end of embedded liberalism, and at the beginning of the neoliberal period of capitalism. This illustrates that neoliberalism has not

created the environment in which cities compete for capital. Rather, this is capitalism and, consequently, how capital functions. It is that shifts towards neoliberalism have reduced the more spatially-fixed and egalitarian economic welfare redistributed by government and, through reductions in regulations, increased the mobility of capital. Outside of the political-economy, reductions in traditional industries have also resulted in there being less economic welfare in a locale, while technological advances have also increased the mobility of capital. Therefore, there is an environment in which cities must increasingly compete to attract capital to add to economic processes through which economic welfare is provided in their locale. But the incentive was already there. It was just to a lesser extent. Fundamentally, however, as long as there are markets in which the factors of production (capital, land and labour) are themselves also tradeable and there is capitalism, there will always be competition between cities that favours capital, as a more mobile entity than cities, in some form.

As is observed within the case studies, however, decisions in society are not all taken through the market. Indeed, in the case studies there are numerous ways in which decisions are made away from the market and in favour of wider societal outcomes, in addition to for other reasons such as political factors. These findings are consistent with the work of Jonas & While (2007) who claim that despite being compelled to compete for capital, in reality there are many ways in which the decisions taken by cities do not operate within this framework and represent more altruistic aims for their populations and more widely. Furthermore, scholars highlight the hybrid nature of the economy in which, despite neoliberal shifts, there are large 'local' elements to local economies, and this has been increasing due to the greater prevalence of the service economy (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Ghemawat, 2001; Goodhart, 2017; Hahnel & Wright, 2016; Malleson, 2014; Peck et al., 2009; Power, 1996). An insight from this study, however, is that these local elements are tied to mobility through the professionals that these industries serve. Overall, according to Defilippis (2004) there is still insufficient locally orientated economic activity. Therefore, urban areas remain dependent upon the mobile capital groupings identified within this study to provide economic welfare within their cities.

7.7.4. Overcoming the Entrepreneurial Need

Commentators have discussed ways in which to reduce the reliance on entrepreneurialism. Bartik (2018) recommends investing in local skills. Hanna (2018) proposes investing in smaller, more local firms who may distribute greater profits locally. Both these methods are recognized by Vicky Japes regarding governance in York:

> "The challenge is obviously sustainable growth, good growth and recognizing contributions that small businesses make, growing the people that are going to stay here so we're investing in people who are going to invest back into the city and maybe not courting the wrong types of businesses."

Brenner & Theodore (2002) highlight that struggles around the key aspects of people's lives in the urban form, such as housing, wages, environmental justice and land-use offers the potential for the development of progressive alternatives. Certainly, these were recurring themes within the conversations of interviewees across all case studies, as were their provisioning. For both Brenner & Theodore (2002) and Harvey (1989), meanwhile, inter- and intra-urban 'solidarity' are a means to overcome the entrepreneurial need. The extent to which such connections may be strong enough to overcome this structurally incentivized competition to provide economic welfare, however, is unknown.

The strategy devised by Defilippis (1999, 2004) and subsequently built upon by the US and UK think tanks the Democracy Collaborative (Democracy Collaborative, 2019) and the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES; CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Jackson & McInroy, 2017) respectively, however, is the only proposal that fundamentally reduces the structural causes of urban entrepreneurialism. There are large extraneous elements to this strategy, though viewed in the context of reducing entrepreneurialism, locally controlled budgets may be used to encourage the most spatially-fixed and egalitarian economic processes through local, democratic ownership over the three areas of socio-economic relations: the means of production, reproduction and exchange. Spatially-fixed is desired because this reduces the need for cities to use their resources to (re)attract them. Egalitarian ownership is desired because this increases the efficiency in providing economic welfare across populations.

The strategy represents a significant opportunity for cities. Subnational budgets constitute 9.35 per cent of national GDP in the UK (OECD, 2019). In Preston, even though the model was only implemented around the means of production, and not fully so, locally retained spend

of the partaking anchor organisations increased from 5 per cent to 18.2 per cent (£112.3 million) and within Lancashire from 39 to 79.2 per cent (£488.7 million) between 2012/13 and 2016/17 (CLES & PrCC, 2019, pp.11-12). The implication for these figures is that locally controlled budgets are being diverted to co-operatives and SMEs in the city and wider region as models that are more equal and that, due to their more spatially-fixed nature, Preston does not have to divert further resources to keep them within the locale. Furthermore, as has been argued by numerous sources (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Ward & Lewis, 2002), with these organisations being owned locally, capital is not extracted to distant shareholders and is instead recirculated, creating a multiplier effect.

Despite not being fundamental to reducing the entrepreneurial need, the extraneous elements to this strategy have numerous benefits. Defilippis (1999, 2004) proposed such changes so that they may also create more space for local democracy. Indeed, in these terms, CLES propose that unused buildings in addition to parks and other land holdings owned by anchor organisations are made available to the community to either govern as a commons or transferred to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019). CLES also recommend that the buildings and facilities of anchor organisations be made available to local community groups and charities for free when not in use (ibid.). In the context of the means of exchange, CLES propose using the pension funds of anchor organisations to provide 'affordable' credit to citizens, local community groups and SMEs – those who are thought to have insufficient access to finance (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Jackson & McInroy, 2017).

Worker co-operatives are the only model that are identified by the literature as having the traits required to reduce the entrepreneurial need, being both more embedded in a locale (Klein, 2008; Malleson, 2014) and with greater equality (Clemente et al., 2012; Magne, 2017). Despite this, it may be inferred that all models that have been identified as social economy models – social enterprises, worker co-operatives, voluntary and community organisations, SMEs and POEs – have superior outputs in this regard than corporations. There are also many extraneous sustainability benefits to such models, such as superior environmental outcomes due to the lack of need to grow (Booth, 1995; Davies, 2009; Johanisova et al., 2013; WCMC, 2014; While et al., 2010; Zovanyi, 2012) and superior social outcomes due to adding meaning

and trust (Rifkin, 2000). These extraneous sustainability benefits are detailed extensively in Section 3.8.

Such outcomes contrast with the characteristics of corporations that: extract wealth from a locale (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019); place immediate and short-term profit maximisation above sustainability related aspects (Doherty et al., 2020; Sardana et al., 2020; Tyler, 2013); play their part in the constant propagation of consumerism, with the consequential impact upon mental health and the undermining of social wellbeing, while cultivating the socially and environmentally destructive economic growth model (Jackson, 2009a; James, 2008); encourage a philosophy that prioritises freedom for those wealthy enough to be considered economic actors at the expense of all others upon whom this imposes 'unfreedoms' (De Lissovoy, 2015; Monbiot, 2019); extols individualism and selfishness (Harvey, 2007); and explicate democracy while dismantling the shared privileges upon which society is built (Clarke, 2007).

Therefore, with changes around the means of production and, with models such as mutual housing associations and credits unions, the means of reproduction and exchange, this may negate neoliberalism becoming what Brenner & Theodore (2002) refer to as 'common-sense' among the population. In doing so, this may see shifts that not all economic activity has to be purely profitable (Mills, 2014; Spash, 2017); that not everything should have an exchange value (Parr, 2015; Spash, 2017); and virtues such as empathy, altruism and a belief in co-operation and social solidarities may become 'common sense' among the population (Harvey, 2007; Spash, 2017).

The strategy set forth here represents a restructuring of the political-economy which, as highlighted by Hanna (2018), has entrenched interests that oppose such changes. This strategy, however, is on a local, geographically specific scale as opposed to nationally and the scale at which capital has co-opted the interests of society (Barber, 2017). In the context of Hahnel & Wright's (2016) three stages of transformation from capitalist societies, such a strategy may be identified as being an interplay between symbiotic and interstitial: symbiotic in the sense that state power is being used to extend and deepen the institutional forms of social empowerment in ways that also solves the socio-economic problems of capitalism; interstitial in that state power is being used to build new forms of social empowerment within

niches in the capitalist society, while not posing an immediate threat to elites, at least not nationally.

Hahnel & Wright (2016) argue that symbiotic strategies solve the socio-economic problems associated with capitalism, such as poverty and inequality, but leave intact the core power of capital. Such a claim is consistent with the observation by Brenner & Theodore (2002) that should the market be the sole means of allocation this would result in intolerable levels of inequality and economic stagnation and, therefore, it requires other state and social formations. Likewise, for the same reasons Amin et al. (1999), Nicholls & Teasdale (2017) and Teasdale et al. (2012) take the view that the positive externalities from social enterprises without any fundamental change in ownership model may enable, as opposed to challenge capitalism. Despite this, Hahnel & Wright (2016) contend that, should social empowerment be increased to the appropriate level, there is the potential for transformation from symbiotic strategies.

In all the case studies there were found to be elements of both symbiotic and interstitial strategies, particularly the former. Unlike the encouragement of social enterprises in Plymouth, which may be viewed as purely symbiotic, the strategy set forth here, and as was found to a certain extent in Preston, represents deeper forms of both, and particularly the latter. Although Hahnel & Wright (2016) argue that should a symbiotic strategy be deep enough it may be transformative, they assert that an interplay with symbiotic and interstitial strategies may be more effective in which, for the latter, communities and institutions are built on the justification of solving the socio-economic problems of capitalism. Symbiotic strategies can then increasingly open space for them, with further enhancement by periodic ruptural strategies such as the Covid-19 pandemic or a defining period in climate change. However, as Peck & Tickell (2002) point out, there must also be fundamental changes to the macroenvironment to truly shift from capitalism.

7.8. Conclusions

Due to reductions in the more spatially-fixed forms, economic welfare is defined by capital and groupings that bring capital in the current political-economic climate. Capital and these groupings were identified in the conversations of interviewees on the basis of mobility and include professionals, wealthy retirees and second-homeowners, tourists, and investment into both business and property. Given the private ownership over capital in addition to the

low-paid nature of the tourism related service employment in these groupings and the need to focus the resources of a city towards their attraction, looking to provide economic welfare in this way inevitably leads to deprivation and inequality. However, using locally controlled budgets to encourage more spatially-fixed and egalitarian economic processes may reduce the dependence on the mobile capital groupings. In doing so, it may be possible to achieve economic wellbeing across a population, which may in turn enable a wider focus on the environment. With the findings around economic welfare having been set forth in this chapter, the next chapter moves on to present the findings related to social wellbeing.

8. Social Wellbeing

With the previous chapter having established the findings from the case studies on economic welfare, this chapter presents the findings around factors such as equality, social cohesion and deprivation that were thought by participants to define social wellbeing within a city. The findings for York are presented first, followed by for the secondary case studies. Then, these findings are discussed in the context of each other, drawing out overriding themes that are key factors in shaping social wellbeing, such as centrally imposed constraints and the equality of a local economy. The chapter concludes by highlighting how, as a key part of urban sustainability transitions, social wellbeing is largely defined by economic welfare.

8.1. York

An advantage that York was said by interviewees to possess in reducing social problems was its size, as was commented upon by Councillor Andrew Waller, Liberal Democrat, City of York Council (CYC):

> "I think that's something that York has a strength in because it's a human-scale city, so it can influence a lot within a city. Whereas in some places the decisions are made so far away, there isn't that connection."

Interviewees also felt that York was not large enough for there to be deep divisions within its communities.

Several interviewees discussed how there was a "patchwork" (Andrew Waller) of smaller communities in the city, here discussed by Dr Steve Cinderby, Senior Researcher, Stockholm Environment Institute, University of York (UoY):

> "I've been doing work with residents about this: the impression seems to be that there are distinct neighbourhoods in the city. They do seem to have a reasonable amount of social cohesion. I think there's quite a diversity of events and activities that they can get involved in."

Community participation, particularly in sports clubs, was thought to be high in York due to what was said to be a predominantly inclusive and close-knit nature within the city aided by there being large areas of grassland, or 'strays' as they are known locally. However, interviewees repeatedly discussed tensions between residents, tourists and a growing student population.

8.1.1. Good Quality of Life

A common theme among interviewees was, through being able to offer a good quality of life to residents, York was able to attract a certain class of people that in turn brought several socio-economic benefits to the city. This effect and the consequences for which are discussed here by Dr Simon Parker, Lecturer, UoY:

> "It's a city that has attracted a growing middle-class and it isn't faced with high levels of social deprivation. A lot of challenges that bigger cities face in the North are to do with endemic poverty and deprivation. You do have it here, but only in pockets of the city."

A frequently cited example of this effect was around York's schools having particularly good GCSE results which was attributed to the city being able to attract a good quality of teacher in addition to a relative lack of deprivation among students.

Socio-economic problems in York were thought to be reduced by charities which were felt by interviewees to be relatively strong in the city due to three potential contributors: the benevolent capitalism of the Quakers, who have had a large presence in York in many aspects such as housing, pioneering mental health care and more egalitarian employment; the influence of the Church, which has been prevalent in shaping York's past; and the educated nature of much of the employment. It was thought that these contributors may be combining to create and attract people who are more compassionate, therefore more inclined to help others in need. Furthermore, these people were said to have the economic and social capital to care for other people. This is perhaps best expressed through what were said by interviewees to be particularly high volunteer rates in the city.

8.1.2. Social Problems

Interviewees frequently commented upon how the local economy was the cause of social inequality within York, expressed here by Richard Lane, York Community Energy:

> "Because we have such a cutting edge digital arts, university, intelligence economy sector, sometimes we don't take care of the people left behind by all that. And that's a problem because then you get resentment; you get growing inequality; you get disenfranchisement; disillusionment; cynicism; you get rejection of the values of the economically active: you get cultural, as well as social and economic, division".

Certainly, as of 2016, with a Gini coefficient of 0.42, York is relatively unequal being ranked 9th out of the UK's 58 largest towns and cities (Centre for Cities, 2022f).

From the responses to surveys carried out by CYC in the early 1990s when this effect may have been less marked, Meethan (1997) discusses a divide within York reflected in the perceptions of tourism within the city. Here, Meethan (ibid.) observes that professionals were more likely to favour tourism. This was thought to be because they were financially more able to access the related cultural facilities (ibid.). Those in 'manual employment' were thought to be less likely to favour tourism and were, to an extent, financially excluded from the city centre (ibid.). Consistent with such observations, Mordue (2005, p.180) termed York's relationship with its built heritage as having the potential to create a "dual city" in which the middle-classes of the city had the cultural capital, as the familiarity with the legitimate culture within a society (Bourdieu, 1986), and (economic)capital to be consumers of such cultural attractions, while poorer groups are denied access. Such findings contradict, or does not realise the potential identified within the literature that claims built heritage may have a positive effect on social cohesion and inclusion (Haf & Parkhill, 2017; Pendlebury et al., 2004; Rostami et al., 2014; Tweed & Sutherland, 2007; UNESCO, 2015).

According to Rachael Maskell MP, Labour and Co-operative Party, York Central, the image of York as being a 'nice place' masks increasing social issues:

> "Where we've got Westfield, Chapelfields, Clifton, Tang Hall, it's kind of pushed away from the centre. So, when people come they see a wonderful city centre with all the assets and the history, busy city centre feeling vibrant but, just go beyond those walls a little way, and some of the areas inside the walls, and mass social problems exist."

Despite the reported social problems in York, spend on social protection per capita at £2,604 in 2014 is relatively low being ranked 58th out of the UK's 62 largest cities and towns (Centre for Cities, 2022f). It may be that, while York has problems with deprivation, these are generally less so than most other places. Certainly, out of 317 local authority districts in England, in the indices of deprivation (which measures aspects such as income, health & disability, and crime), York is ranked 267th, most deprived (MHCLG, 2019). Due to being seen as prosperous, interviewees repeatedly felt that the city found it difficult to access national or European funding to help resolve problems in its deprived areas.

York may be accused of exporting its social problems as, what was often referred to as very high employment levels, was commented upon by some interviewees to be a "labour shortage" (Simon Parker). Indeed, out of the UK's 63 largest towns and cities, at 3.3 per cent York has the lowest claimant count (Centre for Cities, 2022f). This was said to be due to the combination of the low-paid tourism-related work and high house prices being inherently socially unsustainable and pushing out people who cannot afford to live in the city, effectively denying access to poorer groups. This effect is discussed here by Simon Parker:

> "There is a sense that the city is a victim of its own success because it is a bit of a desirable place to live. People coming from London and the South can afford to buy a much bigger house here and that's squeezing out first time buyers who are on local wages and just can't compete. The resentment about incomers; they're not often that explicit; but they're there; below the surface."

This points to York benefitting economically and socially to the detriment of other areas and, accordingly, in these terms, York may not be viewed in isolation.

8.2. Bath

Similarly, in Bath respective interviewees spoke of how their city offered a good quality of life that formed the basis for attracting residents. This was said to be based upon the built heritage and a high number of parks that connects Bath to the surrounding countryside, in addition to the city feeling 'safe'. House prices were frequently commented upon as being disproportionately high for the local economy to the extent that those who are more highly paid, such as professionals, are unable to live in the city. This effect is discussed here by Dr Emma Carmel, Senior Lecturer, University of Bath:

> "I wouldn't think gentrification is the word for that. It's not. It's not that Bath was completely ungentrified before that. So, gentrification I kind of think of as a shift in character and structure and housing from the more or less working-class to the more or less middle-class. Whereas this is from mostly extending to the upper-middle-class access to housing in Bath."

Interviewees spoke of the loss of a 'work and live in the same area' mentality, and of a transitory city in which those who could not afford to live in Bath commuted in from outlying villages.

8.2.1. Social Inequality

Interviewees still discussed inequality in the city that, though in pockets, was said to be extreme in nature. Although a Gini coefficient is not available for Bath, Bath and North-East Somerset Council's website comments, "As a whole, Bath and North-East Somerset remains one of the least deprived local authorities in the country and continues to become relatively less deprived over time. However, within some areas, inequality is widening and deprivation remains significant. There are now two small areas within the most deprived 10% nationally" (BathNES, 2019). Out of 317 local authority districts in England, in the indices of deprivation Bath and North-East Somerset is ranked 265th most deprived (MHCLG, 2019). Interviewees discussed 'council housing' and 'affordable housing' in the city, but thought these to be small in number.

8.3. Bristol

In Bristol, the contemporary nature of the economy was said by respective interviewees to result in a particularly marked inequality in the city. This inequality was said to be mainly along educational lines, here expanded upon by Professor Jim Longhurst, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Environment and Sustainability, University of the West of England:

> "Bristol historically has very poor performance in its secondary schools, it's done a lot in the last few years to improve that. But if you accept that education is the routeway out of inequality, it's not working yet. The 50 per cent is the participation rate for those who could or would go to university. There's a large fraction of the city's talent that doesn't have access by virtue of qualifications, skills, knowledge etc. or connections."

Consistent with the words of Jim here, interviewees commented that Bristol has relatively poor secondary schools which was attributed to particular problems with academisation. According to the data, however, with 61 per cent of pupils achieving 9-4 grades in Maths & English at GCSE, at 30th out of the UK's 55 largest cities and towns, Bristol is only slightly below average in these subjects (Centre for Cities, 2022b).

8.3.1. Unequal Economy

Jim Longhurst went on to comment that the resulting economic inequality dictated the extent to which parts of the population could engage with the strong environmental sustainability culture within the city:

"My assessment would be that your economic status to a substantial degree dictates your engagement with your opportunities for sustainability, your participation in the activities that one might think of as the [European] Green Capital activities; and that is part of the social and cultural divide that exists within the city."

According to interviewees there was a discourse that the relatively strong environmental sustainability culture was socially excluding, and that this had been propagated by the current mayor, Marvin Rees, for political gains. In contrast, interviewees drew attention to the social inclusivity of the environmental sustainability foci, for example in promoting 'reuse and repair' and community projects to support wildlife.

8.3.2. Central Constraints

Many of Bristol's problems around inequality, and social wellbeing more widely, however, were thought by Jim Longhurst to fundamentally reside at the national level:

"Many of our deep seated social inequalities have at their heart Central Government who have positioned around the way in which social security operates; around employment rights; around taxation regimes; around educational opportunities: many of these are rarely, if at all, in the gift of the local state: they are nationally set. And so there's not a lot against that prevailing ideological position that a council can do."

Indeed, despite the narrative of inequality in the city, with a Gini co-efficient of 0.4 compared to between 0.38 and 0.4 for the English Core Cities, this inequality is absolute and not relative (Centre for Cities, 2022b). Meanwhile, out of 317 local authority districts in England, in the indices of deprivation, Bristol is ranked 65th, most deprived (MHCLG, 2019).

8.4. Edinburgh

In Edinburgh, respective interviewees generally thought that their city offers a good quality of life to its residents. While there is no Gini coefficient available for Edinburgh, according to interviewees there are large problems with inequality in the city with 20 per cent of the population said to be living in 'poverty' – though there are no universal measures, this definition is by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission (2021) in which a household is in poverty when their income after housing costs is less than 60 per cent of the median income level.

According to Councillor Steve Burgess, Green Party, City of Edinburgh Council (CEC), due to the small nature of the city, such deprivation is more in pockets as opposed to in the geographical concentrations that are frequently found in larger cities:

> "We definitely have areas that are more deprived. But you can have a poorer area right beside a well-off area. I mean the ward I represent; I've got some of the poorest people in a high-rise estate and I've got some of the richest people living in mansions that you need a couple of minute walk up the drive, literally."

There exists no comparative data between CEC with local authorities in England, or with other local authorities in Scotland, however, the city fairs favourably in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020 (which measures the same aspects of deprivation as in the indices of deprivation in England): 11.7 per cent of areas in Edinburgh are in the 20 per cent most deprived, compared to 44.4 per cent in Glasgow, for instance (CEC, 2020a, p.5). And 45.2 per cent of areas in Edinburgh are in the 20 per cent least deprived areas in Scotland (ibid., p.6). The inequality in the city was mainly attributed to the economy, being based upon high-paid professional employment such as financial services and education, contrasting with significant low-paid service employment related to the tourism.

8.4.1. 'Extractive' Tourist Industry

The tourist industry was described as 'extractive' by interviewees as, while the economic benefits were said to be private through rent-seeking property ownership, hotels or the places that tourists frequent, Edinburgh's wider residents had to endure the physical effects of so many tourists in addition to inflated house prices. Indeed, the damaging effects of Airbnb and second-homeownership on local communities was vociferously highlighted as being a problem in the city. These observations are consistent with the literature. Nasser (2003) highlights the increased footfall and road-use, in addition to artificially shaping local retail trade away from the needs of locals, that may arise from tourism. Indeed, the promotion of built heritage as an economic asset has seen such cities being orientated towards the notional visitor, with the resulting conflict with residents (Graham & Aurigi, 1997; Guzmán et al., 2017; Hewison, 1987). Regarding Airbnb, scholars have identified both the potential benefits of the 'sharing economy' with such short-term rental platforms, in addition to the potential rent-seeking and disruption to communities (Gurran & Phibbs, 2017; Lee, 2016; Rae, 2019). Certainly, consistent with the findings specifically around built heritage,

scholars argue that tourism can add an artificial inflationary pressure on the local economy, pushing land and property prices beyond local affordability and, in turn, pushing local people away from the area (Nasser, 2003; Pendlebury et al., 2004).

8.4.2. Devolved Powers to Address Social Problems

Meanwhile, according to David Somervell, Convener, Transition Edinburgh and former Sustainability Adviser, University of Edinburgh, as a devolved nation Scotland has been able to buffer against many of the social problems caused by the political-economy in the wider UK:

> "Really, really big challenges. None of them are not responsive to careful, coherent action. And, to give the Scottish Government its due, most of these are a consequence of the austerity regime from down South – the progressive reduction in the unitary resource allocated to the regions and to Scotland – and that's to do with Thatcher's shrinking state. It's very simple. The idea that the market has to drive and decide how we prioritise things, it's still endemic at Westminster as a way of driving and prioritising things. The Scottish Government are clearly aiming to blunt that or reduce the impact of that."

Such insight is in agreement with the literature. While the power of the parliaments and assemblies in the devolved nations ultimately rests with Central Government, their local authorities have been able to offset the reductions in spending from austerity on services by one-half of their English counterparts, to 12 per cent, thereby potentially negating the withdrawal of the public sector in favour of the private sector (Hay & Martin, 2014; Institute for Government, 2019; Smith et al., 2016).

8.5. Plymouth

In Plymouth, although respective interviewees acknowledged that there were high levels of social deprivation and inequality within the city, this was rarely expanded upon. The East side of the city was commented upon as being wealthier. However, in other discussions, the South, coastal areas were thought to be wealthier. There were also observed to be large inequalities between adjacent wards. Despite this, with a Gini coefficient of 0.38, Plymouth is slightly more equal than the majority of the UK's 58 large cities and towns (Centre for Cities, 2022d). Meanwhile, out of 317 local authority districts in England, in the indices of deprivation Plymouth is ranked 64[th,] most deprived (MHCLG, 2019). In addition to the economic problems,

Plymouth's distance from London was thought to be a causal factor in the lack of economic welfare, with it being highlighted that there was £400 less spent per child on school in the city than the national average. Furthermore, austerity was thought to have particularly negatively affected the city.

8.6. Preston

Although Preston was acknowledged by respective interviewees to possess the social problems that characterise a post-industrial city struggling to transition to a contemporary economy, much like in Plymouth interviewees were not explicit in describing the forms that these took. An example of this is to be found in the words of Gareth Nash, Director, Co-op Development Network and Co-operative & Mutual Solutions, here:

> "It's like any Northern city really. It's not a big city, but it's suffered from unemployment, poor housing."

While Deborah Shannon, Director – Link Psychology Co-operative, commented:

> "To my knowledge I think there aren't any major social issues, apart from the kind of usual sorts of things that you would get in any city type area [...] you know, obviously Preston in particular may have issues in terms drugs, and you know, antisocial behaviour and all of those sorts of things. But I don't think there's any major particular issues."

Partly due to immigration into the city being in a 'trickle' effect, while there was said to be a broad cultural mix in Preston, including Irish, Polish, and Indian ethnic groupings, it was felt that the city was socially cohesive. Being ranked 45th, most deprived out of 317 local authority districts in England in the indices of deprivation (MHCLG, 2019), Preston is the most deprived English case study by this metric. Preston has a Gini coefficient of 0.39 (Centre for Cities, 2022e).

8.7. Discussion

Therefore, inequality was prevalent in the conversations of interviewees around social wellbeing across the case studies. These were generally around the ways in which the economy was unequal. Consistent with this, while all the UK's 58 largest cities and towns have a Gini coefficient of between 0.37 and 0.46, the cities in which there may be considered to be the most contemporary local economies; Oxford and Cambridge, with Gini coefficients of 0.45 and 0.46 (Centre for Cities, 2022a) respectively are the most unequal of all. Certainly the case

studies that are struggling most to transition to a contemporary economy; Plymouth and Preston, are the most equal. Indeed, while cities generally pursue and even appear to want to be associated with the contemporary economy, the words of Derek Whyte, Assistant Chief Executive, Preston City Council, here regarding the more 'mixed' economy in Preston explains why this may not be a good thing: "You need to look after the welfare of those people who are currently employed in less sexy sectors." The individual characteristics of a city that defined the local economy also affected inequality in broadly similar ways. For example, in all the relevant case studies, built heritage was associated with inequality due to the highly-paid professionals attracted to live there contrasting with a disproportionately large, low-paid tourist industry.

Such changes in the economy are clarified by the literature in which scholars observe the increase in high-paid professional jobs that in turn creates demand for low-paid, low-skilled service jobs, while middling jobs, such as manufacturing, have been disproportionately negatively impact by automation and offshoring (Goodhart, 2017; OECD, 2020; ONS, 2019; Schwab, 2017). Correspondingly, according to Waterton & Watson (2013), the heritage tourism that is prevalent in York, Bath and Edinburgh became an industry in itself as of the mid-to-late 1980s. With scholars estimating that between 10 and 50 per cent of jobs are vulnerable to automation in the next two decades while new, though fewer industries emerge, going forward amid the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' the job market may change yet further still (Arntz et al., 2017; Bank of England, 2021; Frey & Osborne, 2017; Manyika et al., 2017; Schwab, 2017).

Despite this, when asked if the inequality in York was specifically caused by the local economy Anthony May, Emeritus Professor of Transport Engineering, University of Leeds, and York Civic Trust, commented:

> "Not particularly, it's the gradual move to the gig economy where the jobs are there but they're not secure jobs and they're not necessarily full-time jobs and they're typically poorly paid jobs […] so they can't plan, and they also have insecure housing".

Indeed, according to the Living Wage Foundation (2019, p.5) 1 in 6 workers nationally do not earn a wage that meets every day needs which, they highlight, makes financial planning difficult. Scholars argue that increases in precarious employment, with zero-hour contracts

having quadrupled in this period with high levels of underemployment, are largely accounted for by neoliberal policies over the last two decades (Alander, 2018; Arrizabalo et al., 2019; Harper, 2019; MacInnes et al., 2013). Much of this precarity is in the service economy (FLEX, 2021; Koumenta & Williams, 2018) that may disproportionately affect the built heritage case studies due to their large tourist industries. According to Schmueker (2014), employers in such sectors should provide training and progression routes to increase their employees' welfare. This may be unlikely, however, as with private ownership of such businesses, high turnover is accepted as a business cost (Devins et al., 2014).

Overall, the main effect of the changes in employment is unequally distributed rising wealth, with the benefactors being the providers of capital and human capital (Schwab, 2017). Owners of capital are able to profit from interest payments, capital gains and dividends (Doherty et al., 2020). Due to neoliberal policies around promoting cuts in investment, reduced public spending, privatisation, and atomising workers, labour has been increasingly unable to capture productivity gains (Harper, 2019; Malleson, 2014; Stirling, 2019b; Stratford & O'Neill, 2020). Moreover, with governments being reluctant to take responsibility for providing better employment, the safety net is being removed as social welfare is reduced in order to incentivize people to enter the job market (Cottam, 2018; Dowler & Lambie-Mumford, 2015).

This discussion is based upon the assumption of privately owned businesses. However, commentators argue in favour of other models that seek to capture and broaden the productivity gains to reduce work hours for a better work/life balance, particularly in the semi-skilled employment that are especially prone to precarity and low-wages, such as social care (Bedford & Harper, 2018; CCCV, 2020; Magne, 2017; McInroy, 2017). Indeed, research suggests numerous benefits from a shorter working week, ranging from increased productivity, to reduced stress and more time to make positive environmental behaviours (Autonomy, 2019; Debus et al., 2014; HSE, 2020; Sonnentag et al., 2008).

8.7.1. The Relationship Between Size and Social Wellbeing

An affect alluded to in both York and Edinburgh was around an inverse relationship between the size of a city and levels of inequality. These findings support the research of the OECD (2016) that unequal concentrations of household income tend to be higher in areas with greater populations and higher administrative fragmentation. This also demonstrates the part

that local authorities play in buffering the market for greater societal outcomes. Such findings are consistent with the view taken by scholars such as Brenner & Theodore (2002), Guinan & Hanna (2017), Malleson (2014) and Polanyi (1944) who argue that the market is socially destructive and intervention is required, and that other forms of exchange and production are required to reduce the related negative externalities and maintain their existence.

There also appears to be a relationship between size of a city and deprivation. While there are other factors, such as built heritage, the smaller case studies tended to be those that were least deprived. Notably, Preston and Plymouth, being ranked 45th and 64th respectively, have similar levels of deprivation to Bristol which is ranked 65th – a city in which there was acknowledged to be levels of deprivation but was still considered to be 'wealthy' by respective interviewees. Indeed, this may once again be explained by the size of the city, with other Core Cities such as Manchester (6th), Liverpool (3rd) and Birmingham (7th) being ranked as some of the most deprived local authority areas in England (MHCLG, 2019).

8.7.2. Social Wellbeing and Central Constraints

The case studies that appeared most greatly affected by austerity were Plymouth and Preston as those that are the most deprived. Therefore, intercity, as well as intracity inequality is exacerbated by austerity. These findings are not surprising given that, in addition to an overall decrease of 18 per cent on average between 2009/10 and 2018/19, there has also been a reduction in the redistributive element of the way in which funding for local authorities is now structured (Institute for Government, 2020). Various scholars highlight this phenomenon, and call attention to the implication that the provision of public services are increasingly dependent upon the local tax base which, in cities with high levels of deprivation such as Plymouth and Preston, may create a feedback effect of further deprivation (Bailey, 2017; Gray & Barford, 2018; Innes & Tetlow, 2015; Lowndes & Gardner, 2016).

Meanwhile, as discussed by Jim Longhurst, many of the problems of intracity inequality are beyond the control of individual cities themselves and reside in the policies of Central Government. Such insight is consistent with the literature. The UK is a unitary state in which absolute power lies with central government, who choose which powers to delegate (Elazar, 1997). Therefore, given that national governments have been co-opted by the interests of capital, the consequential policies are imposed on cities that may exacerbate inequality such as around the devaluation of labour, reductions in social security, and a general dismantling

of the many 'shared privileges' in society around health, education and other public services, or infrastructure (Arrizabalo et al., 2019; Clarke, 2007; Geels, 2010; Harper, 2019). Be it through administrative fragmentation, the local economy or due to elements that are dictated nationally, research is beginning to highlight the negative impact that inequality has on social wellbeing, both for the individual; for example, on health, and more widely for society; for example, on trust (Tibesigwa et al., 2016; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010).

8.7.3. The In/Outflow of Residents and Social Wellbeing

Another theme from conversations with interviewees regarding social wellbeing that had consequences for inequality in the case studies was around the attraction of residents to a city and the extent to which people were able to afford to live there. For instance, the professionals (and it may be inferred the wealthier retirees) that may be attracted to a locale, were thought by interviewees to have fewer associated social problems than more deprived groups. Therefore, elements such as the extent of this attraction, house prices (as a barrier to entry) and, by extension, housebuilding have a large bearing on social wellbeing within a city. Due to being an interaction with other locales, social wellbeing can not to be viewed in isolation and may not represent the social consequences that factors such as the local economy create, with these frequently being relocated elsewhere.

When this attraction/affordability effect was marked, due to increased social wellbeing this was observed within the case studies to create a positive feedback loop in which attraction would increase further still, as would house prices, in turn pushing more deprived groupings out of a city. An example of this in York is around how the good quality of life that the city offered resulted in being able to attract a good quality of teacher while students had fewer problems with deprivation; their parents being more likely to be professionals (also due to this attraction), and this led to a high standard of secondary school education which in turn enhanced the attraction of residents to York. Notably, within this, due to house prices not mapping on to the local economy, people in more low-paid employment for whom it was still favourable to maintain these jobs may commute in from areas in which there is less social wellbeing, and poorer education systems. Meanwhile, the unemployed are excluded almost entirely. In Bath this effect is so marked that there is a large disparity between the local economy and residents. While York and Bath are relatively small, perhaps due to the in- and

out-flow of residents making up a smaller proportion of the population, this effect was less marked in the larger case studies.

Conversely, this attraction/affordability effect may also work in the opposite direction whereby low levels of attraction may repel the social groupings with fewer social problems, reducing social wellbeing within that city, further reducing an attraction. Additionally, the resulting lower house prices may attract more deprived groupings. Consequently, intervention into the market with, for example, 'affordable housing', as argued by Montgomery (2013), may be the only way in which to ensure more equal access to services, particularly with the rental market, and prevent better public services being monopolized by the wealthiest.

8.8. Conclusions

Therefore, the social wellbeing of a city is largely dependent upon economic welfare. This is both in terms of levels and equality. Notably, elements relating to the economy such as shifts towards the contemporary economy and the attraction of social groupings were surrounded by narratives of inequality. This stood in contrast to elements relating to economic welfare provided through the government, such as with the reduction of the budgets of local authorities associated with austerity increasing inequality. Overall, these findings show the importance of different ways of providing economic welfare in urban sustainability transitions through their impact upon social wellbeing. While this chapter has presented the findings around social wellbeing, the next chapter will discuss aspects relating to the findings as a whole. This will include how the findings may be applied to overcome the barriers to sustainability identified in York in addition observing the relationships between the thematic groupings and discussing the consequences of these for urban sustainability transitions.

9. Discussion

While the previous chapter was the last in a series of four in which the findings from conversations with interviewees in the case study cities were presented and discussed in the context of the literature, this now affords the opportunity to reflect on the findings as a whole. The findings indicate that many issues relating to urban sustainability are present within cities on an elemental level. In the context of this study, this is the level at which the understandings constructed of the case studies were segmented and described in a word or short sequence of words during initial coding. Such elements include the availability of office space or graduate retention. The findings also show how these elements are interconnected, and reflect the need to consider this wider context within a city. For instance, an understanding of elements relating to local politics and culture were required to avoid the failed closer of Lendal Bridge in York to cars, as a less sustainable form of transport, in the interests of reducing air pollution.

While it may sound obvious that such wider context must be considered in implementing sustainability changes, when interviewees in York discussed the 'vision', *York: New City Beautiful* and why the ideas it contains had not been implemented, it was largely due to not heeding much of the insight that was acquired in this study by speaking to policymakers and key stakeholders in the city: as was likely given the political fluctuation, a new party was in control of City of York Council (CYC) one year after the document had been published. And, with *York: New City Beautiful* being associated with the previous administration, it was no longer the focus of the new administration; there was no meaningful effort to consider the role of culture in implementation; CYC does not have the resources to implement the ideas contained within the document. Furthermore, though not a topic of discussion for interviewees, the economic strategy set forth in *York: New City Beautiful* (Yorkshire Forward, 2010, pp.19-29) adopts the entrepreneurial role in which capital is attracted as a means of urban development which, as has been argued within this thesis, will benefit mostly those with existing wealth and will lead to inequality with deprivation for many more. These may be the, "complex discursive processes and socio-political struggles through which sustainable cities are produced" to which Whitehead (2003, p.1187), claims the authors of visions are 'ignorant' to . Meanwhile, *York: New City Beautiful* is not alone in its economic motivation, with scholars identifying investment as the primary motive of many visions (Eadson & While,

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2021; Lapsley et al., 2010). Overall, *York: New City Beautiful* is no aberration in failing to consider the wider context identified in this study and in lacking fundamental insight into urban processes, with many current visions for UK cities engaging with urban sustainability in broadly similar ways (for example, see Bristol One City, 2021; Edinburgh 2050, 2020; Exeter City Futures, 2020; Sheffield City Region Vision, 2017).

Noticeably, when interviewees in York discussed the vision, *My York Central*, they thought it was likely to be implemented due to those involved in the process identifying the wider context within the city: not only was there consideration given to the culture of the residents of York, but this was central to the on-going implementation of the vision; not only had the political fluctuation in CYC been identified as an obstacle to the implementation of a long-term project such as this, but methods had been used to attain 'buy in' from all political parties within the city. Such findings lend credence to the validity that the understandings constructed of the case studies identify the processes that shape urban sustainability.

Also from these findings, both a conceptual contribution and a theoretical understanding emerge that address urban sustainability transitions in some way. These are the subject of the remainder of this chapter. First, the barriers to sustainability in York are identified followed by how insight from the secondary case studies may be applied in overcoming these. Second, the relationships between the thematic groupings are described, including the attracting of capital as part of economic processes, and the ramifications for urban sustainability.

9.1. Identifying and Overcoming the Barriers to Sustainability in York

Within the conversations of respective interviewees three barriers to York becoming more sustainable were identified: a political fluctuation in the local authority, reducing its ability to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies; the lack of a social economy (social enterprises, co-operatives etc.) that may bring wider sustainability related benefits; and a cultural and economic conservatism stemming from the built heritage. Five related elements of sustainability that may benefit from overcoming these barriers were also identified from these conversations as: a lack of renewable energy production, income inequality, inadequate sustainable transport, a lack of 'affordable housing', and poor recycling provisioning.

Commencing with the political fluctuation, from the secondary case studies there are apparent two positive outcomes: a charismatic and innovative leader who, in Plymouth was

able to overcome the associated problems by having a strength and consistency of politics regardless of being in power; and proportional representation, which in Edinburgh led to consensual politics in their local authority despite a political fluctuation. The latter is unlikely in England as proportional representation was voted against in a national referendum in 2011 (BBC News, 2011b). Concerning the former, while the occurrence of such a leader cannot be planned for, cultural shifts in which there is more support for, and increased likelihood of such a leader, can be considered.

Contrasting the York, Bath and Edinburgh case studies demonstrates that reducing a reliance upon tourism will cause economic and cultural shifts from built heritage that may also increase 'sustainability cultures' – cultures that are more innovative, provide greater support for environmental policies, and engage more with sustainability related behaviours. In York, there are particular economic opportunities around the creative industries, while the Bristol, Plymouth and Preston case studies show the wider sustainability benefits that come from social economy models.

In these cities it was demonstrated that the encouragement of these models must come at least in part from the local authority, who must perceive benefits from such in order to be motivated to enact it. While York may currently lack a cultural and economic impetus, with a particularly marked income inequality that is a major source of deprivation and division, the city does possess a social impetus. Due to the political fluctuation in CYC in which Conservatives, Labour and Liberal-Democrats have all held majority control in the recent past, cross-party support must be attained and with ideologically appropriate narratives for each party to encourage the social economy beyond political terms. In the Plymouth and Preston case studies Conservatives were thought to respond to narratives around business and job creation, and entrepreneurship, while Labour was said to be more inclined to relate more to social and fair economy issues. The more deprived areas in York tend to be the wards that elect Liberal Democrat councillors who, accordingly, may perceive the benefits of the social economy in providing economic welfare.

Methods from the Bristol, Plymouth and Preston case studies to encourage the social economy include helping such models navigate the process of bidding for anchor organisation contracts; partnership building; providing suitable 'incubator space'; and, as in Plymouth and Preston, investing in these models and favouring them in the procurement practices of anchor

organisations. Furthermore, as in Preston, gaps may be identified in the market where current supply is inadequate in which local organisations are then commissioned to fill. Meanwhile, as was proposed in Preston, anchor organisations may support opportunities around the buy-out of existing businesses in the city by their workers.

Within York, CYC has commenced strategic forums with the voluntary and community sector regarding bidding for council contracts (York CVS, 2019). In their procurement policies and practices CYC aims to promote, "quality, value-for-money goods and services" and, "positive economic, social and environmental outcomes" through, "supporting local businesses" (CYC, 2022e). There is an existing Social Value Policy through which procurement decisions are taken that have three key priorities: a "Strong Community", a "Vibrant and Inclusive Economy" and a "Healthy Environment" (CYC, 2022f, p.1). CYC are one of 13 local authorities who are founder members of the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation who offer existing suppliers and support around aspects of procurement (CYC, 2022a). CYC currently spends £144m each year on goods and services (CYC, 2022a). Therefore, while there are significant opportunities from the local authority, it is unknown the extent to which CYC's policies are adhered to in practice, or whether they favour social economy models.

As in Preston, while local authorities may be best placed to lead on a procurement strategy, they are only one of perhaps several anchor organisations in a city. Indeed, York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership were said to be analysing the procurement spend of York's anchor organisations. Much like in Preston, due to serving a relatively large hinterland, York's anchor organisations may be disproportionately large. In addition to CYC, these anchor organisations may include the Local Enterprise Partnership itself, University of York (UoY), York St. John's University, York College, Askham Bryan College and York Hospital. Additionally, being ranked 41st out of the UK 62 largest towns and cities for exports per job (Centre for Cities, 2022f), York's economy is relatively insular – a trait which was thought by interviewees in Preston to lend itself to the sense of identity which was said to have aided in procurement commitments from the anchor organisations there. Furthermore, as was also observed in Preston, York being relatively small may aid in collaboration for such a procurement strategy across the city. Although in York there was not a theme among interviewees of a strong sense of local identity as was found in Preston, with a recent change in leadership, York's largest anchor organisation; UoY, was thought to be engaging with the city more while, if other

anchor organisations perceive the benefits from such a procurement strategy, they may too be more amenable to participating. The development of the large brownfield site; York Central, in addition to the building of 600 houses across 8 brownfield sites in the city presents the opportunity identified by Matthew Todd, Senior Researcher, Centre for Local Economic Strategies, that conventionally instigates a progressive procurement strategy.

Consequent to an encouragement of the creative industries and social economy models, economic shifts from tourism may reduce inequality within the city in addition to increasing sustainability cultures. Furthermore, by there being more of a focus on the sustainability benefits stemming from business, this may affect the existing organisational culture within York that was observed as being largely private and profit driven in order to have a social licence to operate. Shifts towards a culture that is more innovative and provides support for environmental policies may also increase the likelihood of a charismatic and innovative leader, in addition to greater political consistency in CYC, which have both been show by the case studies to allow a local authority to provide more long-term vision and increase its ability to enact greater good policies.

With such changes this may allow for a greater focus on tackling the four remaining elements of sustainability that York was identified by interviewees as having problems with. Significantly, CYC may be able to build greater numbers of 'affordable housing'. In doing so, this will result in the population more closely matching the local economy by increasing the ability of many of the citizens on low-incomes to live within York and further reducing the effect of inequality. Also aided by a cultural impetus, CYC may be more able to pursue renewable energy generation and improve recycling, in addition to providing support for the more sustainable forms of transport – pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and public transport – while restricting car-use.

Therefore, emerging from the conversations with interviewees, there are policies eminently available to the policymakers of York to overcome the three barriers the city was identified as possessing. In doing so, this may also benefit five key areas, and help the city shift towards sustainability.

9.2. Urban Sustainability: Resolving the Tensions Between Capital and Economic Wellbeing
In addition to the insight resulting from viewing the findings in its elemental form for an individual case study, there is fundamental understanding in the relationships between the

four thematic groupings – 'culture', 'local authorities and public goods', 'economic welfare', and 'social wellbeing'. Describing these relationships, the following is a theoretical understanding that contributes towards questions of urban sustainability transitions.

Social wellbeing is largely dependent upon economic welfare. When there are levels of deprivation, economic welfare is the priority of both the affected populations and that city's local authority. To provide economic welfare, cities generally look to attract the mobile capital groupings due to their role in economic processes. These include professionals, tourists, and investment into both business and property. For some cities there is also the attraction of wealthy retirees and second-homeowners. Due to mobility, the need to (re)attract these groupings dominates their resources. Furthermore, due to their unequal nature in consisting of high-paid professional roles, low-paid service roles and privately owned capital, attracting these groupings is inefficient in providing economic welfare across a city. Thus, even cities that are considered to be 'wealthy', lack economic wellbeing.

However, by using the land, investment and procurement practices of organisations anchored within a locale to favour local, democratic control over the means of production (social economy business models); reproduction (mutual housing associations and the use of facilities by the community); and exchange (credit unions and community banks, facilitating loans to social economy business models and citizens), more egalitarian and spatially-fixed economic welfare may be encouraged.

Should there be economic wellbeing across a population there comes the more long-term consideration in the public goods that local authorities provide around quality of life and the environment. Similarly, with economic wellbeing, whereby issues of deprivation are not the immediate concern of citizens, though nuanced, there are increased cultural impetuses for these more long-term sustainability goals, in addition to greater engagement with sustainability related behaviours.

10. Conclusion

Having presented and discussed the research findings, attention now turns to the concluding parts of this thesis. Notably, this chapter will reflect upon the grounded theory methodology undertaken, set out three areas of knowledge that this study contributes towards, and recommend three avenues of research to be explored, before ending with a statement relating to the findings as a whole. First, however, this chapter presents a reminder of the research problem, then the aim and objectives are restated followed by a recap of the methodology that was employed, before going on to discuss how these aim and objectives were completed.

The need to address the ways in which humans impact upon the environment is critical (IPCC, 2018a). Though there is degradation at unprecedented rates for the wider aspects of the environment, climate change is perhaps the most urgent concern (ibid.). Meanwhile, with increases in both high-paid professional jobs and low-paid service jobs, at a period in which there are reduced middling manufacturing and administrative jobs, while those with significant capital are able to capture the gains from technological advances, the economic welfare resulting from economic processes are allocated increasingly unequally (Goodhart, 2017; McInroy, 2017; OECD, 2020; O'Connor, 2015; ONS, 2019). Cities have a notable relationship to both the environment and the job market – being hubs of activities, cities are the indirect cause of much of humanities impact upon on the environment. Also, cities are the sites of the social consequences from the more unequal economy. Therefore, given that urban populations are predicted to rise globally (UN DESA, 2018), understanding how urban areas as specific entities may become sustainable is increasingly pertinent.

Although the need for urban sustainability is clear, such shifts are not straightforward. While cities are more on the scale at which democracy functions, national governments have been co-opted by the interests of capital (Barber, 2017; While et al., 2010). The ensuing shift towards neoliberalism has seen cities increasingly constrained as the public sphere is reduced to make space for capital (ibid.). Such shifts have seen a general reduction in the provisioning of social welfare, such as programmes around housing, or social security, to ensure that members of society can meet their basic needs, in addition to the increased mobility of capital (Defilippis, 2004; Harvey, 1989; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Technological advances have also increased the mobility of capital, while both of these have led to the loss of many

city's traditional manufacturing industries (ibid.). Consequently, urban sustainability must be considered amid an environment in which there is greater intercity competition to attract increasingly mobile capital to provide economic welfare in their cities.

Consequent to the need for urban sustainability transitions and the challenges that must be overcome to achieve this, the aim of this study was to:

1. Explore how the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing within contemporary urban governance processes may be resolved, and their relation to sustainability transitions.

This aim was be achieved through two objectives:

1. Develop theory and concepts around urban sustainability transitions.
2. Explore how the application of grounded theory may be used to address issues of urban sustainability transitions.

This study was an inductive inquiry and identifies with grounded theory methodology. The aim and objectives were arrived at through an iterative process and avenues of research were pursued as they presented themselves in data collection. The research treated the reasons for levels of urban sustainability as a reality that may be accessed subjectively by those who experience that phenomenon in addition to through objective measurement. Consequently, the philosophical position was critical realism (Bryman, 2012). Given that subjective data was primarily used, this study is qualitative and, though diverges at times, most closely identified with the constructivist branch of grounded theory in which the resulting theory is considered to be a 'construction' between those involved (Charmaz, 2006).

As in-depth understanding was required, as per the recommendations of Beveridge (1951), Harvey (2006), Walton (1992) and Yin (2014), this study employed case studies. Additionally, to further understanding of causal effects as recommended by Bonnett (2001), King et al. (1994) and Yin (2014), a comparative study was adopted. The primary form of data collection was semi-structured interviews with 'experts' in a locale. So that the data may be triangulated from various perspectives, as recommended by Gillham (2000), Layder (1998), Patton (1990), Swanborn (2010) and Yin (2014), this was supplemented by secondary data. The theoretical sensitivity prior to data collection was to have a base level of knowledge of the case studies; enough to be able to engage with the phenomenon but not to the extent that existing perceptions may be imposed upon the data. Throughout data collection, constant

comparative analysis was undertaken whereby analysis guided subsequent collection. Having set forth the methodology employed in this research, the remainder of this section describes how each objective has been achieved, before going on to discuss how the aim of the study has been answered.

Objective 1: Develop theory and concepts around urban sustainability transitions.

Through exploring elements within the voices of participants, interpreted through inductive reasoning and later brought into conversations with the literature, this study achieved Objective 1 with the development of both a theoretical understanding and a conceptual contribution towards questions of urban sustainability transitions. Commencing with the conceptual contribution, a means through which to create a pathway towards sustainability in York was created and is set out below.

Three barriers to sustainability in York were identified in the conversations of respective interviewees as: first, a political fluctuation in City of York Council that reduces its ability to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies; second, the lack of a social economy (co-operatives, social enterprises etc.) that may bring wider sustainability benefits; and third, an economic and cultural conservatism stemming from the built heritage. Participants in York linked these barriers with five other issues of sustainability, which were exacerbated by them: a lack of renewable energy production, income inequality, inadequate sustainable transport, a lack of 'affordable housing', and poor recycling provisioning.

From the secondary case studies a pathway was identified that the policymakers of York could take in overcoming these barriers and, in doing so, also see improvements in the five related areas of sustainability. Here, York must reduce the economic emphasis that is placed on tourism that sees the city identify almost exclusively through its built heritage and instead, with energy, vision and intelligence, pursue other economic avenues. Such possibilities are notably far more progressive than the low-paid, tourism related jobs that are currently propagated; York was thought by respective interviewees to be lucky to be home to a prevalent creative industry that would benefit significantly from support, while the Bristol, Plymouth and Preston case studies were shown to be enjoying the cultural, economic, environmental, social and political benefits of social economy models. These case studies have highlighted various means through which the public institutions and anchor

organisations of a city may encourage the latter. These are detailed throughout this thesis and I will not repeat them here.

York will never lose the historic nature of the city that makes it such a special place in which to live and visit, but the picture that was painted by interviewees of this grounding in the past is one of a 'stodgy' culture that does not want to face the challenges of the future. This regressive state was also thought to create a duality in the local economy in which life may be good for the professionals who are attracted to the city, but it is progressively more difficult for the other half who, despite working primarily in the industry that is the economic focus, are less able to afford to live in the city; cast away to more deprived areas, such people are effectively denied access to all the socio-economic and cultural benefits that York has to offer.

Part of the problem identified by interviewees is that City of York Council, held back by the culture and a political fluctuation, does not want to rock the economic boat: "tourism comes easy for York, the city works, why rock it?" The policymakers of York may ask. "Well actually, York doesn't work.", may be the response, followed by, "And you rock the boat because with all the advantages that the city has it can be so much more for all the people involved."

Cultures, however, can change. While an encouragement of the creative industries and social economy models are justified on their own grounds, in contrasting the Bath, Edinburgh and York case studies it was found that through reducing the economic emphasis on tourism, this draws the city away from its built heritage; into the present and beyond: into the future. With such changes there is a feedback effect. With cultural shifts among the population this may lead to greater political consistency and support for sustainability policies. A more innovative local authority with such support, operating in a more stable political climate was shown by the Bristol, Edinburgh and Preston case studies to be more able to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies. Consequently, City of York Council may be more able and willing to enact progressive policies: to encourage renewable energy and recycling; to recognize the contribution that the half of the residents who are not professionals make to the city and build more suitable and affordable housing to give them the right to the city; to be brave in reducing the ease within which cars can move about the city, while encouraging more sustainable forms of transport. And York is able and willing to shift towards

sustainability. Therefore, through creating a pathway towards sustainability in York, this advances a conceptual contribution towards questions of urban sustainability transitions.

And below is the theoretical understanding of urban sustainability transitions. From the understandings constructed of York, Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston, the coded data for each city resided in the consistency of the same four thematic groupings: first, culture, as the values of a city's population or sub-populations and how, when expressed, these impact upon sustainability related factors; second, public goods, as commodities and services that are available to all society such as the air we breathe or a social service, and the ability of local authorities to provide them; third, the means through which economic welfare, as the ways in which the wages and profits resulting from the production of goods and services, in addition to any intervention from government such as subsidies and social welfare, meet the economic needs of residents; and, fourth, the way in which factors such as equality, social capital and deprivation determine social wellbeing. From establishing the interactions that take place between these groupings, including the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing as part of the provisioning of economic welfare, fundamental understanding of urban sustainability transitions lies. This is discussed below.

Cities require economic welfare. Much of this is spatially-fixed, with there being large 'local' elements to local economies (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Ghemawat, 2001; Goodhart, 2017; Hahnel & Wright, 2016; Malleson, 2014; Peck et al., 2009; Power, 1996). The case studies showed that when there is insufficient economic welfare in a locale, local authorities look to encourage this. No more so was this intervention evident than in Plymouth and Preston as the most deprived case studies. However, in all the case studies there was observed to be insufficient spatially-fixed economic welfare.

Also identified to an extent within all the case studies was how they looked to attract capital from elsewhere in order to compensate for this shortfall. While Harvey (1989) termed this phenomenon 'urban entrepreneurialism' whereby cities compete for capital to provide this economic welfare, the case studies showed that this attraction also included groupings that brought capital: professionals, wealthy retirees and second-homeowners, and tourists. This capital may be in the form of money or, as with professionals, this may also be human capital. This capital is either stored economic welfare, or adds to economic processes through which economic welfare is created.

The mobility of these groupings that allow for them to be attracted is also a curse as they require attraction to locate in your city. The literature shows that cities divert resources to facilitate this, be it providing infrastructure for a business so that it may locate there or funding events to create a festival atmosphere in a city so that it may raise its profile and increase the attraction of these mobile capital groupings (Defilippis, 2004; Harvey, 1989; 2001; Jonas et al., 2011). Therefore, budgets are directed towards groups who are already wealthy, such as shareholders and property investors, in addition to professionals who may be considered to be affluent, or encouraging the low-paid tourist industry. Consequently, budgets are being used to exacerbate inequality. Furthermore, shareholders and investors may not live within that city, in which case the economic welfare that is being created within a locale is also leaving it. Meanwhile, budgets are being diverted away from groupings who do not have the desired capital – those between 50 and 80 per cent of the population identified by Cox (1999), Goodhart (2017) and Peck (2005) who are generally less well educated and are more rooted in a locale – and who are more likely to need social welfare. The inevitable effect, therefore, from looking to provide economic welfare through attracting these mobile capital groupings is inequality and large swathes of deprivation.

Due to the inability to achieve economic wellbeing, as the financial security that citizens require to meet their basic needs, across a city's population through this form of local economic development, the consequences for urban sustainability are significant. The case studies show that when people are concerned with the immediate problems of deprivation their focus is on seeking economic welfare. Similarly, with greater deprivation, cities have a more immediate need to encourage economic welfare. Therefore, with deprivation comes a mentality that is incompatible with sustainability. This shows the paradox between the 'entrepreneurial city' and the 'sustainable city'. In other words, this is wherein the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing lie, in addition to the wider consequences for urban sustainability. The contradiction around the environmental aspect of sustainability is especially visible in cities that are considered to be 'environmental exemplars' such as the Bristol case study and the literature regarding Freiburg. Here, due to the problems of deprivation and diversion of funding that may otherwise be used to provide public goods, the mobilisation of these reputations to attract the mobile capital groupings was found results in

them in no way being able to satisfy the environmental pillar of sustainability, and certainly not all aspects of sustainability.

There are, however, alternative forms of urban governance. This is identified within the strategy set forth by Defilippis (1999; 2004) and expanded upon by the respective US and UK think tanks, the Democracy Collaborative (2019) and the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES, 2019; 2020; CLES & PrCC, 2019; Jackson & McInroy, 2017). Here, as set forth in more detail in Section 2.2., through using locally controlled resources to encourage local, democratic ownership over the three areas of socio-economic relations; the means of production, reproduction and exchange, more spatially-fixed and egalitarian economic welfare may be encouraged. This has two benefits. Spatially-fixed economic welfare does not require a city's resources to maintain its presence. Egalitarian economic welfare is a more effective means through which to achieve economic wellbeing across a population. This strategy, therefore, reduces both the shortfall in spatially-fixed economic welfare and the need to attract the mobile capital groupings. As we saw in Preston, policymakers are recognizing this other way and though only partially employed, the city is bucking the economic trend of many of its counterparts (PwC, 2018).

With the resulting economic wellbeing across a city through the implementation of this strategy, the case studies show that, no longer concerned with the issues of deprivation, citizens exercise their cultural preferences for the long-term goals associated with sustainability. Additionally, they are more likely to engage with sustainability related behaviours. No longer concerned with the need to encourage economic welfare or having to divert budgets to the attraction of the mobile capital groupings, and with cultural impetuses from their populations, local authorities are able to prioritise quality of life and the environment in the provisioning of public goods.

There are extraneous benefits to the strategy set forth by Defilippis. Through an encouragement of social economy models, as detailed within Section 3.8., this would have significant benefits to all aspects of urban sustainability from the productive and service capacities within a city, including on wage equality and environmental outputs (Booth, 1995; Bowles & Gintis, 1993; Hall & Weghmann, 2019; Hillman et al., 2018; Johanisova et al., 2013; Magne, 2017; Zovanyi, 2012). Furthermore, as part of being able to prioritise more long-term goals in public goods, local authorities may be able to engage with informational and

structural strategies, as set out in Section 6.7.2., to encourage pro-environmental decisions in the consumer decisions of residents. Overall, away from the public goods that local authorities provide, businesses and residents play a large part in urban sustainability; for instance, businesses and households in York contribute 16 and 31 per cent of carbon emitted directly in the city respectively, in addition to indirect contributions such as in the supply-chains of goods they produce or consume (Gouldson et al., 2020). Therefore, the extraneous benefits to this local economic strategy are an important element to a city's sustainability.

Despite the benefits that may arise from this strategy, there are constraints. With the reduced budgets of local authorities associated with austerity, locally controlled resources are themselves reduced. As was frequently identified in the case studies, there are also legislative constraints placed upon cities that reduces a local authorities' ability to govern for sustainability. And, through the implementation of this strategy, even a more greatly resourced local authority through no longer having to divert their resources towards the attraction of the mobile capital groupings and without the problems of deprivation are still constrained centrally in the public goods that they may provide. For instance, while green provisioning has direct consequences for the extent to which residents recycle (Spaargaren, 2003), there is no clear policy direction in England around waste (Bees & Williams, 2017). Similarly, Central Government subsidies for both renewable energy and insulation have been removed (DECC, 2014; Ofgem, 2021), making the appropriate policies more difficult. Public transport, meanwhile, is largely dictated by private providers and local authorities are only able to incentivize them through subsidies should they wish to change their behaviour, with the resulting, "bendy-buses [being taken] through the centre [of a historic city such as York]" (Phil Bixby, York environment Forum). If included in devolution deals, there will be the right to 'franchise' public transport. Although this will allow for greater local authority control, they are still largely limited in their choices in favour of private providers.

There are also infrastructural constraints placed upon cities that affect their ability to govern for sustainability. Staying with transport, a current example of this is around the location of the High-Speed 2 railway line (HS2, 2022) which, as was shown in Bath, Bristol and York regarding rail links, will redefine the relationship between London and affected cities, with large implications as incoming residents from the Capital are able to pay higher house prices.

Another example around infrastructure is the energy fuel mix that is used in cities, with the extent to which it is carbon intensive being largely a national issue (BEIS, 2021b).

Overall, through the encouragement of more egalitarian and spatially-fixed economic welfare, in addition to the extraneous benefits for sustainability through superior business model outputs and consumer preferences of residents, and a greater focus on quality of life and the environment in the provisioning of public goods, there are various ways in which this strategy increases urban sustainability. As set forth by commentators (Cohen et al., 2016; Haf & Parkhill, 2017; Hawkes, 2001; Rogers, 1997), the strategy also consolidates sustainability with the achievement of political goals and the impact of the culture of residents. Therefore, through highlighting how the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing may be resolved, in addition to identifying the cultural, political, social environmental and economic consequences of doing so, this advances a theoretical understanding towards questions of urban sustainability transitions. However, attention is also drawn to centrally dictated elements around legislation, budgets and infrastructure.

Objective 2: Explore how the application of grounded theory may be used to address issues of urban sustainability transitions.

Objective 2 was achieved through the completion of Objective 1: through the development of both a theoretical understanding and a conceptual contribution, grounded theory has successfully been employed to explore issues of urban sustainability transitions. This, in part, is due to its use being consistent with the primary reason identified by the progenitors of grounded theory, Glaser & Strauss (1967), in being when there is insufficient theoretical understanding of a social phenomenon. Certainly, grounded theory is not limited to exploring urban sustainability transitions and has been applied across multiple research areas as diverse as modelling visitor experiences at heritage sites (Daengbuppha et al., 2006), understanding patients' cancer-coping process (Knott et al., 2012), and on women and shame (Brown, 2006).

Indeed, I argue that the successful application of grounded theory lies in the availability of knowledge related to that social phenomenon; in this study, there were found to be key stakeholders and policymakers in case studies who collectively had the knowledge to construct an understanding of their city. Furthermore, there was a rich body of secondary data on UK cities that served to enhance this knowledge. Due to this knowledge of respective

cities being readily available, grounded theory may be applied to other questions related to urbanism. An example of this was found in the semi-structured nature of data collection during this study whereby an understanding was able to be developed for why plans, or 'visions' that have or were being created for York or parts of the city in some way were or were likely to be implemented, and the reasons for this.

Furthermore, this study highlights that research design is integral to the success of the application of grounded theory. For example, it is the observation that exploring sustainability required the in-depth understanding that can be gained through case studies that, combined with the availability of relevant knowledge, led to the development of the novel solutions for tackling urban sustainability transitions that ensued. Indeed, the theoretical understanding and the conceptual contribution vary significantly from existing work in this area; be they the 'visions' that cities frequently create to set out and mobilise support for strategic sustainability goals (for recent UK examples, see Bristol One City, 2021; Edinburgh 2050, 2020; Exeter City Futures, 2020; Sheffield City Region Vision, 2017), or the academic literature with foci on individual elements of urban sustainability that may then be generalised as opposed to in-depth, fundamental understanding of urban sustainability in case studies that may then be applied more widely (for example, see Bulkeley & Betsill, 2005; Fuenfschilling et al., 2019; Irvine & Bai, 2019; Lam et al., 2020; North et al., 2017).

The question remains, however, does the successful application of grounded theory require, as in this study, that the researcher is not familiar with the related theories and concepts of that area of study? I argue not. This is because through careful selection from the grounded theory 'toolbox' of methods (constant comparative analysis; memo-writing; presenting a 'chain of evidence'; theoretical sensitivity prior to data collection; and reflexivity during data collection (Charmaz, 2006, Thornberg, 2012)) it is possible to maintain transparency and academic rigour throughout.

Aim: Explore how the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing within contemporary urban governance processes may be resolved, and their relation to sustainability transitions.

In contrasting how both the conceptual contribution and the theoretical understanding developed for Objective 1 contribute towards answering the aim of this study, despite being based upon the same dataset, there is a clear difference. Although the lessons around the

barriers from the conceptual contribution may be relevant to multiple cities, the combinations of these barriers are more likely to be specific to York. Moreover, though identifying and overcoming barriers to sustainability in a specific city has provided a pathway towards sustainability, I have been careful to qualify this with limiting words throughout this thesis. The shallow understanding of urban sustainability from viewing the coded data in this way may be seen in how public goods are engaged with having overcome the barriers in York: greater political stability in addition to cultural support will allow for their better provisioning.

This contrasts with the fundamental understanding around the provisioning of public goods that was gained through viewing the coded data in their wider thematic groupings as in the theoretical understanding: local authorities only have the resources to provide public goods when the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing have been resolved; local authorities are more able to focus on the provisioning of public goods when economic wellbeing has been achieved; and, there is greater cultural support for sustainability only when there is economic wellbeing.

Indeed, viewing the coded data in the form of the conceptual contribution may, if applied to another city, identify individual elements within that city that pose a particular problem. However, it is only by observing the relationships between the thematic groupings and understanding the resulting change in outputs from public institutions, economic capacities and residents in the context of outside budgetary, legislation and infrastructural constraints, that the extent to which cities in the UK may transition from their current unsustainable state to one in which all elements of sustainability are satisfied may be understood. Accordingly, it is the development of this theoretical understanding through which the aim of this study has been achieved.

10.1. Reflections on the Study

Having described how the aim and objectives were answered, this affords the opportunity to reflect on the methodology through which these were achieved. With the observation that cities are in no way sustainable, the inductive inquiry nature of this study was appropriate. The philosophical position being critical realism, in which the reasons for levels of urban sustainability are treated as a reality that may be understood through the subjective experiences of those who observe that phenomenon in addition to objective measurement, set in motion the appropriate methodology. This led to identifying with Charmaz's (2006)

'constructivist' branch of grounded theory from which there was a flexible 'toolbox' of methods to choose. Furthermore, the qualitative approach ensued and, consistent with the insight of Baxter & Jack (2008), case studies were adopted to facilitate in-depth understanding of such large and complicated entities as cities. Cities were observed to be effective subjects for case studies due to their scale and individuality. It was also found that a city's physical and governance boundaries could be neatly captured, even in Bristol as a city that had expanded beyond its borders, with the relationship with the wider Bristol Urban Area forming part of the understanding.

Consistent with Bonnett (2001), King et al. (1994) and Yin (2014), through contrast the comparative method proved to be effective in enhancing understanding in addition to highlighting the individuality within a case study. Heeding the insight of Kantor & Savitch (2005), this study had both sufficient case studies and suitable levels of depth in these. Consistent with Flyvbjerg (2006) and Hague & Harrop (2004), the example that derived from the case studies was both valuable and had broader applicability. However, it was only through the construction of a theoretical understanding, as per Kantor & Savitch (2005), whereby context was accounted for and conceptual tools were developed that led to understanding the same problem in a different place, that this broader applicability was realised.

York proved to be an effective primary case study due to having several interesting characteristics that were worthy of understanding. Notably, York being rich in built heritage made for interesting dynamics around tourism, culture and the attraction of professionals. Consistent with the observation by McFarlane & Robinson (2012) that greater understanding is often found in cases that differ the most, in Phase 1 of the study in which York, as a smaller city that is rich in built heritage, was compared with Bristol, as a larger city that identifies itself through the environment, proved to enrich understanding of both cities. In addition to the barriers that they were identified for, the case studies in Phase 2 were found to bring their own idiosyncrasies, be it social cohesion in Preston or the lack of an innovative culture in Plymouth due to a reliance on public sector employment, that served to deepen understanding around urban sustainability.

Consistent with grounded theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Galleta, 2013), semi-structured interviews as the primary source of data collection enabled a versatility in exploring an

individual's experiences while maintaining relevance. Being triangulated by secondary sources frequently expanded upon, corroborated or even contradicted this data; but on all occasions this enhanced the understanding attained from interviews. Interviewees were found to be accepting and understanding of the term 'sustainability'. The disparity between York interviews being in person and those in other cities being conducted via video or phone call was not found to affect the quality of the data collected. The design of the consent form, with different levels of anonymity, including the option to see extracts and the right to withdraw these, in addition to being able to decide their level of anonymity after the interview, was found to create to an atmosphere in which interviewees could express themselves freely and openly. Notably, many interviewees subsequently chose not to be anonymous having gained trust in the interviewer.

The interview sampling method, in which key stakeholders and policymakers were identified from a range of notable organisations across a case study, was found to be representative. Interviewees overwhelmingly proved to be extremely knowledgeable about their city, and were passionate about sharing this knowledge. Despite the duality to data collection in Phase 2, it was found to be possible to both construct an understanding of a city and gain an understanding for the 'barrier(s)' in York for which that case study was identified.

The theoretical sensitivity prior to data collection, being consistent with constructivist grounded theory in which there was only a level of pre-knowledge (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012; Thornberg & Dunne, 2019), proved to be effective in allowing for exploration of topics with interviewees without clouding their perceptions. The reflexivity that was maintained throughout data collection was successful in helping me reflect upon and minimise the ways in which I was affecting data collection. Constant comparative analysis successfully helped the study reach theoretical saturation and allowed for new avenues of research to be developed during data collection, with the subsequent addition of Phase 2 of the study.

Many aspects of grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2008) were found to aid in analysis. First, memo writing induced creativity and created a log that could be drawn upon in later analysis, while conceptual maps were found to help in understanding the relationships between codes. Second, the write-up process formed a crucial part in the final analysis and development of this study. Thirdly, it was found that only

engaging with the literature fully in this latter stage allowed for understanding around observations within the data to be developed prior to seeking insight from existing knowledge. Notably, as the researcher, I was unfamiliar with many of the concepts that were found to relate to the data and, consistent with Tavory & Timmermans (2014), this lack of prior knowledge triangulates the validity of the study with the resulting theoretical understanding being grounded in the data. For instance, the need to attract the mobile capital groupings was identified within the data without prior knowledge of Harvey's (1989) seminal article on 'urban entrepreneurialism' or the associated body of work (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox, 1993; Defilippis, 1999; MacLeod, 2011; MacLeod et al., 2003; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002; While et al., 2004). This literature was then used to not only triangulate, but also provide an explanation for this phenomenon; understanding that was unlikely to come from interviews. Meanwhile, a second example of triangulation regarding another key part of the findings was the observation that the four thematic groupings identified in the understandings constructed of the case studies share many similarities with Scott & Storper's (2015) five 'commonalities' that allow for conceptual abstraction of cities: economic development, resource allocation, social and political aspects, and cultural norms and traditions.

10.2. Contribution to Knowledge

Through exploring issues of urban sustainability with the grounded theory approach, this study contributes understanding to three areas of knowledge. First, this study provides embedded analysis from six case studies of how managerial and entrepreneurial drivers of urban development impact upon governance for sustainability, adding to existing academic work on 'urban entrepreneurialism' (Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox, 1993; Defilippis, 1999; Harvey, 1989; MacLeod, 2011; MacLeod et al., 2003; Mocca, 2017; Peck & Tickell, 2002; While et al., 2004). Notably, this study shows that, while the entrepreneurial form of urban governance is incompatible with sustainability due to the deprivation and inequality that invariably arises, it is not possible for cities to adopt the managerial form; this being lost to the contemporary neoliberal climate and technological age that has seen the increased mobility of capital and privatisation of services and infrastructure, and reduced traditional manufacturing industries and provisioning of social welfare programmes. Indeed, part of the understanding that this study affords is that, in the appropriate political-economic climate,

the managerial form of urban governance is compatible with sustainability as this may more equally encourage economic welfare and reduce the need to divert resources towards the attraction of capital. However, the most significant contribution of this study is to look beyond the public sector focussed managerialism and the private sector focussed entrepreneurialism, and towards a third form of urban governance that utilizes the means available to cities to embed more spatially-fixed and egalitarian economic welfare in their locale. This form of urban governance has its roots in the work of Defilippis (1999, 2004) who argues for its use on the basis of the space it creates for local democracy and from a broader mix of the community. In this sense, this form of urban governance may be termed 'participatialism'.

Second, resulting from the use of grounded theory and the adoption of York as the primary case study, this research has explored three deep-seated barriers to sustainability (those related to 'political fluctuations', 'a lack of social economy models', and 'built heritage') that are not often considered in existing literature. Indeed, the employment of grounded theory methodology in this study not only led to the identification of their role in sustainability, but expanded understanding for how they may be improved upon in this context from subsequent case studies.

Third, this study has shown the effectiveness of grounded theory as a methodology for reconciling economic objectives with sustainability. Certainly, the application of grounded theory here highlights that the collective knowledge exists within cities that not only identifies how conventional economic development is problematic in meeting the economic needs of residents, but emphasizes alternatives. Furthermore, this understanding was found to be embedded in factors that are integral to questions of urban sustainability: concerns of culture, the provision of public goods by local authorities, and social wellbeing.

10.3. Recommendations for Future Research

This study has uncovered three areas in which further research is required to understand urban sustainability more fully. Firstly, urban entrepreneurialism significantly impacts upon cities in the UK. Despite this, much of the related research is from a US perspective and is not recent (for example, Brenner & Theodore, 2002; Cox, 1993; Defilippis, 1999; Harvey, 1989; MacLeod, 2011; MacLeod et al., 2003; Peck & Tickell, 2002; While et al., 2004). Furthermore, research that seeks to explain urban entrepreneurialism in the UK is disparate and fragmented (for example, see Bassett, 1999; Harding, 1991; Jonas & Wilson, 1999; Kantor &

Savitch, 2005; O'Brien & Pike, 2019). Additionally, with the changes associated with the Conservative Government since 2010 including localism, devolution, the creation of Local Enterprise Partnerships, austerity and City Deals, UK urban entrepreneurialism is evolving. Accordingly, research should look to understand these various factors and bring understanding of urban entrepreneurialism in the UK into the present.

Secondly, while this research contributes six case studies upon which respective understandings were constructed, consistent with Layder (1998), the resulting theory is forever considered to be incomplete and subject to revision. Indeed, additional case studies must be sought to enhance understanding and explore different characteristics; for example those associated with large, post-industrial cities, such as Leeds or Manchester. Furthermore, as Blumer (1969) highlights, reality is constantly being recast and new research must be undertaken to understand today's 'reality' more clearly.

Finally, this study demonstrates that many of the issues related to cities are underexplored in research. These elements include the relationship between the size of a city and inequality; the effect of proportional representation on the ability of a local authority to provide long-term vision and enact greater good policies; the relationship between public engagement and support for environmental policies; the outputs of small- and medium-sized enterprises in comparison to corporations. Accordingly, understanding issues such as these and the numerous others identified in the understandings constructed of the case studies will add significant insight into urban sustainability.

10.4. Concluding Statement

Towards the very beginning of this thesis I stated that the motivation for undertaking a study such as this stems from an academic curiosity around the observation that cities are far from being sustainable. Although I took an exploratory approach, given that it was unlikely that this problem had an easy solution, I had no expectation of answers. But there were.

Due to the tensions between capital and economic wellbeing in the contemporary city, urban sustainability is not possible amid neoliberalism with the current way in which urban policymakers engage with economic development. As identified collectively by many of the policymakers and key stakeholders of York, Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston, pursuing capital leads to deprivation and inequality. And, from these circumstances the long-

term goals that lead to sustainability will never be the focus of the populations of cities or their local authorities.

There is, however, a different way. Urban sustainability transitions have their roots in cities defying a Central Government that has been co-opted by the interests of capital; of cities grasping the opportunity that reside within locally controlled resources to encourage more egalitarian and spatially-fixed forms of ownership over the means of production, reproduction and exchange; in populations who are not so preoccupied with issues of deprivation that they can express their cultural yearnings for the long-term goals associated with sustainability; of local authorities who are not so preoccupied with issues of deprivation that they may focus not on merely sustaining life, but on what makes life good.

The changes discussed here may seem unlikely given current norms. This thesis, however, is full of examples of people thinking and behaving in the interests of other people and the environment more widely as opposed to capital. And from these examples, in addition to many others, societal imagining can change; just ask Helen Graham, Lecturer, University of Leeds:

> "Power isn't always where you think it is. And actually, you can give too much power to certain people and organisations if you're not careful. And that precludes good things happening. So, don't assume that you can't do stuff; run into walls; find out if walls are there by running; to see if they're there: they might not be."

Indeed, the very changes that are required for urban sustainability transitions have also been identified collectively by many of the policymakers and key stakeholders of York, Bath, Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth and Preston. And, given the immediate need to avert environmental collapse and improve social wellbeing, such societal reimagining must begin now.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: List of Interviewees

All interviewees listed have given their permission to be identifiable:

- Katherine Atkinson, Regeneration Project Support Officer, City of York Council

- Shirah Bamber, Communications and Marketing Manager, Preston City Council

- Gareth Barwell, Head of Place Management, City of Edinburgh Council

- Micaela Basford, Sustainability Officer, Bath and North-East Somerset Council

- Justin Bear, Project Manager, Plymouth Energy Community

- Anna Bialkowska, Chair, Tang Hall Big Local, York

- Professor Martin Bigg, University of the West of England

- Nick Bird, Communications and Community Outreach Coordinator, Bath & West Community Energy

- Phil Bixby, York Environment Forum

- Professor Alistair Boxall, University of York

- Councillor Steve Burgess, Green Party, City of Edinburgh Council

- Dr Emma Carmel, Senior Lecturer, University of Bath

- Councillor Tony Carson, Conservative, Plymouth City Council

- Dr Steve Cinderby, Senior Researcher, Stockholm Environment Institute, University of York

- James Cleeton, England Director South, Sustrans

- Molly Conisbee, Research Development Manager, University of Bath

- Tony Crouch, World Heritage Manager, Bath and North-East Somerset Council

- Councillor Cammy Day, Labour Group Leader and Deputy Head of Council, City of Edinburgh Council

- Kat Deeney, Natural Infrastructure Manager, Plymouth City Council

- Councillor Peter Dew, Conservative, City of York Council

- Kyle Drummond, Senior Economic Development Officer, City of Edinburgh Council

- Councillor Daniel Duckworth, Conservative, Preston City Council

- Councillor Sue Dann, Labour, Plymouth City Council

- Paul Elliot, Low-Carbon City Officer, Plymouth City Council

- Dr Oliver Escobar, Lecturer, University of Edinburgh

- Mark Finch, Project Coordinator, York Community Catalyst
- Marc Gardiner, Director, Zebra Collective, Plymouth
- Derek Gauld, Housing Development Manager, City of York Council
- Dr Helen Graham, Lecturer, University of Leeds
- Mark Gunthorpe, Head of Economic Development, University of York
- Guy Hanson, Design & Sustainability Manager, City of York Council
- Gareth Hart, Director, Iridescent Ideas CIC, Plymouth
- Councillor Johnny Hayes, Independent, City of York Council
- Jane Hunt, Senior Economic Development Officer, Plymouth City Council
- Dr Bryn Jones, Senior Lecturer, University of Bath
- Caroline Kay, Chief Executive, Bath Preservation Trust
- Paul Kelly, Community Empowerment Manager, Community Gateway Association, Preston
- Andy Kerr, Head of Regeneration, City of York Council
- Matthew Kirk, Programme Manager, University of York
- Vicky Japes, Public Health Programme Manager, City of York Council
- Richard Lane, York Community Energy
- Mark Leach, Project Manager, Bristol City Council
- Kate Lock, York Environment Forum
- Professor Jim Longhurst, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Environment and Sustainability, University of the West of England
- Andrew Lowson, Executive Director, York Business Improvement District
- Dr Julian Manley, Social Innovation Manager, University of Central Lancashire and Chair, Preston Co-operative Development Network
- Rachael Maskell MP, Labour and Co-operative Party, York Central
- Anthony May, Emeritus Professor of Transport Engineering, University of Leeds, and York Civic Trust
- Paul McCabe, Strategic Manager – Sustainability and Transformation, City of York Council
- Dave Merrett, Former Labour Councillor and City of York Council Leader
- Kirsty Mitchell, Collections Engagement Officer, York Minster

- Patrick Miner, Master's (by Research) Student, University of Edinburgh

- Gareth Nash, Director, Co-op Development Network and Co-operative & Mutual Solutions, Preston

- Dr Andrew Neal, Senior Lecturer, University of Edinburgh

- Alan Nestor, Managing Director, Edinburgh Bicycle Cooperative

- Adrien Nielson, Conservation Officer, Bath and North-East Somerset Council

- Heather Niven, Head of Science City York

- Professor Rich Pancost, Director of the Cabot Institute, University of Bristol

- Dr Simon Parker, Lecturer, University of York

- Sheridan Piggott, York Bike Belles

- Michelle Pilling, Community Safety & Engagement Manager, Preston City Council

- Councillor Martyn Rawlinson, Labour, Deputy Head of Preston City Council

- Tamar Reay, Economic Development Officer, Preston City Council

- Deborah Shannon, Director – Link Psychology Co-operative, Preston

- Andrew Sharp, Head of Business, Make It York

- David Somervell, Convener, Transition Edinburgh and former Sustainability Adviser, University of Edinburgh

- Jane Stephenson, Business Development Director, Resource Futures, Bristol

- Katie Thomas, Low-Carbon & Circular Economy Lead – York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership

- Matthew Todd, Senior Researcher, Centre for Local Economic Strategies

- Ian Townsend, Chief Executive, Bristol Green Capital Partnership

- Sarah Toy, Strategic Resilience Officer, Bristol City Council

- Councillor Andrew Waller, Liberal Democrats, City of York Council

- Carl Wain, Commissioning Manager, City of York Council

- Councillor Sarah Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services, Liberal Democrats, Bath and North-East Somerset Council

- Dr Paul Warwick, Centre for Sustainable Futures Lead and Lecturer, University of Plymouth

- Derek Whyte, Assistant Chief Executive, Preston City Council

Appendix 2: Consent Form

Sociology Department
University of York
Heslington
York
YO10 5NG

UNIVERSITY
of York

Consent Form

My name is Graham Gill, I am a PhD researcher at the University of York in the Sociology Department conducting a study in which I hope will feed into policy thinking about environmental sustainability in York. I am interviewing key stakeholders and policymakers in York to identify barriers to environmental sustainability. I am also interviewing key stakeholders and policymakers in other urban areas that have had similar barriers to environmental sustainability so that York may learn from these experiences. Furthermore, I am conducting interviews regarding visions that have been created for York and their implementation. The data collected for this study will be used for output such as: my PhD project; academic journal articles; blog contributions for third sector organisations and presentations to academic meetings and stakeholder organisations. Recordings, and transcripts of recordings, will be kept on a password protected computer and will be deleted after June 2023. This date has been chosen as it allows time for a full rigorous analysis and for the various planned outputs to be published. Data will be kept confidential and will only be available, on request, to my academic supervisors: Dr Daryl Martin and Dr Gareth Millington and, if needed, an academic marker/examiner of my research project. Carefully selected extracts will be used in the outputs of the research. You have the right to withdraw from this study before 1st February 2021 without explanation. Please note this research was approved by the Sociology Department's Ethics Committee on 17/9/2018.

There are three different options with varying levels of anonymity and an additional option regarding seeing output before publication, please feel free to choose the options with which you are the most comfortable.

[please tick as appropriate].

I agree that my name and institutional affiliation may be cited within the research ☐

OR

I agree that my institutional affiliation may be used as a generic identifying feature if no other features (e.g. gender, age, name) are used ☐

OR

I would prefer to remain anonymous ☐

AND

If extracts from my interview are used in written outputs I would like to see this before publication and know that I have the right to withdraw this information ☐

I understand the research and consent to taking part and for my interview to be used for future analysis by the researcher:

Print Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

For further information about this project, please ask me or feel free to contact my research supervisors: Dr Daryl Martin and Dr Gareth Millington.

Graham Gill	Dr Daryl Martin	Dr Gareth Millington
Telephone: 07929365808	Telephone: 01904 322633	Telephone: 01904 323058
Email: gg736@york.ac.uk	Email: Daryl.Martin@york.ac.uk	Email: Gareth.Millington@york.ac.uk

Appendix 3: Interview Request Email

My name is Graham Gill. I'm a PhD researcher in the Department of Sociology at the University of York. I'm researching the different aspects of cities that effects their sustainability, be it culture, institutions etc. In addition to activities such as presentations, a blog and my academic work, this will be with a view towards writing a report that will be presented to One Planet York (the environmental collaboration between City of York Council and local organizations) and the York City Environment Observatory (a council and university project to measure York's environmental performance and understand how this relates to the health and wellbeing of citizens and the economy of the city).

I'm interviewing key policy people and stakeholders in xxxx. As xxxx I would welcome your views on how sustainable xxxx is, what the city does well and what could be improved. To achieve this, I would like to conduct a semi-structured interview with you. This should take approximately 30 minutes. I think that you will provide a great insight into xxxx in this regard and I would enjoy and value hearing your opinions.

Appendix 4: Semi-Structured Interview Questions, Reminders and Techniques

The following generative questions were used in interviews. Asterisks indicate when questions were only applied to specific cities. Below these are reminders and techniques that were used during the interview process to create the best environment and engage effectively with interviewees around the research area.

How environmentally sustainable is xxxx?

To what extent is xxxx economically sustainable?

How socially sustainable (social wellbeing, equality) is xxxx?

How do the different institutions of xxxx, be that the council or individual business, affect how sustainable xxxx is?

How does xxxx's culture affect its sustainability?

What does xxxx do well?*

What could xxxx be doing better?*

xxxx is rich in built heritage, how and to what extent does this effect the culture?**

xxxx's council fluctuates between parties frequently, how does this affect the city and what does it do to negate the negative aspects of this?***

There appears to be numerous social enterprises and worker owned cooperatives in xxxx, to what do you ascribe this?****

xxxx is a city rich in built heritage, with this in mind, how was it possible for the tram to be created?*****

*York

**Bath, Edinburgh

***Bath, Edinburgh, Plymouth

****Bristol, Edinburgh, Plymouth, Preston

*****Edinburgh

Read about interviewees, job title etc. before interview; relax, and create an informal, talkative atmosphere for interviewees; let interviewees exhaust themselves; write down any questions or facts that appear to me when they are talking and ask them after they have exhausted themselves; it is semi-structured so probe in an area and then when done move onto next question; do not impart research to interviews, it is a blank slate; an area is good, they will naturally pick this within the open format of the questions, so don't try to manufacture this.

Probing questions: e.g. "Could you tell me more about that?" – this will be key for me, going down routes they initiate that I can then engage in.

Indirect questions: "How do you think those who live outside the area view the power station?" – perhaps illuminates what they themselves think about the power station - but need further questions to interpret meaning.

Silence: By allowing pauses in the conversation, the subjects have ample time to associate and reflect and then break the silence themselves with significant information.

Interpreting questions: e.g. rephrasing, asking for clarification.

Revealing something of yourself, your own circumstances and feelings is a way to persuade interviewees of your good faith. By creating both greater empathy and attempting to reduce power differentials in the actual encounter.